

1465

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**



**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name North Chester Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number East River Road, Smith Road and North Chester Road N/A not for publication

city or town Chester N/A vicinity

state Massachusetts code MA county Hampden code 015 zip code 01011

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Judith B. McDonough

10/28/96

Signature of certifying official/Title Judith B. McDonough, Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____

Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): _____

Edson H. Beall

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

12.6.96

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
9	6	building
5	0	sites
2	0	structures
0	0	objects
16	6	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Domestic/hotel
- Dmestic/single dwelling
- Industry/manufacturing facility
- Transportation/road-related
- Agriculture/storage/field/animal facility
- Education/school
- Religion/religious facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Domestic/single dwelling
- Agriculture/storage/field/animal
- Transportation/road related
- Religion/religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Colonial/Georgian
- Mid-19th/Greek Revival/Gothic Revival
- 20th C. Revival/Colonial Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation stone
- walls wood
- roof asphalt
- other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Continuation Sheet**Section number 7 Page 1**North Chester Historic District
Chester (Hampden County), Massachusetts****7. DESCRIPTION**

The North Chester Historic District is comprised of a small 19th century village in the town of Chester, Massachusetts, in Hampden County. The district is in a valley through which the Middle Branch of the Westfield River runs. This branch of the Westfield River passes through the district in a northwest-southeast direction; district buildings, sites and structures are located on both of its banks. District properties are located on the valley floodplain at each side of the river, with the exception of the cemetery, which is located on the uplands between Smith and Bemis Hills on the east side of the district. On the west, the land slopes rather steeply up Holcomb Hill.

On both east and west, the hillsides are second-growth woodland covered with upland deciduous trees such as: Sugar and Red Maples; Yellow, Gray, and Paper Birches; and Northern Red, White, Pin, and Black Oaks among others. Upland evergreen and coniferous trees such as White Pine, White Spruce, and Red Pine are to be found among deciduous shrubs such as Shadblow Serviceberry, Roundleaf Dogwood, and Red Chokeberry. The floodplain fields are found mainly on the west side of the river, and it is here that the fields are located, cultivated for hay or used as pastures for horses and sheep. From the stone walls that remain, it is evident that more of the land on the lower slopes of the hills was cleared in the past than is now.

The major village thoroughfare is East River Road, a paved road running in a generally parallel fashion to the river on its west side. On the north, the district stops at the north property lines of the former Howe house and factory site. The district ends on the south with the core buildings of North Chester Center: the Chapel and the Elcopo Ledges farmhouse. East and west boundaries mostly follow the rear lot lines of properties alongside East River Road and along the east bank of the river itself. The district is composed of residential buildings and outbuildings, several potential historic industrial archaeological sites, a burial ground, a chapel, former school, stone walls, and a 19th century iron truss bridge, all relatively widely spaced in a distinctly rural valley setting. There are three primary buildings that do not contribute to the district due to their contemporary date of construction. However, two of the three are not inconsistent in materials, workmanship and feeling with the district as a whole. Properties in the district are in good condition, and construction since 1909-1910 is so limited that the district has retained its 19th century hilltown village appearance.

A descriptive narrative of the district's resources follows.

Structures

The most visually prominent structure in the district is the North Chester bridge at the village center crossing the Westfield River at Smith Road (MHC #B 44) (Photo No. 5). An iron bridge, it was designed by Richard Hawkins of Springfield and constructed in 1887 using the Howe truss system. Iron beams span the river for approximately thirty feet and support iron railings that are divided into

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five cross-braced sections on each side. There is an open-grid bridge flooring, which permits a view to the river about thirty feet below. The bridge is secured on each bank by random, drylaid, granite-block abutments, which extend between ten and twenty feet in either direction along the bank.

Stonework of the abutments is matched in its high quality by the stonework of two walls on Chester Hill Road (no inventory form but part of MHC #B 35) built by Amos Cone between 1876 and 1904 using stone from the ledges west of the Cone house (Photo no. 1). Approximately three hundred feet long, two and a half feet wide, and three feet high, the drylaid fieldstone walls rise up a slope to ledge on the west separating a farmhouse and yard from an open field on the south, and bordering North Chester Road on the north.

Sites

There are three factory and two dam sites remaining from the 18th and 19th centuries in the district. Approximately forty to fifty feet north of the North Chester Bridge on the west bank are the remains of granite block dam abutments and granite stone foundations of the sawmill and cotton mill that were active there from the 18th century through the 1860s (Photo No. 3). About a mile up the river is the site of the Howe bedstead factory and a second dam site active from the 1860s through the 1890s. Remains of a third factory thought to be about an eighth of a mile south of the bridge may remain. This was the second cotton mill. A tannery is also thought to have existed north of the bridge and above the cotton mill buildings and to have been active in the 1860s, leading to the possibility of a fourth manufacturing site.

Located on the east side of the river on a south-running spur road off Smith Road is the North Chester Cemetery. Cemetery stones, which number about 46 headstones, date as early as 1803 and as late as 1947 with the majority from the mid-19th century. Surrounded by a woodland, the cemetery is bordered by a low stone wall. While the cemetery is generally clear, there is a large maple tree within the circumference of the fieldstone walls. Some stone repair work has recently been done on veterans' stones. There is one obelisk form, but the majority of the remaining stones are tablet in shape and are mostly granite and limestone with a few of marble and slate. Inscriptions are representative of their period in style and content.

Also located in the district, along East River Road and Smith Road are parcels of field and woodland. These five parcels (Accessor's Map #s 402-4,5,6,27.01,28) are listed collectively as one site in the contributing resource total (see District Data Sheet).

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Chester (Hampden County), Massachusetts**Buildings**

Traditional building forms had long lives in North Chester. So much so, that breaking down the few buildings into stylistic designations can be misleading, as forms persisted with limited variation for long periods of time. In addition, the buildings were by and large very modest in ornament so that with few exceptions there is little stylistic distinction among them. A 1 1/2-story house with knee-high windows and an end gable roof could be built in 1840 or in 1900 with little to distinguish the two (Inv.# B31, B43 outside the district). There has been loss of several higher-style buildings as well, with at least two Federal and one Greek Revival house known from photographs to have been more stylistically developed than the average.

Federal Period (1776-1800)

A transitional Georgian/Federal-period building is the **Cushman Tavern** on the southwest corner of River and North Chester Roads (MHC # B32, ca.1773) (Photo No. 4). The clapboard building is two stories in height beneath an end gable roof with a two-story, end-gable ell on the south followed by a 1 1/2-story shed-roof wing on the south, creating a C-shaped plan. The north-facing central block of the building is five bays wide with a center entrance whose surround is a Federal-style entablature with a multi-light transom, giving it the high proportions of the Federal period. A 2 1/2-story, east-facing ell extends on the south of the main block. It is terminated by a shed-roof addition, which was originally a horse shed and was later enclosed. Sash in the house is the Georgian 12/8, and windows have simple molded surrounds. The windows of the second story are located close to the eaves, a local Georgian feature. The east door surrounds are relatively simple entablature surrounds. The roof structure has been altered from a typical 18th century L-shaped, hipped-roof structure. At some point after a 1905 photograph was taken, the roof was altered so that there is a fully exposed wing gable end interrupting the north gable ridge. This is a framing anomaly without counterpart elsewhere. There is one interior chimney on the main section. From the exterior, it appears that the north-facing section of the building was the first to be erected and that the south wing was added not only to gain space, but also to provide more access to the inn from East River Road.

A simplified version of a common western Massachusetts, late Federal house form is found at the **Little House** on East River Road (MHC # B31, ca. 1830-1846) (Photo No. 4). This is a 1 1/2-story end-gabled house of very plain construction. Set on an east sloping site, the house has high fieldstone foundations on the east and an entry reached by a set of stairs to a porch landing. The house is a modest four bays wide and one bay deep. Comparison with an early 1900s photograph reveals that the windows were enlarged, probably during the alterations made in 1972, and their wide surrounds replaced with narrow ones; one of the two second-story eyebrow windows has been moved and the central chimney has been removed. The roof has no eave returns. Prior to the changes, the building had the attenuated proportions of the Federal style, although the second-story windows are fewer in number than usual and the existence of an entry porch is unusual.

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The **North Chester Schoolhouse** is a second good example of the persistence of a vernacular Federal-style building form, duplicated throughout the southern hilltowns with few variations (MHC # B33, ca.1850) (Photo No. 6). A single-story wood clapboard building is set on relatively high fieldstone foundations beneath a front gable roof. Originally the central entrance was flanked by two windows for a three-bay facade, which has now been altered to two bays, with a three-bay depth and rectangular plan. Narrow cornerboards and shallow eave returns frame the elevation, and there is a simply enframed Federal-style entry and transom. Sash is the 6/6 common at the middle of the 19th century.

Greek Revival Period (1830-1860)

There are two examples of the Greek Revival style in North Chester. On North Chester Road is the **James Elder House**, which is an 1837 reconstruction of an 1831 house (MHC # B35). It is 2 1/2 stories in height, five bays wide and two deep for a rectangular plan beneath an end-gable roof with a central chimney. The central entry of the south-facing Elder House was originally a simple architrave surround, but a Queen Anne-style porch was added in the 1890s with turned supports and ornamental brackets. The porch extends across three bays of the south facade and stops at a slightly projecting two-window bay, which also dates from the 1890s. On an eastward slope, the house has high, flat-ledge stone foundations. The Elder house (known as **Elcopo Ledges** since 1936) has a rare window-spacing pattern in which the windows of the outer two bays at each side are placed more closely together, for an A-B-A pattern.

Directly across the North Chester bridge on Smith Road is the **John Stevens House** (MHC # B36) (Photo No.7), which dates from 1820 to 1830. A front-gabled, 2 1/2-story Greek Revival house, its eaves make full returns to form a pediment. Corner pilasters frame the building and support a wide frieze. In the gable field is a regionally popular rectangular window. The sidehall-plan house has a broad entry surround with full-length sidelights and pilasters supporting a full entablature.

Gothic Revival (1830-1860)

There is a single Gothic Revival-style building in North Chester, the **Howe House** on East River Road (MHC # B37, ca. 1860) (Photo No. 2). This style is not well represented in the hilltowns, so it takes on a particular importance for its well-maintained and comparatively high-style exterior. One and a half stories in height, the front-gabled house is three bays wide and has a sidehall plan. Board-and-batten sided, the house has ornamented bargeboards and eaves, label lintels over the windows, and a shed-roof portico on scroll-cut braces. Sash is 6/6. On the south is a single-story ell enclosed with a screened porch. A single-story ell on the north appears to be a later addition, but carries out the siding and running eaves ornament. Built for manufacturer Elbridge Howe when he established his bedstead factory nearby on the river, this house is a departure from the stylistically conservative farmhouses of North Chester.

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Chester (Hampden County), Massachusetts**Queen Anne / Colonial Revival (1880-1920)**

The **North Chester Chapel** of 1909 (MHC # B34) is the latest building in the historic district within its period of significance. This is a 1 1/2-story clapboard building with a steeply pitched end-gable roof. The building sits on fieldstone foundations on a high slope between North Chester and East River Roads. Square in plan, it is three bays by three bays and is entered on the east facade at the end bay beneath a shed-roof portico on turned Queen Anne-style posts. The door is framed by a simple capped surround, which is complemented by capped window surrounds. The windows have 1/1 sash and, in the gable field of the south facade, a louvered lunette, which together with the full-profile eave returns and louvered shutters, constitutes the Colonial Revival stylistic features of the building.

Outbuildings

There are two contributing barns in the district; both appear to date from the 19th century. The **Howe livestock barn** (MHC # B37), East River Road, has an attached silo and board-and-batten siding resembling that on the house. At the **John Stevens House** (MHC # B36) on Bridge Road is a large livestock and horse **barn** with two double-width entries for vehicles.

Recent construction

Recent construction in the district is residential and continues to make use of wood frame exteriors with clapboard siding. They are 1 1/2 stories to 2 1/2 stories in height and are set back from the road for new sites or occupy the approximate location of earlier buildings which they replace.

Archaeological Description

While no prehistoric sites are recorded within the district, the general area (within one mile) or, in the entire town, sites may be present. The physical characteristics of the district include several well drained level to moderately sloping areas in close proximity to wetlands indicating locational criteria which are favorable for many Native American settlement locations. The district including the now dammed Middle Branch of the Westfield River and its floodplain is generally surrounded by steeply sloped uplands. Given the above information, the size of the district (282.5 acres) the availability of open space and generally low densities of prehistoric settlement in the region, a moderate potential exists for recovering significant prehistoric survivals.

A high potential exists for historic archaeological resources within the district. There are three factory and two dam sites remaining from the 18th and 19th centuries in the district. The remains of granite block dam abutments and granite stone foundations can be found approximately forty to sixty feet north of the North Chester Bridge on the west bank of the river. These structural remains mark the site of the Steven's sawmill and cotton mill active there from the 18th century and the site of several

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subsequent mills through the 19th century. The Steven's family also added a grist mill and mill to extract linseed oil at this location. The Stevens family also manufactured wooden window shades at a site on the west side of the river immediately below the bridge. Visible evidence of that site are now gone as a result of road widening, however, subsurface evidence of the operation may survive. The Howe mill site lies about a mile up the river from the Stevens mill where a second dam was present. The mills at this site were active during the mid to late 19th century where Eldridge Howe manufactured hardwood bedsteads and later also ran a sawmill. A third mill site was also active in the 19th century about an eighth of a mile south of the bridge where a second cotton mill was present. A fourth possible manufacturing site thought to be a tannery active in the 1860's is conjectured north of the bridge and cotton mill buildings. Several important residences have also been lost in the village. The Thomas Elder House (ca. 1772), the residence of one of the area's first settlers, was originally located about 60 feet west of the current Elcopo Ledges House on North Chester Road. Another one of the villages early farmers, Sylvester Bemis, also had a home (18th century) and track of land running about one-half mile up and down the river around the cemetery. The Bemis house is no longer extant and the precise location is unknown. In the 1820's James Elder built a house for his son James Elder south of the Cushman Tavern (also known as Elder's Inn and Parmenter's Tavern) facing north Chester Road. That house collapsed from lack of maintenance with a garage, also used as a firehouse, built there in the 1960's. James Elder built a third house in 1831 which burned in 1837. That house on North Chester Road was rebuilt that same year as the Elcopo Ledges House. John Cook also had a 19th century house at the bridge crossroad with East River Road with a general store added to the south side of the house. That building burned in 1966 and was replaced by a contemporary home. Occupational related features (trash pits, privies, wells) and outbuildings should also be present in the district within archaeological sites and extant structures. Only two contributing barns dating to the 19th century are present in the district indicating a high potential for survivals of this outbuilding type. Occupational related features should be present with residences and the mill sites in the district. Unmarked graves may also be present at the North Chester Cemetery or the east side of the river off Smith Road where gravestones date from 1803 to 1947.

(end of Section 7)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
- INDUSTRY
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Period of Significance

1775-1946

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:
Massachusetts Historical Commission

North Chester Historic District
Name of Property

Chester (Hampden County), Massachusetts
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 282.5 acres

UTM References See continuation sheet.

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1. Zone Easting Northing

3. Zone Easting Northing

2. Zone Easting Northing

4. Zone Easting Northing

X See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Bonnie Parson of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission w/Betsy Friedberg, National Register Director

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date October, 1996

street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone 617-727-8470

city or town Boston state MA zip code 02125

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Chester (Hampden County), Massachusetts**8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

North Chester Historic District is significant as an excellent example of a late 18th and 19th century rural New England agricultural and mill village. Located on the middle branch of the Westfield River, North Chester developed as a village in the foothills of the Green Mountains because the relatively flat but narrow plain of the river valley was hospitable to farmers, and the river could be used to power the all-important saw and grist mills. The industries and agriculture were eventually eclipsed in importance by another Chester village, Chester Factory Village (NR 1989), when the railroad was routed through the latter. The village of North Chester was sustained as a farm and summer home community into the 20th century.

The district's significant buildings range in date from ca. 1770 (Photo No. 4) through the first decade of the 1900s and are representative of the continued use of a few building forms and styles in an isolated, economically modest setting. The district meets Criteria A, and C and has local significance.

Plantation Period (1620-1675)

According to the Massachusetts Historical Commission *Reconnaissance Survey Report* for the town of Chester in the Connecticut Valley Study Area, evidence of Native Americans in the Berkshire foothills is very limited. No sites have been identified from Prehistoric, Contact, or Plantation Periods, and this is attributed to the fact that the area was probably used by small numbers of Native Americans for short-term hunting and fishing only. The groups identified with the area are the Connecticut River Valley Woronoaks and Nonotucks. Mohicans from the Hudson River Valley also may have come this far in their seasonal trips.

Native trails followed the Westfield River valleys, where extensive beaver trapping took place for trade with the English in Springfield in the late 1630s. The hunting, fishing, and trapping activities probably extended into the Colonial Period as well.

Colonial Period (1675-1775)

The political history of North Chester began when the Colony of Massachusetts, which was short on cash, laid out ten western townships in 1762 for sale at public auction. Township #9 consisted of 32,200 acres (of which about 5,700 acres had already been given out in grants) and included the present-day Chester, Huntington, part of Montgomery, and Middlefield. William Williams of Hatfield bought the land for 1,500 pounds sterling, but turned around immediately and sold it. The second owners, four Proprietors who were essentially real estate speculators, bought the township and divided it into sections for each to sell. The area that was eventually to become Chester was assigned to John Chandler. Even before the sale, and as early as 1760, however, nineteen families had settled in Township #9. As they had taken some of the better land, perhaps illegally, not all of them were

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allowed to take part in the subsequent division and sale, and so moved away. First, however, the Proprietors had to have the Township surveyed in 1762, and then they laid out the first land division amounting to 102 lots of 108 acres apiece. Unlike settlements laid out in the 17th century in the Connecticut River Valley, Hadley and Hatfield, for instance, the plan did not follow the English practice of a linear arrangement of long, narrow houselots along a main thoroughfare, and separate common fields. Rather, each owner got one complete parcel of 108 acres, and the parcels were irregular, contiguous, and laid out like a crazy quilt. East River Road was provided for in the North Chester plan, but each land owner was given an additional two acres to accommodate future roads among the adjacent parcels. Forty-seven men found this a suitable arrangement and bought land in this first distribution. Then enough of them settled and built homes, so that in 1765 the Proprietors incorporated the township as Murrayfield.

Despite the sound start, it seems that the Proprietors were unhappy about their investment. In 1763 they petitioned the government to receive compensation for the quality of the land in Township #9, which they declared was uneven and mountainous and divided by three rivers that they claimed would require them to build bridges and roads to make good on their investment. From a later petition by the settlers, it is apparent that although the Proprietors were given additional land in Hampshire County to offset their disappointment, they constructed neither bridges nor roads to improve Murrayfield. Settlement continued, nevertheless, and in 1766 there were sixty-eight taxpayers in Murrayfield.

In the area that was to become North Chester, the absence of good roads and bridges may have made settlement relatively more difficult but the fertile alluvial land made it attractive for farming. In 1763 many of the lots in North Chester were sold with John Smith, Nathan Mann, and Samuel Elder among the first owners. Town real estate valuation lists show the arrival of others: Thomas Elder came in 1769; John Elder in 1770.

Certainly the Elders are among the first settlers to North Chester. Thomas Elder was one of the first to build a house (now gone), perhaps prior to his marriage to Margaret Moor in 1772. The house was about sixty feet west of the current **Elcopo Ledges House** (MHC # B35, North Chester Road, 1837)(Photo No. 6). The Elders continued to farm the land for several generations, and were responsible for building a number of the houses that made up the village core.

The 1768 Real Estate List indicates that farming was actively going on in North Chester at the time, with Timothy Smith at the top of the list having a horse, an ox, a few cows and pigs, twelve sheep, and real estate worth 26 pounds sterling. Abner Smith had no sheep but several cows, horses, oxen, swine, and property worth 16 pounds. John Smith with a few more pigs and property worth 20 pounds was next, and Samuel Elder had the fewest livestock but real estate valued at 34 pounds sterling.

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Shortly after this evaluation, East River Road was laid out by the Selectmen and was accepted by the town at the annual meeting of 1769. The road began at Worthington and was described as having gone down the left bank of the river past Wait's Mill, and Timothy Smith's property. This description is important both for dating the road and mentioning the existence of a mill in North Chester.

Another early settler was Sylvester Bemis, who came from Lancaster, Massachusetts, to farm and also was the first of several generations of North Chester farmers. Bemis is said to have hiked out from Lancaster, cleared land, planted, and built a house (now gone) before returning to Lancaster for the winter. He had a tract on the east side of the river. Beginning halfway up what is now known as Bemis Hill, and including the location for the North Chester Cemetery (MHC #800), it ran for about a half mile up and down the river with a large meadow across the hilltop, and here he grew wheat and hay and raised cattle. Accounts from the period indicate that farmers from the area, including Bemis and Samuel Bell, another early settler, were fattening cattle during this period, taking them to Boston or Hartford once a year together with dairy products and surplus crops for sale.

To go to church, the not-very-numerous North Chester residents traveled to Chester Center (NR 1988) to a meetinghouse framed up in 1766 but not fully completed until 1773. The unfinished meetinghouse was also the site of the first town meeting, held in 1766.

Schooling was not far behind in town affairs, as it was mandated for the Bay Colony in 1769. The strapped townspeople, however, voted not to raise money for schools that year. They did vote to do so the following year, and included funds to teach girls in summer sessions. Traditionally, school was held in private homes during this period, so the children of North Chester were taught by their neighbors for at least the next ten years. In 1780, the town voted not to build schoolhouses, although each school district was given leeway to build its own.

Although population was small, it was a hardship for people in the eastern part of Murrayfield to get to civic affairs, church, and town meetings in the western half at Chester Center; so in 1773, the eastern part of town was set off and called Norwich. Other boundaries were set during this period as well. The western boundary at Becket was laid out in 1765, and the northern boundary with Worthington was set in 1768.

By the end of the Colonial Period, the village had been established to include a number of farmsteads raising cows, sheep and pigs, and Wait's essential mill. Remaining from the period are East River Road and the Cushman Tavern (MHC # B32) (Photo No. 4) built by Thomas Elder. Thomas Elder is thought to have constructed the inn at the end of this period, ca.1773, and an attic beam carved with a 1770s mark supports this early date. An early tavern in such an apparently remote locale is explained by the fact that East River Road was used from the 1770s as a main route between Pittsfield and Springfield following the Middle Branch of the Westfield River. It was a generally level route, consequently easier on the horse teams. Although it was subject to flooding when river levels rose, it

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Chester (Hampden County), Massachusetts

did not wash out as did so many on the hillsides, so was more reliable for travel and carried enough travelers to support an inn.

Federal Period (1775-1830)

Any grievances held by the Murrayfield settlers against the Proprietors for failing to build adequate roads and bridges were redressed during the Revolutionary War, when three of the four Proprietors had their property confiscated for being Loyalist sympathizers. Residents further supported the war by formally voting for independence and then raising money for thousands of pounds of beef, clothing for soldiers, and relief for soldiers' families. Abner Smith from North Chester collected taxes for the war. Townspeople continued to meet their obligations between 1776 and 1782, but then resources of the relatively new community were exhausted. Among the soldiers who took part in the Revolutionary War was Sylvester Bemis, who was eventually buried in the North Chester cemetery in 1831. Some of the Chester men went to Cambridge to fight. John Elder was in Colonel David Brewster's Regiment of the 9th Continental Army in 1775. Thomas Elder and Thomas Smith enlisted for a short time, and Abner Smith enlisted for twenty-eight days. Finally, six men were hired to serve for the town in 1781. As a measure of the remoteness of the town at the time, in 1781 it was voted to offer a twelve-shilling bounty on wolves.

In addition to the town's involvement in the political changes of independence, several changes to local political boundaries additionally took place during this period. First, in 1783, Murrayfield changed its name to Chester to avoid confusion with a similarly named town in the county. Middlefield separated from Chester in the same year, 1783; then, in 1799, a northeast corner of Chester was annexed by Worthington. Only one more loss of territory was to occur, the annexation of a southeast corner by Norwich in 1853.

John Stevens has been cited by one local historian as an original settler of North Chester, but town and family records indicate that Stevens and his wife Catherine did not arrive in Chester from Brookfield until 1797, more than thirty years after the first arrivals. Stevens' sawmill was on the west bank of the river at the North Chester bridge, a site that was to be used by subsequent mills through the 19th century. He later added a section for a gristmill. In recognition of the importance of the solitary mill, the village was called Stevens Mill.

The 1794 map of Chester is the earliest on record and shows a mill north of the bridge, which we know to have been the location for Stevens' saw and gristmill; and a fulling mill south of the bridge on the east side of the river. A third mill, another sawmill, was further north on the east bank of the river at the border with Worthington. The 1794 map confirms a bridge was in place, below the Stevens mill and in its present location, and River Road ran north from Littleville to Worthington, although it was not improved as a highway until 1811. There is no indication that a dam had as yet been constructed.

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The Stevens were an enterprising family. They bought and sold land and expanded their mill capacity at the river with a third addition to the sawmill, this time to extract linseed oil. Chester historian Samuel Quigley noted that flax was grown to such an extent in Chester and Worthington that it was said that much of the land in the two towns had been "flaxed to death." The Stevenses also invented and began manufacturing wooden window shades at a site on the west side of the river immediately below the bridge. At some time in the first two decades of the 1800s, the Stevenses sold their mills to business associates Thomas and Charles Plunkett. The Plunkett brothers converted the saw and fulling mills to two cotton mills, and continued the wooden shade business. They were so successful in their endeavors that they managed to amass \$50,000 in capital in the 1820s and the name of Stevens Mill shifted to Plunkettville, presumably to reflect their activity and prominence. It was at this time that a dam was erected above the two mills to regulate the water flow and to keep the mills in operation during dryer months. During this period, 1820 to 1830, the Stevens House was built in the Greek Revival style (Photo No. 7). It was here that the last post office in town was kept in the 1930s.

In 1804, one of Thomas and Margaret Elder's seven children, James, who was born in 1780, took over ownership of the Elder farm. The bond of agreement drawn up for this transfer of ownership manages to tell us quite a bit about the farming practices in Plunkettville, as well as the hard bargain willed by Thomas and his second wife Polly. James was in his twenties at the time and had been operating the farm for a period of time preceding the contract. In the bond he promised to supply Thomas and Polly's needs which were itemized in detail. Food to be provided annually included 100 lbs. of beef, 100 lbs. of pork, 4 barrels of cider, 8 bushels of rye, 10 bushels of Indian corn, 4 bushels of wheat, one of pears, five bushels of winter apples, 5 bushels of potatoes, 3 bushels of turnips, 20 heads of winter cabbage, half a bushel of parsnips, 20 lbs. of ham, 10 lbs. of hog's lard, 8 lbs. of tallow and 1 1/2 bushels of salt. Sheep and cows were to be maintained for the parents, firewood to be delivered and stacked, housing provided, including a new house if they required it, and shoes made for their feet. To support all this husbandry, the farm had a horse barn, a cow barn, corncrib, pigpen, icehouse, soaphouse, cider mill, and sugarhouse. In addition to the crops named in the bond of agreement, the Elders grew flax in the wetland south of the schoolhouse.

The inn built by Elder came to be known as Parmenter's Tavern in 1837 according to the History of Middlefield, later as the Cushman Tavern as ownership changed again in 1880. Local tradition holds that George Washington stopped at the inn on a trip between Albany and Springfield. Notwithstanding this visit, the inn was a significant social and institutional center into the 20th century, being used at various times, as will be noted, for summer boarders, a dance hall, and post office. (Photo No. 4).

James Elder built a second house south of the inn facing North Chester Road for his son, also a James Elder, at the time of the son's marriage in the 1820s. An early photograph shows it to have been a four-bay, 1 1/2-story cape-style house, which eventually fell down from lack of maintenance. In its place was built in the 1960s the garage that served for a time as a firehouse, but is now vacant.

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Around 1800, a cemetery was begun on Bemis Hill for North Chester families, with members of the Hutchins, Bemis, Smith and Elder families buried here, among others. About the same time that the cemetery was being established by a few families in the village, there was a religious dispute growing in Chester. North Chester residents had attended church meetings in Chester Center from 1766, but in 1811 a dispute among the members led to a Baptist church being formed by a group of Chester Center and North Chester families, among whom were Jonas Parmenter, James Elder, Wm. Toogood, and Thomas Moore from North Chester. At first, Baptist meetings were held in members' houses, but in 1830 a chapel was built in Chester Center at the corner of Elder Road and Skyline Trail.

Early Industrial Period (1830-1870)

The Early Industrial Period was the manufacturing heyday of North Chester. While farming continued as the mainstay of most families, the river continued to power the growing mills, and North Chester added a general store and a number of new houses. Thomas and Charles Plunkett retired from their mills in 1836. Thomas sold half of his interest in the cotton business to John J. Cook and sold the wooden window blind business to Seldon Cone. Thomas Plunkett was a well-respected person. He continued to run a general store for a number of years and was sent as a Representative to the State Legislature.

John Cook operated the mills making cotton thread, some linen, and brown sheeting for the next twenty-four years. The History of Western Massachusetts reported in 1855 that Cook's mills used 80,000 lbs. of cotton, 100 cords of wood, 2,000 lbs. of starch, and 250 gallons of oil each year. From these raw materials, which cost \$10,000, the mills employed forty people to produce 350,000 yards of fabric valued at \$27,800. He eventually bought Seldon Cone's window shade business, which was reported in 1839 to earn \$15,000 annually. To his holdings, he added the Stevens house and land on the east side of the river from the bridge to the dam. Cook lived in a house at the bridge crossroads with East River Road and added a general store to the south side of the house. The building was replaced by a contemporary home on North Chester Road after it burned in 1966.

The third manufacturing business to be established in North Chester was a bedstead factory and dam upstream of the Cook cotton mills. Noted on a map of 1855 as a sawmill and linseed mill, it was owned by Elbridge Howe, who manufactured hardwood bedsteads at the site for several decades and ran a sawmill as well. The 1870 atlas indicates the property was in the Howe estate. The New England Business Directory of 1860 lists Howard Cooley in North Chester as a tanner and currier, but the location of his operations is not known.

Five years after John Cook took over the Stevens' mills and consolidated his property holdings, the railroad came to Chester Factory Village. From its arrival in 1841 can be dated the slow decline of manufacturing in North Chester. Farmers as well as manufacturers now had to transport their goods and supplies by wagon seven miles to the railroad to take advantage of its service and remain

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competitive. The disadvantage may not have been immediately apparent, but over the next few decades the time and expense of this arrangement took its toll. Chester Factory Village grew and thrived, while North Chester moved at a much slower pace. From the Parmenters Tavern a stagecoach traveled daily with the mail to Huntington, then carried produce and passengers to the train to be shipped off from Chester Factory Village, and returned with passengers and goods to North Chester.

Meanwhile, James Elder built a third Elder house, this for himself and his wife Betsy, in 1831 just east of the original farmstead. Six years later it burned, but they rebuilt it on the same site. That reconstruction is the Elcopo Ledges house (MHC # B35, 1837), and James lived there until his death in 1860.

Elbridge Howe also built a house on East River Road (MHC # B37, ca. 1860) (Photo No. 2) south of his factory. The Little House just south of the Inn on East River Road also dates from this period (MHC # B31, ca. 1837-1846) (Photo No. 4). The North Chester blacksmith, a man named Warren Goodrich, lived at the house from 1861, but it is thought to have been constructed earlier due to mention of a house in a land sale from James Elder in 1846. It is thought that this house may have been the one called for in the 1804 bond between Thomas and James Elder, in which James was to build a house for Polly if Thomas died before she did. Deacon Thomas Elder died in 1839. The Post Office was in this house for a few years in the 1920s.

In 1859 John Cook sold all his holdings, known as the North Chester Water Power Company, to Amos A. Taylor for \$15,000. Taylor financed the purchase with a Chelsea businessman Herman Powers, but the onset of the Civil War interrupted the supply of cotton to the north and Taylor was unable to sustain the mills and make mortgage payments. He lost the property to Powers in 1861. Powers at first leased the house, store, and mills to a business partnership named Dobbs and Hunt. Hardly more successful than Taylor, Dobbs and Hunt gave up their lease in 1865, but not before their negligence led to the upper mill burning down. Once again in full possession of the property, Herman Powers moved with his wife and their family to North Chester. They lived in the house (which burned in 1966), ran the general store attached to it and the lower mill, and became an important part of village history. Powers was Postmaster with one brief interruption until his death in 1882. He was also Justice of the Peace in North Chester during most of the seventeen years he spent in the village. He and Caroline had 10 children. His sons Fred and Arthur were mail carriers. Fred and another son George fought in the Civil War as did their neighbor Captain Joshua Bemis.

At this time there were over 250 people in the village, which warranted its own post office, the first of which was established in 1839, James Elder the first postmaster. The larger population also meant more school children. In 1799 the town's school districts were each provided with a schoolhouse. North Chester had not been large enough then to merit a schoolhouse, so students traveled to Chester Center until the village got a school building of its own ca. 1850 (MHC # B33) (Photo No. 6). The one-room schoolhouse had classes for grades 1-8 and held as many as thirty children at a time under

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Chester (Hampden County), Massachusetts**

the supervision of one teacher. Not all of North Chester's institutions flourished, however. The Baptist Church, which had thirty-three members in 1855, was discontinued in 1865, and its members rejoined the Chester Center Congregational church or the Huntington Baptist church. The chapel was moved down to North Chester Road and used for hay storage until it fell apart in 1909.

Late Industrial Period (1870-1915)

By the 1870s, North Chester's mill era was at an end. The map of 1870 shows the only remaining mills to be a sawmill between North Chester and Dayville on the south, and the Elder family's cider mill. Howe's bedstead factory was no longer in operation, and both the cotton mill and wooden window shade mills were gone, the site of the latter completely lost when the road was widened. The Late Industrial Period for North Chester, ironically, was more agricultural than industrial. During this period the iron Howe truss bridge was put in place, where it remains today among the few remaining examples in Massachusetts of this type of bridge (Photo No. 5).

The Cones were the second family to live in the James Elder house and like many of his neighbors, Amos Cone combined farming with other work, in this case as a stone mason. He laid stone walls for others and supervised construction of bridge abutments. The stone walls on his property are a good example of his work (Photo No. 1), as are the house's foundations, which he rebuilt with a space for vegetable storage within a section of double wall construction. Cone, a Chester Selectman in 1872, was a well-known local handyman who made wooden waterpipes, called pump logs, for underground water lines, but his most unusual accomplishment was "tomb in the woods" for a North Chester resident, Hiram Smith. After a childhood fright, Smith wanted to be interred in a ledge hollowed out by Cone as a tomb, rather than being buried underground. His sister's wishes in this regard were not recorded, but both were indeed interred there. Diversified farmers, the Cones also made honey, cider, vinegar and maple sugar, cheese, and soap.

Emerson Cushman bought Parmenter's Tavern in 1880. It served as the North Chester Post Office from 1888 to 1925, with Chloe and Emerson Cushman serving as Postmasters, and once again in the 1930s. It was also the center for much of North Chester's entertainment, as there was a dance hall on the second floor where square dances and parties were held for many years.

The people of North Chester went to considerable lengths to get to church services on Sundays and to have Sunday School for their children. Herman Powers and his wife Caroline organized a Sunday school in the North Chester schoolhouse, for instance, populating it in large part with their own ten children. Several families in town often drove wagons to the Baptist services in Huntington, acting as a stagecoach by picking up other families along the way. Their arrangements were made easier in 1908 when Rev. Edward Seymour became pastor of the Chester Hill church and also came to the North Chester schoolhouse to preach. In 1909, the people of North Chester decided to act on their wish for a chapel closer to home. Over a three-day period, they worked together under the direction

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of George Stanton to erect a new chapel (MHC # B34) on land donated by Harriet Cone with lumber cut from members' lots and materials bought with cash contributions. A nondenominational chapel, it held services with Rev. Seymour and other traveling ministers on an irregular basis, and is used only in the summers now.

At the school nearby, the first trained teacher Dora Ledbetter was hired in 1898.

Early Modern Period (1915-1940)

North Chester became a community of both year-round and summer residents during the Early Modern Period. With automobiles making travel much more convenient, people followed Route 20 into the Berkshires and found the southern hilltowns to be cool destinations. It is from this period that several new cottages were built in the area and older houses were adapted for summer use. For the span of a few years, the Powers House (now gone) became a clubhouse for the thirteen men who made up the Worcester County North Chester Club and drove up for meetings and recreation in their Model A Fords.

Modern Period (since 1940)

In the 1950s, the Littleville dam was constructed to provide a flood control reservoir on the Middle Branch of the Westfield River and also to act as a reservoir for drinking water for Springfield. The village of Littleville, which was just south of North Chester on East River Road, was eliminated, and roads that connected North Chester directly to Huntington and Route 20 were closed. This proved to make North Chester much less accessible, and fewer summer residents came. Other year-round families moved away. Active farming has by and large stopped, and some of the fields have filled in with woodland, leaving fieldstone walls and granite foundations beside the river as physical vestiges of the district's agricultural and industrial past.

Archaeological Significance

Since patterns of prehistoric settlement in Chester are poorly documented, any surviving sites would be significant. Prehistoric sites in this area can be significant by contributing to our knowledge of prehistoric settlement and subsistence in the Berkshire uplands of Western Massachusetts in general and specifically along the Westfield River tributaries. Prehistoric sites in this area may contain information which indicates the extent to which this area was exploited by Mohican groups and their predecessors from the New York locale or from Woronoaks and Nonotucks and their forbearers in the Connecticut River Valley. This information can be used to test the extent to which river basin boundaries were analogous with Native socio-political boundaries at different points in prehistory and the Contact Period.

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Historic archaeological resource identified above have the potential to provide detailed information on the changing social, cultural and economic characteristics which typified a rural New England agricultural and mill village which evolved in the 18th and 19th centuries in a river valley in the foothills of the Green Mountains of western Massachusetts. Archaeological resources combined with documentary sources can help trace the evolution of the village as it incorporated industry with agriculture early in its development then ironically returned to a largely agricultural base during the Late Industrial Period as railroad facilities were routed to other areas of the town. Archaeological survey and testing can document the locations, land use history and integrity of the mill sites which were responsible for industrial growth in the village. These mills are no longer extant but survive as archaeological sites with visible above ground remains. Archaeological testing can identify the different periods of use at the mill sites and to what extent latter mills either incorporated earlier mills into their design or, introduced new construction. Structural remains from the mills combined with the analysis of occupational related features can provide information pertaining to working conditions at the mills and details of the technologies used at the mills and manufactured products. Mill sites along East River Road can contribute information on the operations of gristmills, sawmills, cotton mills, linseed extraction and tanneries. The two historic dams in this area can also provide data on the evolution of water power technologies in the village and how this valuable resource was allocated between the various mills in the village. Extant residential homes and residential sites in the village can also provide valuable information on the lives of village inhabitants and, in some instances commercial enterprises which were operated from residences structural remains at house sites from the districts early settlers including the Thomas Elder House, the Sylvester Bemis house and later the James Elder House can help reconstruct the layout of the village during its early settlement as well as provide detail of construction for early homes in the village. Other house sites including the John Cook house can provide detail of residences which also served as commercial enterprises in this instance a general store. Occupational related features related to extant homes and archaeological sites can also provide valuable information pertaining to general lifeways of inhabitants and how this may have varied within the village economic and social structure. This type of analysis can be especially important in tracing the specifics and quality of village life as it evolved from agriculture to an agricultural and mill village. Archaeological evidence may also be present indicating the extent to which these patterns changed as industry and agriculture were eclipsed in importance by Chester Factory Village when the railroad was run through the latter. The decline in industry returned the North Chester Village to an economy once again dominated by mostly agriculture. Evidence of these important events and changes in the village economy may survive in the archaeological record. Archaeological survivals from outbuilding in the village can also provide important information relating to the layout of individual residences, farms and industries. Only two contributing outbuildings survive in the district indicating this structural type as an important potential resource in the village. Unmarked graves in the village cemetery can also be a valuable resource by providing information on cemetery layout and post-mortem treatment of the dead, especially paupers.

(end of Section 8)

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(end of Section 9)

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Chester (Hampden County), Massachusetts

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	18	670500	4688440
B	18	670950	4688090
C	18	670900	4687470
D	18	670420	4687300
E	18	670020	4687670
F	18	669820	4688200

(end)

Boundary Description

The boundaries of the North Chester Historic District are outlined on the Town of Chester Accessor's Maps #s 402 and 405.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of this district were drawn to encompass the concentration of historic properties associated with North Chester aligned in a linear fashion along East River Road and the Westfield River. To that end, the north boundary was drawn at the north lot line of the historic Howe House; the south boundary was drawn at the south lot line of the historic Elder House, the North Chester Chapel and the Smith House after crossing the Westfield River. The east and west boundaries were drawn to follow the east and west lot lines of the properties along East River Road and the Westfield River, with the exception of the North Chester cemetery where the boundary was extended to include this burial ground historically related to the village.

(end of Section 10)

North Chester Historic District
North Chester (Hampden County), Massachusetts
District Data Sheet

<u>Map#</u>	<u>Inv.#</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Style</u>	<u>Resource</u>	<u>C/NC</u>
405-32	B31	East River Road	Little House	c.1830-1846	Federal	B	C
405-32	B32	East River Road	Cushman Tavern	c.1773	Federal	B	C
402-27	B37	East River Road	Howe House	c.1860	Gothic Revival	B	C
402-27		East River Road	barn with silo	c.1860	utilitarian	B	C
402-27		East River Road	shed	c.1980	utilitarian	B	NC
402-4, 5, 6, 27.01, 28		East River Road & Smith Road	field/woodland			Si	C
402-7		430 East River Road	house	c.1980	Neo-colonial	B	NC
402-7		430 East River Road	barn	c.1980	utilitarian	B	NC
402-27	D	East River Road	Howe Mill Site	19th c.		Si	C
405-380's		East River Road	Stevens Mill Site	18-19th c.		Si	C
405-250's		East River Road	shutter mill site	19th c.		Si	C
405-20		130 North Chester Rd.	house	c.1966	Swiss Chalet	B	NC
405-33		North Chester Road	municipal garage	c.1960	utilitarian	B	NC
405-18		North Chester Road	stone walls	c.1910	dry laid	St	C
405-18	B35	North Chester Road	Elcopo Ledges a.k.a. James Elder House	1837	Federal	B	C
405-18		North Chester Road	barn	1900-94	utilitarian	B	NC
405-34	B34	North Chester Road	Chapel	1909	Colonial Revival	B	C
405-19	B33	128 North Chester Rd.	Schoolhouse	c.1850	Federal	B	C
405	B44	Smith Road	bridge	1887	truss	St	C
405-21	B36	Smith Road	John Stevens House	1820-1830	Greek Revival	B	C
405-21		Smith Road	barn	c.1880	utilitarian	B	C
402-38	B800	Smith Road	cemetery	c.1800		Si	C

Contributing Non-contributing

Building	9	6
Site	5	0
Structure	2	0
Object	0	0
Total	16	6

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: North Chester Historic District

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Hampshire

DATE RECEIVED: 11/05/96 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 11/19/96
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/05/96 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/20/96
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 96001465

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 12-6-96 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the
National Register

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



James Elder House - Stone walls
North Chester Historic District
Hampshire Co, Massachusetts

Bonnie Parsons

6/94

PVPC

Southwest View

Photograph No. 1 of 7



Elbridge Howe House
East River Road
North Chester Historic District

Hampshire, Massachusetts

Bonnie Parsons

6/94

PVPC

View Northeast

Photograph No. 2 M7



Cook Cotton Mill Foundation
East River Road + Westfield River
North Chester Historic District
Hampshire, Massachusetts

Bonnie Parsons

7/94

PVPC

View west

Photograph No. 3017



Cushman Tavern and Little House
East River Road
North Chester Historic District
Hampshire Co, Massachusetts

Bonnie Parsons

7/94

View South

Photograph No. 4 of 7



Hawc Truss Bridge

Smith Road

North Chester Historic District

Hamphshire^{Co.} Massachusetts

Bonnie Parsons

7/94

v.-w east

Photograph no 5 17



School House & James Elder House
North Chester Road
South Chester Historic District
Hampshire Co, Massachusetts
Bonnie Parsons

7/94

View South west

Photograph No. 6.07



Smith House (Stevens)
Smith Road
North Chester Historic District
Hampshire Co, Massachusetts
Gregory Farmer
1990
View East
Photograph No. 7 of 7



Chester MASSACHUSETTS

1:25 000-scale metric topographic map

7.5 X 15 MINUTE QUADRANGLE SHOWING

- Contours and elevations in meters
- Highways, roads and other manmade structures
- Water features
- Woodland areas
- Geographic names

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

1987

Produced by the United States Geological Survey in cooperation with Massachusetts Department of Public Works

Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Commonwealth of Massachusetts agencies

Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1980. Field checked 1981. Map edited 1987. Supersedes Chester and Westhampton 1:25,000-scale maps dated 1972.

Projection and 1000-meter grid, zone 18 Universal Transverse Mercator

10,000-foot grid ticks based on Massachusetts coordinate system, mainland zone, 1927 North American Datum

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983, move the projection lines 5 meters south and 37 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map

CONTOUR INTERVAL 6 METERS
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
CONTROL ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER
OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST METER

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

CONVERSION TABLE		DECLINATION DIAGRAM		ADJOINING MAPS		
Meters	Feet	1987	1990	1	2	3
1	3.2808	11° 11' 15"	11° 11' 15"	1	2	3
2	6.5617	11° 11' 15"	11° 11' 15"	4	5	
3	9.8425	11° 11' 15"	11° 11' 15"			
4	13.1234	11° 11' 15"	11° 11' 15"			
5	16.4042	11° 11' 15"	11° 11' 15"			
6	19.6850	11° 11' 15"	11° 11' 15"			
7	22.9659	11° 11' 15"	11° 11' 15"			
8	26.2467	11° 11' 15"	11° 11' 15"			
9	29.5275	11° 11' 15"	11° 11' 15"			
10	32.8084	11° 11' 15"	11° 11' 15"			

To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808
To convert feet to meters multiply by 0.3048

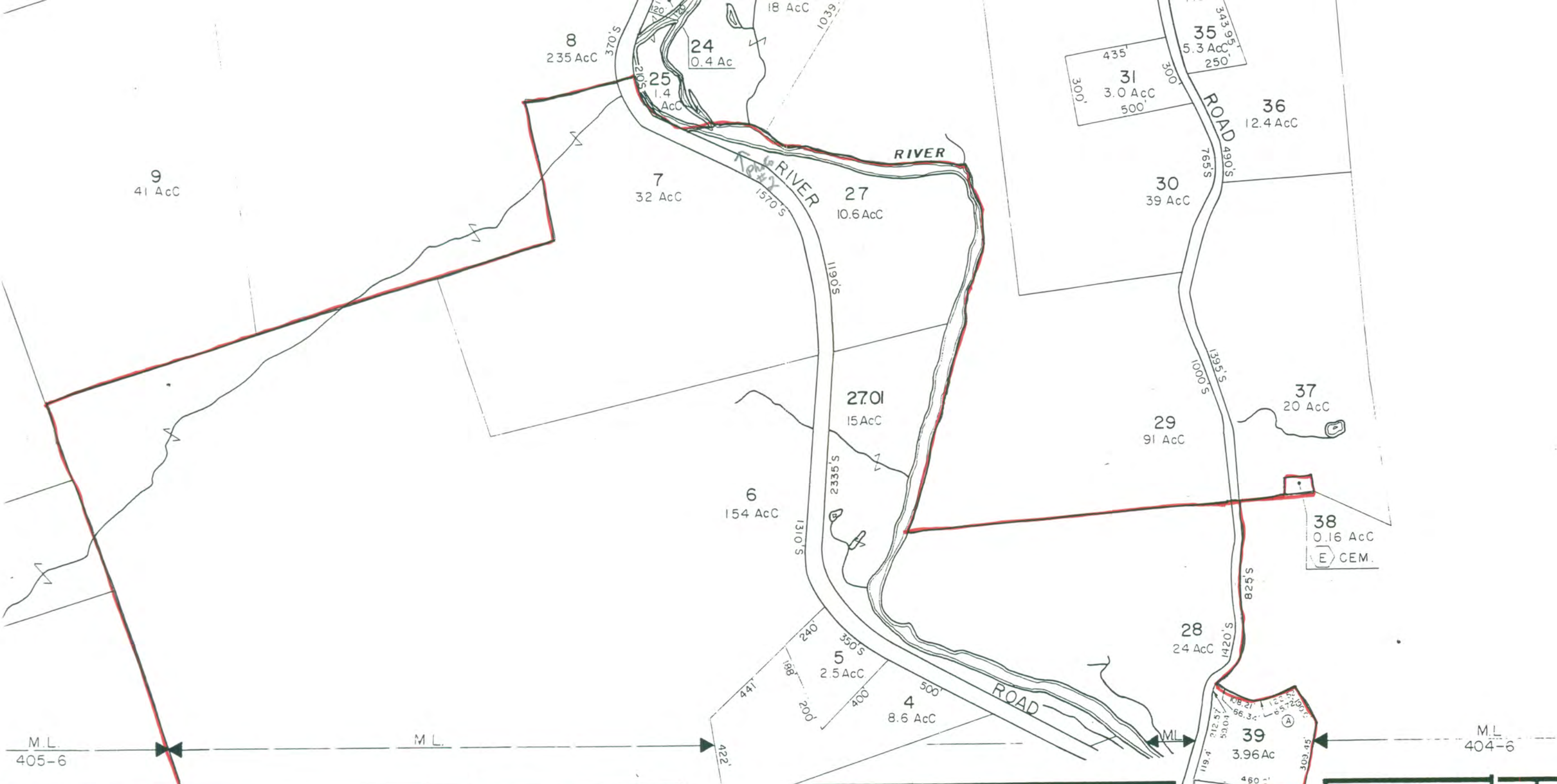
ITM grid convergence (ITM) at center of map
Diagram is approximate

1	Pittsfield East
2	Chester
3	Westhampton
4	East Lee
5	Westhampton
6	Oris
7	Blanford
8	Springfield North

FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092

Topographic Map Symbols

- Primary highway, hard surface
- Secondary highway, hard surface
- Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
- Unimproved road, trail
- Railroad: standard gage; narrow gage
- Bridge: drawbridge
- Footbridge; overpass; underpass
- Built-up area: only selected landmark buildings shown
- House; barn; church; school; large structure
- Boundary:
 - National, with monument
 - State
 - County, parish
 - Civil township, precinct, district
 - Incorporated city, village, town
 - National or State reservation, small park
 - Land grant with monument; broad section corner
 - U. S. public-lands survey: range, township, section
 - Range, township, section line: location approximate
- Fence or field line
- Power transmission line, located tower
- Dam; dam with lock
- Cemetery; grave
- Campground; picnic area; U. S. location monument
- Well; water well; spring
- Mine shaft; prospect; adit; or cave
- Control: horizontal station; vertical station; spot elevation
- Contours: index; intermediate; supplementary; depression
- Distorted surface: strip mine, lava, sand
- Bathymetric contours: index; intermediate
- Parrenial lake and stream; intermittent lake and stream
- Rapids, large and small; falls, large and small
- Swamp; marsh
- Salinized marsh; land subject to controlled inundation
- Woodland; scattered tree
- Scrub; mangrove
- Orchard; vineyard



LEGEND

AcC
Ac

SUBDIVISION LOT NO. ②

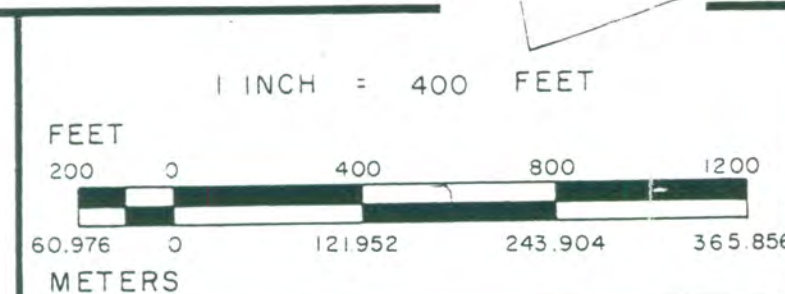
MATCH LINE ← M.L. →

RIGHT OF WAY R/W

RECORD DIMENSION 100'

SCALED DIMENSION 100' S

WETLANDS



REVISED TO: **January 1, 1987**

ASSESSORS MAP

CHESTER

MASSACHUSETTS

MAP NO. **402**

AM

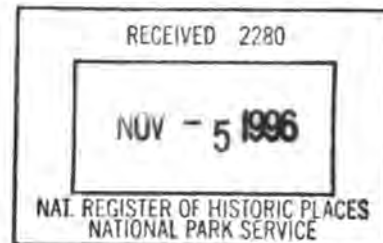
North Chester Historic District
Chester (Hampton County), Massachusetts
Map 10/2



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

28 October 1996

Carol Shull
Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
P. O. Box 37127
Washington, D. C. 20013-7127



Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

North Chester Historic District , Chester (Hampden County), Massachusetts, 01011

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. Owners were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30-75 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betsy Friedberg".

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Fay Piergiovanni, Chairperson, Chester Historical Commission
John Baldasaro, Chairperson, Board of Selectmen
Bonnie Parsons, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
Gale Andrade, Director, Hamilton Memorial Library



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

13 November 1996

Carol Shull
Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
P. O. Box 37127
Washington, D. C. 20013-7127



Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed, please find the supporting documentation for the following nomination which was inadvertently omitted from the package sent to you on October 28, 1996. The nomination is:

North Chester Historic District, Chester (Hampden County), Massachusetts, 01011

I apologize for any inconvenience this omission may have caused. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betsy Friedberg".

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure