

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Cheney Brothers Historic District

AND/OR COMMON

Cheney Brothers Historic District

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Between Hartford Road and Laurel,
Spruce, and Campfield Streets

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION 1
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN

Manchester

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

Connecticut

CODE

09

COUNTY

Hartford

CODE

003

3 CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | PRESENT USE |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT | <input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) | <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE | <input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH | <input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SITE | PUBLIC ACQUISITION | ACCESSIBLE | <input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT | <input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED | <input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED | <input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> NO | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: |

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

(See continuation sheet.)

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

__ VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Manchester Tax Assessor's Office

STREET & NUMBER

Manchester Town Hall, Center Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Manchester

Connecticut

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic American Buildings Survey (partially)

DATE

1966

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Washington

D.C.

7 DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION | | CHECK ONE | CHECK ONE |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD | <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED | <input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAIR | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED | | |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Cheney brothers Historic District encompasses approximately 175 acres and includes the 18th-century Cheney Family Homestead, several 19th-century mansions built by the Cheney Brothers and their descendants, some two dozen mill buildings dating from as early as 1886, several schools and churches either built by the Cheneys or situated on land donated by them, and about 210 individual and multifamily mill houses either constructed or purchased by the Cheney Brothers Manufacturing Company between 1850 and 1920 for use by its mill operatives. Collectively these form what Harper's Weekly editor Henry Loomis Nelson described in 1890 as "in many respects . . . the most attractive mill village in the country." Nelson was impressed especially with the community's park-like surroundings; absence of fences, pigsties, chicken coops, and litter; and rows of neat, well-kept workers' residences which represented "every phase of the spirit of rural architecture."¹¹ If today he could return to South Manchester, which is part of the town of Manchester, probably he would be pleased that relatively few physical changes have occurred in the historic district. He might not be pleased, however, that the village is considered by many historians, like Ruth O. M. Anderson, as an excellent example of the "benevolent paternalism" of many 19th and early 20th-century textile mill owners.¹² For while recognizing South Manchester as atypical in beauty and comfort, Nelson applauded the Cheneys as the creators of "not such a model village as a family would erect as a monument to its own benevolence" but "a community of friendly neighbors and good citizens."¹³

According to Buckley, both "welfare capitalism" and "civic responsibility" contributed to the Cheney family's development of South Manchester. Cheney Brothers Manufacturing Company "decided fairly early in the period of expansion after the Civil War," he says, "that it had a deep responsibility to the community and that in fulfilling that responsibility it would create the conditions of small labor turnover and employee

(continued)

¹¹Nelson, "The Cheney's Village at South Manchester, Connecticut," 87.

¹²Ruth O. M. Anderson, From Yankee to American: Connecticut, 1865-1914 (Chester, Connecticut, 1975), 54.

¹³Nelson, "The Cheney's Village at South Manchester, Connecticut," 87.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

| PERIOD | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599 | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS | <input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE | <input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699 | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> ART | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION | | |

SPECIFIC DATES 1838-1954

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Cheney Family &
Cheney Bros. Mfg. Co.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to historian William F. Leggett, author of The Story of Silk, during the 1860's the United States achieved international "supremacy in silk manufacturing," and the Cheney Brothers Manufacturing Company, by making "the cheapest and most serviceable silks . . . on the market," stood as "the leading firm of its kind in America."¹ The Cheney brothers built their first silk mill in 1838, after losing a fortune in a short-lived national mulberry tree boom, and soon became, says Connecticut industrial scholar Ellsworth Grant, "the first [in this country] to master the intricate art of silk weaving." By the end of the 19th century they had established "Cheney silks [as] the best in the world."² En route to this success the Cheney family developed a new kind of power silk spinning machine based on the cotton spinning mule, became the first to import large quantities of raw silk from Japan, perfected the spinning of waste silk from imperfect cocoons, supported development of the highly important Grant reel by one of their employees, and built an entire community, which Harper's Weekly editor Henry Loomis Nelson described in 1890 as "in many respects . . . the most attractive mill village in the country."³

Although atypical in beauty and comfort, the village of South Manchester, part of the town of Manchester, is an excellently preserved example of the paternalism of many 19th- and early 20th-century textile mill owners. The historic district spans about 175 acres and includes the 18th-century Cheney Family Homestead, several 19th-century Cheney Family Mansions, some two dozen Cheney Mill Buildings from 1886 and

(continued)

¹Quoted in Marjorie W. Young, Textile Leaders of the South (Columbia, S.C., 1963), 705.

²Ellsworth Strong Grant, Yankee Dreamers and Doers (Chester, Connecticut, circa 1975), 179, 187.

³Henry Loomis Nelson, "The Cheney's Village at South Manchester, Connecticut," Harper's Weekly, XXXIV (February 1, 1890), 87.

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List, by street, of property owners in the district, showing in order: building or lot number, owner's name, owner's address if other than building or lot noted, and date of construction (when known).

BANK STREET

| | | |
|-------|---|--------|
| 9-11 | Katherine M. Wittke 9 Bank | (1918) |
| 15-17 | Oke E. and Aldie Johansson 15 Bank | (1920) |
| 23-25 | Barney T. Peterman Sr., and Barney T. Peterman Jr. 250 Fern Street | (1920) |
| 29-31 | George and Josephine Hahn, Fannie and Genta Sault, 31 Bank | (1918) |
| 10-12 | K. Craig and Diane H Repoli 10 Bank | (1918) |
| 16-18 | Gordon T. and Irene S. Neddow 246 High St. West. | (1918) |
| 20-22 | Frances G. Fallon 22 Bank | (1918) |
| 26-28 | Elizabeth J. McGeown 49 West | (1918) |
| 30-32 | Ern H. Haberern and Walter H. Szuchy 30 Bank | (1918) |

BEECH STREET

| | | |
|----|--------------------------------------|--------|
| 10 | Patrick and Mary C. Peak 10 Beech | (1878) |
| 14 | Francis E. McGlinchey 14 Beech | (1878) |

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CEDAR STREET

- 69-71 Irma Perlebach
15 Hendee Road
- 89 (v) Ellis Sales Inc.
162 Pine
- 95 Denise Ann Smaglis (1905)
- 107-109 Barney T. Peterman, Sr. & Barney T. Peterman, Jr.
250 Fern Street
- 111 Antoinette T. Camposeo (1885)
- 117-119 C & C Investments (1900)
423 East Center Street
- 126-128 Town of Manchester: Lutz Museum
Contact City Manager: Robert Weiss
- 110 Town of Manchester: West Side Library & (1914)
Rec. Bldg.
Contact City Manager: Robert Weiss
- 94 Town of Manchester: Washington School
& Ath. Field.
- 70-72 David W. and Debra A. Walsh (1901)
72 Cedar

CHESTNUT STREET

- 90 Robert G. and Kathleen L. Dunlop (1883)
- 96-98 Fernand and Marie D. B. Parr (1883)
- 104 Grace H. and Charles Hewitt (1890+)
- 106-108 Irene J. Foisy (1905)
107 Chestnut

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CHESTNUT STREET (continued)

| | | |
|-----|---|--------|
| 114 | Thomas P. and Milla B. Riggio | (1882) |
| 122 | Stella Durdek 19 Elm Tree Road Glastonbury, Ct. | (1882) |
| 91 | Laurel Manor, Inc. | |
| 101 | Beatrice C. McAuliffe | (1895) |
| 105 | Charles T. and Helen G. Johnson | (1905) |
| 113 | Richard D. and Susan A. Scott | (1906) |

COOPER STREET

| | | |
|--------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| 104 | William B. and Elizabeth A. Hagenow | (1892) |
| 112 | Zion Evan. Lutheran Church | (1896) |
| 120-22 | Zion Evan. Lutheran Church | (1893) |
| 130-32 | Fred Carlson | |
| 136 | Zion Evan. Lutheran Church | |
| 138 | Stephen D. and Paula J. Chase | (1952) |
| 140 | Zion Evan. Lutheran Church | |
| 144 | Lennart O. and Mildred N. Cooper | (1950) |
| 152 | Frank F. and Henrietta Ruff | (1949) |
| 158 | Robert H. Bertha J. Farrand | (1918) |
| 162-64 | Herbert A. and Florence Phelon | (1910) |
| 168 | Dennis A. and Patricia A. Catanzano | (1920) |

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COOPER STREET (continued)

174 Eileen G. Rickard (1915)
178-180 Keith R. and Lynn S. Davis
184 Paul A. and Kathleen A. Quey
113-115-
117 Charles N. and Marie Linda Rose
117 Cooper

COOPER HILL STREET

109-111 Alfred Walter Klein (1917)
109 Cooper Hill
113 Jessie Bristow, Jr. (1917)
117-119 Elizabeth and Walter Phillips (1917)
123-25 Leonard J. and Ann C. Delaney (1917)
and Lester C. and Sophie Silver, Jr.
123 Cooper Hill
127-29 Avon F. and Ann F. Melendez (1917)
129 Cooper Hill
133 William R. Dumas, Jr. (1917)
143 Robert H. Lewie (1917)
147-53 Laszlo and Jolanda Szarka (1917)
256 Scott Drive
165-69 Margaret A. and Edward W. Strauss (1927)
Victor J. Johnson
169 Cooper Hill
114 Matthew M. Moriarity, Jr.
301 Center Street

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COOPER HILL STREET (continued)

- 142 Louis Reale and
Carter and Elizabeth R. Shepherd (1922)
- 148-54 Manchester Equities
139 East Center Street
- 164-68 Joseph J. and Helen W. Gravell (1922)
166 Cooper Hill
- 49 Town of Manchester
(Contact City Manager: Robert Weiss)
- 57-59 Thomas A. Mozzer (1880+)
& Denise R. and Patricia A. Mozzer

ELDRIDGE STREET

- 17 1/2 } Edward C. and Laura L. Morano (1920)
19 1/2 } 19 1/2 Eldridge Street
- 23-25 Patricia Holmes (1920)
21 Bigelow
- 25 1/2 Frank, Louis, Mary & Frances Guinipero (1917)
1071 Main Street
- 29-31 Helen V. Campbell (1886)
29 Eldridge
- 33 Josephine M. Diminico (1860+)
(rear) 39 Eldridge Street
- 39 Josephine M. Diminico (1879)
- 45-47 Emma Rivosa (1891)
- 51-53 Vincent L., Diana & Laura A. Belfiore (1879)
141 Pitkin Street
- 55 A&B } Vincent L. Diana & Laura A. Belfiore (1964)
57 A&B } 141 Pitkins Street

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ELDRIDGE STREET (continued)

| | | |
|-------|---|---------|
| 61-63 | Josephine Diminico 39 Eldridge | (1893) |
| 71-73 | William J. & Helen O. Flavell 71 Eldridge | (1879) |
| 77-79 | William J. & Patricia E. Dougela 77 Eldridge | (1919) |
| 83-85 | Lillian B. Begin | (1875) |
| 91 | Joseph Loney Jr. | (1875) |
| 24 | Irving L. Bayer; Helen B. Solomon, & Philip Bayer 219 Parker Street | (1901) |
| 30 | Margherita and Renato N. Nicola | (1865+) |
| 34 | John and Mary Gibson | (1865+) |
| 40 | Gerald F. and Dorothy E. Shannon | (1865+) |
| 44 | Josephine Diminico 39 Eldridge | (1865+) |
| 48 | Rudy R. Dipietro | (1865+) |
| 54 | Joseph Lucien and Marilyn B. Fortin | (1865+) |
| 58 | Joshva and Waltraud I. Leggitt | (1878) |
| 62 | Elizabeth P. Mayer 68 Eldridge | (1865+) |
| 68 | Elizabeth P. Mayer | (1865+) |
| 72 | Anton F. and Carole D. Mayer 273 Charter Oak Street | (1865) |

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ELDRIDGE STREET (continued)

- 78 Guido and Florence Giorgetti (1896)
84 Robert J. and Pauline B. Madden (1896)

ELM STREET

- 60 Northern Star Textile, Corp
Kamber Mgt., Inc.
Contact: Bobrow & Rosen
40 East 69th Street
N.Y., N.Y. 10021
- 63 Northern Star Textile, Corp.
Kamber Mgt., Inc.
Contact: Bobrow & Rosen
40 East 69th Street
N.Y., N.Y. 10021
- 81 (v) Town of Manchester
- 91 KEMSCO
307 Cumberland Road
West Haven, Connecticut 60001
- 96 Kibbe I. Gerstein, Sheal Wenick,
& Samel M. Gruskin, Trustees
56 Huntington Street
New London, Connecticut 60002
(Trustees for Linda T. Wenick & Ellen R. Wenech
and Elaine & Mark Gerstein (minor))
- 110 KBW Storage Co.
(silk vault) 67 Wyllys Street

ELM TERRACE

- 34 Peter and Betty A. Foster (1857)
153 Edgerton Street

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ELM TERRACE (continued)

- 42 Charles E. Rick (1879)
- 2 (v) } Penn Central Company
and related } Six Penn Center Plaza
property } Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
bet. Laurel
and Park Sts. }
- 4 Grayce L. Rau (1902)
- 10 James R. and Jane A. Sostman (1902)
- 14 Leo J. and Anne E. Kwash
- 26 Wm. J. McSweeney

FAIRFIELD STREET

- 14 Gail S. Dunlop (1919)
72 Vernon Street
- 20-24 Elizabeth M. Moriarty (1919)
22 Fairfield
- 30 Stella Maltempo (1919)
160 Cooper Hill Street
- 40 Charles and Edith P. Darghty (1919)
40 Fairfield
- 46-48 Robert I. and Helen A. Wolverton (1919)
554 Taylor
- 54 Frieda M. Kleinschmidt (1919)
- 64 Frank P. Vaccaro (1919)

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FAIRFIELD STREET (continued)

| | | |
|--------------|---|--------|
| 70-72 | Ella B. Cohen 72 Fairfield | (1919) |
| 80-82 | Edith Maxwell 80 Fairfield | (1919) |
| 86 | Yvonne A. Migliore 122 West | (1919) |
| 3 | Edward E. and Emma Newman 371 Hartford Road | |
| 11-13 | E. J. Armstrong 11 Fairfield | (1919) |
| 19-21- 23 | Robert P. Blanchard 21 Fairfield | (1919) |
| 45 | Gene R. Nelson | (1919) |
| 49-55 | David Minicucci 216 Hebron Road. Bolton, Ct. | (1919) |
| 63 | James G. and Alice G. Gagnon | (1919) |
| 69-75 | Mary Iwosa 69 Fairfield | (1919) |
| 85-91 | Alton T. Haddock 125 Pondrane | (1919) |

FOREST STREET

| | | |
|----|------------------------------|--------|
| 22 | Richard M. and Patsy Eller | |
| 30 | Jay R. and Shirley M. Stager | |
| 40 | Laura A. Belfiore | (1904) |

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FOREST STREET (continued)

- | | | |
|---------|---|--------|
| 50 | Bernice B Gryk | (1860) |
| 78 | Vivian F. Fergeson | (1899) |
| 98 | James C. Bayliss Florence M. Bayliss Cecilla Plano | (1902) |
| 110 | Gerald T. and Hope A. Krause | (1901) |
| 120 | Emilija Milda Berzins | |
| 126 (v) | Robert H. and Janet S. Smith Mail to Trustee: Robert J. Smith Estate 1 Constitution Plaza Connecticut Bank and Trust Co. Hartford, Connecticut | |
| 148 | John S. and Alex T. Urbanetti and Hollis A. Willhide c/o Lebro T. Urbanetti 163 Ludlow Road | |
| 171 (v) | KEMSCO 307 Cumberland Road West Hartford, Connecticut | |
| 193 (v) | W. G. McNalley & Sons, Inc. | |

HARTFORD ROAD

- | | | |
|--------|---|--------|
| 21 | Frederick K. and Roberta Setzler | (1860) |
| 79 (v) | Marjorie H. Bryant and Robert H. Smith 131 Hartford Road | |
| 99 | Maureen S. Lynch 99 Hartford Road | (1911) |

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HARTFORD ROAD (continued)

- 131 Robert H. and Janet S. Smith (1851)
- 135 (v) Katherine Cheney Hammond
1145 So. Jameson Lane
Santa Barbara, California
- 139 Katherine Cheney Bell Estate (1910)
c/o CBT Company
Phoenix Branch
803 Main Street
Hartford, Connecticut
- 151 John E. and Norma M. Willard (1905)
- 161 (v) Samuel J. Heyman, Jr., Trustee
Annlar Investors, Inc.)
265 Post Road
Weston, Connecticut
- (Send also to Heyman:
%Prudential Management Co.
P.O. Box 404
Sangatuck Station
Weston, Connecticut
- 177 John B. Bornini and Leon Podgrove
P.O. Box 829
Manchester, Connecticut
- 371 Edward E. and Emma Newman
- 381 Ralph A. and Kathleen M. Wentworth
- 387-391 Donald N. and Karen Jakad
65 Fairfield Drive
South Windsor, Connecticut
- 20 South Methodist Church Trustees
- 48 South Methodist Church Trustees (1870)

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HARTFORD ROAD (continued)

- 106 Manchester Historical Society, Inc. (1785)
%Herbert W. Swanson
233 South Main Street
- 146 Alice C. Jarvis (1910)
26 Alexander Street
- 130 Multi-Circuits, Inc. (1890+)
130 Hartford Road

HIGH STREET

- 19 Magaret Fogarty (1879)
- 27 Mary D. Hauelsen (1878)
- 39 Margaret E. Brogan (1883)
- 45 John V. and Mary T. Leonowicz (1888)
- 53 Leona M. Kearns (1889)
- 59 Harold R. and M. Loretta Griffin (1889)
- 65 Peter N. and Rhoda L. Owren (1889)
- 73 Eli B. and Pauline E. Tambling, Jr. (1889)
- 81 Henry L. and Ruth C. Gaurder (1889)
- 91 Rita J. Borgeson (1889)
- 97 Mabel F. and Muriel D. Tomlinson
- 103-105 Hazel G. Barcomb (1889)
103 High Street
- 109 Eleanor R. Palmer (1893)

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HIGH STREET (continued)

| | | |
|-----|---|--------|
| 121 | Harry L. and Lois Ann Beckwith | (1876) |
| 127 | Mary M. Dupont | (1881) |
| 14 | Peter and Betty A. Foster | |
| 16 | Frank S. Findlay | |
| 30 | John P. and Regina D. Evanski | (1879) |
| 36 | Holland and Marino Lucy Belanger | (1873) |
| 42 | Marion P. Vennart and Marion Avis Plank | (1883) |
| 48 | Joan Carole Stefurak | (1879) |
| 54 | Anthony and Joan M. Berube | (1889) |
| 62 | Edith McAdams | (1889) |
| 70 | Larry E. and Barbara L. Young | (1883) |
| 78 | Fred Diminico | (1875) |
| 84 | James N. and Stella V. Leber | (1875) |
| 88 | Mary Frazier 396 Burnham Street | (1879) |
| 94 | Margaret J. Minor | (1879) |
| 102 | Alex. M. and Patricia A. Tomkunas 117 Penney Drive East Hartford, Connecticut | (1875) |
| 108 | John E. and Diane D. Burg, Jr. | (1875) |
| 116 | Jean E. Comins | (1875) |
| 124 | Robert C. and Carol C. Doyer | (1883) |

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LAUREL STREET

- 60-62 Leon and Eugenie Fallot
86 Park Street
- 66-70 James W. and Kathleen E. Nixon
68 Laurel
- 74 Doris E. Little (1941)
- 80 Robert L. and Ann L. Sanford (1889)
- 86-88 Cora E. Irons (1896)
86 Laurel
- 92-94 John E. and Helen Wilson (1894)

MAIN STREET

- 1151 Town of Manchester (1915)
Contact City Manager: Robert Weiss
- 1146 Town of Manchester (1904)
- 1180 Town of Manchester
- 1208 South Methodist Episcopal Church (1924)

NEW STREET

- 40 (v) Estate of Alexander Jarvis
%John D. LaBelle and Alice C. Jarvis
co-executors
843 Main Street
- 76 (v) The Hartford Electric Light Co.
P.O. Box 2370
Wethersfield, Connecticut

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NEW STREET (continued)

- 55 Marion Mohr Taylor (1891)
61 Franklin C. and Virginia G. Field
83 Princeton Street
69 John A. Suhie (1892)

PARK STREET

- 91 Neil M. and JoAnn C. Danahy (1894)
113 Edwin M. Kose
121 Nancy L. McCavanagh
131 Robert D. and Maree R. O'Connell (1897)
145 Lewellyn and Mary Ann Pelletier (1897)
157 Robert J. Finnegan (1883)
180 (v) Herald Printing Company
16 Brainard Place

PLEASANT STREET

- 7-9 K.B.W. Storage Co.
67 Wyllys Street
13 (v) K.B.W. Storage Co. (1910+)
27-29 Norman and Leah G. Spector (1900+)
35 Thomas and Christine A. Clifford (1876)
43-45 Robert L. and Jacqueline V. Genovese (1876)
43 Pleasant

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PLEASANT STREET (continued)

| | | |
|----|---|--------|
| 49 | Edna H. Werdelin | (1884) |
| 55 | John Howarth | (1876) |
| 69 | Henry James and Grace C. McCann | (1877) |
| 75 | Roy Clifford Johnson | (1876) |
| 83 | Althea Gibson | (1876) |
| 89 | Esther V. Metcalf | (1876) |
| 97 | Terry and Elizabeth A. Harlow | (1876) |
| 54 | James E. McGovern and Ellen L. Budlong | (1880) |
| 62 | Clarence L. Landry and Loretta C. LeLacheur | (1876) |

PINE STREET

| | | |
|---------|---|--------|
| 118 | Mary D. Hauelsen | (1878) |
| 130 | Estate of Harry R. McCormick Robert C. McCormick, Exec. Uplands Drive/P.O. Box 251 South Wellfleet, Massachusetts (Also contact: Nicholas R. and Phyllis V. Jackston & Sidney and Harriet E. Green 127 Middle Turnpike West, Manchester, Connecticut) | (1902) |
| 134 (v) | Manchester Bus Service, Inc. 673 Spring Street | |
| 136 | Richard L. and Sandra L. Adams | (1902) |
| 142 (v) | Manchester Modes, Inc. 685 Parker Street | |

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PINE STREET (continued)

- 162 Manchester Modes, Inc.
685 Parker Street
- 168 Northern Star Textile Corp. (1883)
Kamber Management, Inc.
Contact: Bobrow & Rosen
40 East 69th
N.Y. N.Y. 10021
- 182 Northern Star Textile Corp.
- 210 Joseph Bortman
100 Pilgrim Road
West Hartford, Connecticut
Contact:
Samuel J. Heyman, Trustee
%Prudential Mgt. Co.
P.O. Box 404
Saugatuck Station
Westport, Connecticut 06880
- 230 Town of Manchester
- 123 Margaret Fogarty (1879)
- 131 William F. and Norma L. Mullen (1883)
- 137 Clifford R. and Sarah A. Mitchell (1902)
- 141 John S. and Betty M. Martin (1908)
- 145 Tihamer B. and Margaret A. Brandalik (1908)
- 149-151 Arnold S. Gillis (1877)
- 175 Pine & 199 Forest
K.B.W. Storage Co.
67 Wyllis Street

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SCHOOL STREET

| | | |
|-----------|--|---|
| 19 | Town of Manchester-Fire Dept. Sta. #4 | (1918) |
| 39 | Town of Manchester-Central Heating Plant | (1916) |
| 41-43 | Town of Manchester (Old Trade School) | (1926) |
| 47-49 (v) | Town of Manchester | } Town properties, contact: Robert Weiss, City Manager |
| 51-53 (v) | Town of Manchester | |
| 55 | Delfina Pola | (1918) |
| 57-59 | Delfina Pola 55 School Street | (1888) |
| 65-67 | Margaret E. Maiorca 67 School | (1900+) |
| 71-73 | Peter and Constance Monaco 71 School | (1901) |
| 79 | Barbara and Ronald A. Custer | (1883) |
| 85-87 | Peter and Victoria Dovernorowtz, Jr. 85 School | (1883) |
| 95 | Anna Willard | (1883) |
| 46-48 | Charles Jack Coniarn | (1914) |
| 52-54 | Alife Gloms 52 School | (1911) |
| 56-58 1/2 | Anna Dziordzi 58 School | (1886) |
| 64-66 | Thomas E. and Catherine H. Toomey and Alexander Matthew 193 E. Center Street | (1886) |

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SCHOOL STREET (continued)

| | | |
|-------|--|--------|
| 72-74 | William A. and Estella J. Simpson 377 Hackmatack Street | (1886) |
| 78-80 | Helen Manseqlio 80 School | (1891) |
| 86-88 | Walter J. and Anna S. Brown 88 School | (1891) |
| 94-96 | Marion L. Graveline 94 School | (1894) |

SPRUCE STREET

| | | |
|-----|---------------------|--------|
| 254 | John George England | (1900) |
|-----|---------------------|--------|

WEST STREET

| | | |
|-------------|--|--------|
| 3-5 | Darrell D. and Lorraine B. Gallagher Dale C. and Deane P. Allen 3 West | (1917) |
| 11,13,15,17 | C & C Investments 423 East Center Street | (1917) |
| 21 | Santo and Emily Leone | (1917) |
| 27-29 | Wayne C. Huot 29 West Street | (1917) |
| 37 | Walter A. and Mary B. Frederickison | (1952) |
| 49-51 | Elizabeth J. McGeown | (1917) |
| 69 | Anne E. Last | (1872) |
| 73 | Estate of Robert and Mafalda Quey Contact: Mafalda Quey 73 West Street | (1872) |

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WEST STREET (continued)

| | | |
|-------|--|---------|
| 77 | Annie M. Hewitt | (1890) |
| 81 | Lois E., Robert J. and Jennie W. Doggart | (1900+) |
| 87 | Martin A. and Wilma Uriano | (1890+) |
| 4-6 | Helen Knowles 64 William Street Hartford, Connecticut | (1860+) |
| 12 | Alfred A. and Maria Napoletano 659 Hartford Road | (1860+) |
| 16 | Elsie H. Kroll | (1860+) |
| 22-24 | James J. and Eileen C. Dowds | (1887) |
| 28 | Joseph E. and Etiennette Duplessie | (1890+) |
| 34 | Marie Jeanne Chapman | (1919) |
| 52 | Donald F. and Joanne E. Costello | (1860+) |
| 58 | George Edward Hahn %Mrs. Josephine Hahn 31 Bank Street | (1860+) |
| 64 | Katharina Thurner 64 West and Anna T. Heller 72 Chambers Street | (1872) |
| 68 | George E. and Ruth F. Hahn 31 Bank Street | (1872) |
| 72 | Gilda Agostinelli | (1860+) |
| 76 | Boleshaw and Kazimiera Kisielewicz | (1860+) |
| 82 | Lucija Ivins | (1860) |

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loyalty which were important factors in achieving business success."¹⁴ By 1865 the company had begun buying adjacent land and erecting tenant houses, a practice that it continued through World War I as the need for them arose. Usually workers had the option of renting or purchasing with the help of company-financed loans. Most early tenant residences were apparently single-family dwellings, but subsequently the company built two-, three-, and four-family units as well as boarding houses for both male and female workers. In 1867 Cheney Brothers erected Cheney Hall, a recreational and entertainment facility, for its operatives, and in 1869 the firm built 2-mile-long South Manchester Railroad which, in addition to providing a freight connection with the major rail lines, carried workers back and forth from North Manchester to the silk mills for a minimum fare. Three years later the company built Taylor Reservoir to provide water for its factories and fire protection for both the mills and nearby houses, and in 1889 it organized the subsidiary South Manchester Water Company which erected more reservoirs and eventually furnished water for most of the community. Later Cheney Brothers' Manchester Electric Company supplied electricity for the entire town. Finally, over the years Cheney Brothers donated land for numerous churches and erected several community school buildings.

During and after the 1930's the company disposed of its utilities, most of whose structures lay far outside the present historic district. In recent years the South Manchester Railroad tracks have been removed and several railroad buildings demolished. Cheney Hall, the schools and churches, and most of the post-1886 factories and the majority of the houses remain, however, and along with the Cheney mansions, they stand in striking testimony to both the Cheney Brothers' silk manufacturing enterprise and the mill village that it supported. Within the bounds of the historic district there are a few post-1925 structures, but none of that vintage contributes to its national historic significance.

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¹⁴Buckley, A New England Pattern, 148-49.

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I. The Cheney Mills. The Cheney mills that remain form the center of the historic district and reflect the general appearance of the manufacturing complex about 1916. Still standing and in relatively sound condition are 16 mills and several support buildings that date from 1886-1916. Except for one gray-painted brick structure, all these buildings are red brick with green-painted window, door, and roof trim. Cheney Brothers, Inc., utilizes eight of the mills, and various other owners and tenants occupy the rest. Almost all are in good condition, and those along Pine Street are connected by steel truss, wood frame, second-story passageways.

Spinning Mills (63 Elm Street). Erected in 1886 at the southeast corner of Forest and Elm Streets, this complex, consists chiefly of three three-story, rectangular-shaped, east-west oriented, approximately 300-foot-long mills and one similarly constructed operatives' cafeteria. The west-facing group features low-pitched gable roofs and rectangular six-over-six sashes set in segmentally arched openings, and it is distinguished particularly by a five-story clock tower projecting from a three-story pavilion at the center of the front facade. Highlighting the tower are brick quoins, belting, and corbeling plus round-arched front windows and occasional keystones. Apparently sometime after initial construction the spaces separating the four main edifices were partially enclosed to create additional work areas. A boiler plant extends across the rear (east) facade of the four attached buildings, and nearby are several smaller support structures, including a coal bin large enough to accomodate two cars of the South Manchester railroad. Except for the easternmost outbuilding, which is situated at 148 Forest Street, the entire spinning complex, which housed Pioneer Parachute during World War II, is owned at present by Northern Star Textile Corporation, of which Cheney Brothers, Inc. is a subsidiary. The firm leases out some space in the mill buildings but uses most of it for storage.

Velvet Mills (60 Elm Street). Also part of the present Cheney Brothers, Inc., operation, these three mills rise three stories over a partially raised basement. Each is rectangular shaped, about 300 feet long, crowned with a low pitched gable roof, and distinguished by pairs of 16-over-16 sashes set in single segmentally arched openings. At their front, or east, end the mills are linked by two 3 1/2-story tower-like sections that

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have straight front facades and hexagonal rears. Each linking section has a 3 1/2-story street-side tower, and these, along with two towers on the interior sides of the two southernmost mills, have segmentally arched single windows. These mills were constructed in 1901.

Velvet Weave Shed (182 Pine Street) and Yarn Dye House (31 Cooper Hill Street). These two adjacent, rectangular-shaped, east-west oriented mills complete the present Manchester facilities of Cheney Brothers, Inc. They were erected about 1914. The Weave Shed measures approximately 250 feet in length, rises two stories, and has a saw-toothed roof. Abutting its east (front) facade at the north end is a small three-story company fire house of matching red brick. The Dye House rises three stories high to a low-pitched gable roof and displays two-story-high north and south facades, each of which has 38 brick pilaster-separated bays. Most window openings are filled with four horizontal three-pane casements and exhibit stone sills and lintels. At the west end a small three-story addition houses the offices of Cheney Brothers, Inc. Inside, the Dye House is typical of most of the Cheney mills. It features slow-burn construction with heavy wood beams and cast-iron support columns. These two structures, along with the mills at 60 Elm Street, contain several notable pieces of historic Cheney equipment either operable or still in actual use. These include: skein dyers with cypress vats, patented between 1894 and 1911; two half-century-old Royle jacquard card punches; a Royle automatic card lacer patented in 1896-97; a Royle & Son card repeater of similar vintage; at least two Grant Reels manufactured by Atwood Machines of Stonington, Conn.; and three Sipp-Eastwood silk warping machines made in Paterson, N.J. Cheney Brothers, Inc., now weaves most of its velvet in South Carolina, but it operates 72 velvet looms and does all its dyeing here.

Other Mill Buildings. Across Forest Street north of the Spinning Mills are three west-facing Weaving Mills (91 Elm Street) that are almost identical to the Velvet Mills in design and age. Apparently the Weaving Mills are used now primarily as warehouses. East of them, across Elm Street, are a rectangular-shaped, two-story, early 20th-century Machine Shop (175 Pine Street and 199 Forest Street) and an adjacent irregular-shaped

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two-story support building (96 Elm Street). Neither structure serves its original function, but both are in fair condition.

North of these are two unique early 20th-century buildings that were essential to the Cheney's receipt of raw silk shipments by rail. One is an east-facing, three-story, shed-roofed, windowless Silk Storage Vault (110 Elm Street). Across its front (east) facade are seven irregular bays, each containing a heavy steel door. Raw silk was taken off incoming rail cars and kept here until it was needed in the mills. The second, and northernmost, structure is a one-story oblong Rail Car Vault (2 Elm Terrace). Plain except for a corbeled cornice, this one-story red brick edifice rests on a concrete and stone foundation, is windowless, and has only one entrance, a large steel double door on the south end. Rail cars carrying silk were kept here until their contents could be removed to the Silk Storage Vault.

East of the Machine Shop, across Pine Street, are two rectangular-shaped, east-west oriented, three-story Ribbon Mills (162 Pine Street) that are linked by a smaller building of similar construction. A partially raised basement gives the two main structures a 3 1/2-story appearance. Twenty-over-twenty sashes light the interior work areas, while brick buttresses help support the exterior walls. These edifices still serve the textile industry but not in their original capacity. Southward down Pine Street about one block, and across Cooper Hill from the Yarn Dye House, is the Dressing Mill (210 Pine Street). Now a warehouse with gray-painted south side and east (front) end, this massive three-story building measures about 400 feet in length and has 49 bays along its north facade. Apparently built in sections and completed in 1911, it has 9-over-15 sashes in segmentally arched openings, a large three-story north tower, and two smaller three-story south towers.

North of the Ribbon Mills, between Pleasant and High Streets, are several small support buildings. These include a Cheney Brothers garage (13 Pleasant Street), a small secondary office building (27-29 Pleasant Street), and the remains of a combination stable-garage (134 Pine Street). These structures contribute to the historical significance of the district, but their importance is secondary. Not contributing to the district's significance, but not distracting significantly from its appearance either, is a post-1940 Pratt and Whitney factory at 15 Hall Court immediately east of the Dressing Mill.

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II. The Cheney Mansions. Occupying about 70 acres along Hartford Road between South Main and Elm Streets on the east and west and Forest Street and I-84 on the north and south are 13 Cheney family mansions. Dating from 1785 to 1911, they rest in a little-altered park-like setting, represent individual Cheney family members throughout the history of their family silk-making enterprise, and illustrate vividly the life style of successful New England textile mill owners. The dwellings are all in fair to excellent condition, and most continue to serve as private residences.

Cheney Homestead (106 Hartford Road). Timothy Cheney, father of the eight Cheney brothers, completed the first section of this south-facing 2 1/2-story, gable-roofed, white frame house sometime between 1780 and 1785. Situated near the southern edge of the historic district, it rests on a stone foundation, has a one-story rear wing and two 1 1/2-story west wings, is graced with gabled dormers, and features 12-over-12 and 12-over-8 sash windows flanked by black-painted louvered shutters. A single red brick interior chimney serves the 30-foot-square main block, and two similar stacks rise from the two west wings. The principal entrance is a single door set under a hip-roofed porch on the south side, but because the house is set into a low hillside, the second floor also contains a ground-level entrance on the east side. The residence is owned by the Manchester Historical Society, which operates it as a museum. Inside are period furnishings as well as a few family pieces, including a clock that Timothy built into the east wall of the living room. On the third floor is a room dedicated to the artwork of Seth and John Cheney. Also on the property are a modern but architecturally compatible garage and a restored one-room school.

Mary Cheney House (48 Hartford Road). Situated east of the family homestead, this 2 1/2-story, gray brick, mansard-roofed residence was built in 1870 for the daughter of Frank Cheney, one of the original brothers. It is distinguished by heavy multiflue chimneys, Victorian round-arched dormers, and segmentally arched window openings. Mary Cheney enjoyed a reputation for philanthropy, so perhaps it is fitting that the South United Methodist Church uses the house now as a resident school for teenage girls. 756

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Frank Cheney, Jr., House (20 Hartford Road). This 2 1/2-story, red brick, Neo-Colonial residence was designed by Charles Adams Platt and finished about 1900. It sits on a stone foundation and has a hip-roofed central block adorned by massive red brick chimneys and simple gabled dormers. Dominating the front facade is a pedimented central pavilion with a white-painted second-story palladian window and a first-story rounded portico displaying Ionic columns and a balustrade. Identical gabled wings complete the structure. Although owned by the South United Methodist Church and used for both residential and assembly purposes, the house retains much of its original interior decor and charm, and the exterior is almost unaltered.

George W. Cheney House (21 Hartford Road). Situated across Hartford Road north of the Frank Cheney, Jr., House, this gray-painted frame dwelling rises two and one-half stories under a steep hipped roof that is graced on each side by shed dormers. Since its completion about 1860 the 30-by-30-foot building has received several small rear additions, but essentially it is distinguished by tall red brick chimneys rising from the east and west sides of the roof, paired windows with six-over-six sashes and black-painted louvered shutters, and a one-story shed-roofed, balustraded porch that passes fully across the front facade.

Clifford D. Cheney House (40 Forest Street). Despite its Forest Street address this 2 1/2-story Charles Adams Platt residence looks south across an expansive lawn toward Hartford Road. Erected in 1904 and faced in pink stucco, it has a large central block that measures approximately 47 by 26 feet and displays a cross-gabled roof. Stuccoed end chimneys, green-painted louvered shutters, a one-story columned portico, and a pair of two-story gabled wings complete the primary architectural detail visible from the street. The mansion is situated immediately east of the George W. Cheney House, and in contrast to the older dwelling it presents a striking appearance against a background of green lawn and blue sky. Rear of the mansion are two small frame houses (22 and 30 Forest Street) that apparently are associated with the Cheney family also. They date from the late 19th century.

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Philip Cheney House (50 Forest Street). This 2 1/2-story, red brick, gable-roofed, H-shaped, Neo-Colonial mansion is attributed to Charles Adams Platt also. Manchester tax records list 1860 as its construction date, but Platt was not born until 1861. Probably he designed the house about 1900. A large dwelling, it has an approximately 45-foot-square central block and two slightly dissimilar wings that measure 25 by 51 feet and 22 1/2 by 59 1/2 feet respectively. Large multi-flue stacks and segmentally arched dormers grace the roof, while two-story hexagonal bays adorn the south ends of each wing. There are irregular one-story additions at the southeast corner and west end.

Austin Cheney House (99 Hartford Road). Built in 1911 and remodeled in 1921, this pink stucco-covered frame dwelling rises two and one-half stories under a steep gable roof. Its rectangular main block measures about 75 by 35 feet and is supplemented by a 21-by-20-foot ell at the west end of the south side. It has a full basement, as do most of the Cheney mansions, and partially finished attic. Open porches adorn portions of both ends and the south facade.

Charles Cheney House (131 Hartford Road). According to tax records this 2 1/2-story Tudor style residence was built in 1851, but it might date from a somewhat later period. It rests on a stone foundation and exhibits dark-tan stucco siding with dark-brown wood trim. A combination of gabled and hipped roofs covers the structure's irregularly placed sections and supports several multiflue red brick chimneys.

Seth Cheney House (139 Hartford Road). This irregularly shaped, gable-roofed, 2 1/2-story, white frame house was apparently built sometime during the mid-1800's and remodeled, according to tax records, in 1910. Massive multiflue red brick chimneys, pedimented dormers, and black-painted louvered shutters highlight the exterior. A one-story, Doric column-supported porch extends across the front (south) facade, shielding the entrance, and six-over-six sash windows light the interior. The house is situated across Hartford Road from and northeast of the Cheney Homestead.

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Horace B. Cheney House (78 Forest Street). Erected in the mid-1890's, the north-facing dwelling rises 2 1/2-stories under a pyramidal roof. It is irregularly shaped with an approximately 40-by-50-foot main block and several porches and wings. The exterior is covered with dark-gray wood singles and highlighted with white-painted window, door, and cornice trim.

Frank D. Cheney House (98 Forest Street). A large 2 1/2-story, gray-painted, frame structure, this dwelling dates, according to tax records, from 1902 and measures about 80 by 30 feet. It is gable roofed and has a gabled pavilion at the west end of the front (north) facade. This is matched by three gabled dormers along the front roof slope. Open, one-story porches grace the front, rear, and west facades. In addition a small wing abuts the rear facade.

Howell Cheney House (110 Forest Street). Visible from both Forest Street and Hartford Road, this 2 1/2-story red brick residence is reminiscent of the Philip Cheney House in style but is smaller and does not have the symmetry of the 50 Forest Street structure. The front facade is distinguished by a parapet-gabled pavilion with a hexagonal bay, while the rear features two open porches and at least one ell with an attached wing.

Willard House (151 Hartford Road). In a recent Connecticut reply to a request for determination of eligibility of this section of the historic district for inclusion in the National Register, this house was not listed with the above Cheney mansions. It is situated immediately north of the Seth Cheney House and immediately west of the Charles Cheney House, however, and is compatible with the Cheney homes in scale and age. Completed in 1905, it is a 2 1/2-story, gray-painted, H-shaped, frame structure with a gabled roof. Probably it has an as yet undetermined direct association with the family, but even if it does not, it contributes to the visual impact created by the Cheney dwellings as a group.

III. Workers' Houses. Workers' houses in the Cheney Brothers Historic District fall into three distinct geographical divisions, all of which abut either the mill or the mansion area. East of the latter is a group of relatively small middle and late

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19th-century dwellings along School and Eldridge Streets. North of the mills, between Laurel and Park Streets, is a section of larger late 19th-century residences. West of the mills, between Division, Cooper Hill, and Campfield Streets, is the largest concentration of operatives' houses. The majority of these date from the era of World War I, but many are older. Originally most of these houses belonged to Cheney Brothers, but now almost all are privately owned. All are frame structures, and most are in good to excellent condition. They vary in color from white and cream through the pastels to dark red, blue, green, and brown.

East Side Houses. Approximately 35 residential structures, most predating 1900, make up this section of the historic district. All are frame and range from one and one-half to two and one-half stories. They include both single-family and multifamily dwellings. Through the years some of the structures have been reroofed, a few have received asbestos siding, and most have been repainted, probably in a different color than the original. Overall, they have undergone few external structural changes; they still reflect with remarkable accuracy the mill operatives' living conditions during the late 19th century.

The most interesting units in this section are 12 that were constructed during the mid-1860's. Most of these are situated along the south side of Eldridge Street. They are simple rectangular-shaped, two-story, gable-roofed buildings with one-story shed-roofed porches across their two-bay-wide front facades. On several houses these porches have been enclosed, but on others carpenter Gothic detail remains along porch roof lines. A single brick interior chimney pierces each roof crest near its midpoint, and six-over-six sashes fill most window openings in each dwelling.

North Side Houses. Twenty-seven dwellings, dating chiefly from the 1880's and 1890's, compose this section. Most are 1 1/2- or 2 1/2-story single-family houses, but at least five are duplexes. Although the older structures vary in design, most have gabled roofs and one or more full-length porches one or two stories high. A few have hipped roofs. Almost all, regardless of color, display white-painted window surrounds, which usually frame six-over-six sashes, and all exhibit red brick chimneys. Separated from other workers' houses by either

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the mills and mansions or the South Manchester Railroad, these dwellings were reserved for the mills' supervisory personnel.

West Side Houses. This tree-lined section of the historic district contains almost 150 workers' houses, which vary widely in style and age. Some are single-family houses, and some are duplexes, triplexes, or quadruplexes. Most of those along High Street in the north were erected in the late 1880's or at the turn of the century, while most of those along West and Fairfield Streets in the west were constructed in the 1910's. All are frame, but some have cedar or asbestos siding. Roof styles include gable, cross-gable, hip, hipped-gable, and gambrel, and roof coverings include both slate and asphalt shingles. Most of the dwellings have either four-over-one or six-over-six sash windows in white-painted wood surrounds, either full-length or partial-length front porches one story high, red brick interior chimneys, and either full or partial basements.

Especially notable are a number of tall, two-story, rectangular-shaped, steep-gable-roofed houses along High Street and 14 gambrel-roofed and hipped-gable-roofed triplexes and quadruplexes along Fairfield, West, and Copper Hill Streets. Also of particular interest are several larger, 2 1/2-story houses along the east side of Cedar and Pine Streets near the mills. The latter, like the North Side Houses, may have quartered supervisory personnel originally. Included also in this western section is a park bordered by Cooper Hill, Cooper, Pleasant, and Cedar Streets. Historically it has been an important recreation area for Cheney operatives, and today it is a playground for both the community and the local schools.

IV. Other Structures. Other Cheney-built or Cheney-financed buildings are scattered throughout the historic district. Most are not significantly altered, and with only one or two exceptions they continue to serve their original functions.

Cheney Hall (177 Hartford Road). A large, 2 1/2-story, red brick and brownstone structure with full basement and mansard roof, this south-facing edifice is situated off Hartford Road northeast of the Cheney Homestead. The hall's "importance, socially as well as culturally, in the progress of the community

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. . . is difficult to overestimate," says Buckley.¹⁵ Cheney Brothers erected it as a place for social and religious gatherings, amateur and professional dramatic performances, and concerts and lectures. Today it is a fabric store. Inside, it retains its grand organ and hardwood floor as well as its now-hidden (under a false ceiling) balcony, gas chandeliers, and arched ballroom window tops. Outside it is hardly altered at all. Predominant exterior features include one rear center and two front corner hip-roofed towers; six steep gabled dormers on the mansard; round-arched first-story and segmentally arched second-story window openings with two-over-two sashes; and a partially enclosed, full-length one-story entrance portico with five recessed, double doors.

Cheney Office Building (146 Hartford Road). Situated southeast of Cheney Hall and near the family homestead, this two-story red brick edifice with raised basement was erected in 1910. It features a three-bay front pavilion, double one-over-one sash windows with transoms, and a number of stone beltcourses. At present it serves as an administration building for Manchester Community College.

Cheney Fire Hall (230 Pine Street). This two-story frame structure was constructed apparently around the turn of the century and added to several times over the years. Green-painted and hip-roofed with a three-story south tower, it stands on the northeast corner of Hartford Road and Pine Street. From this vantage point fire-fighting equipment could be dispatched quickly to any mill or any area of the community. It is still used by the town of Manchester. The historic district also includes a two-story red brick fire hall erected in 1916 at 19 School Street near the Cheney-built city secondary education center.

Cooper Hill Water Treatment Plant (49 Cooper Hill Street). Built by the Cheney family in 1916 to treat Globe Hollow water for use in the mills, this red brick, gable-roofed, one-story facility is the only Cheney utility structure within the historic district. The town acquired the facility in 1956 and renovated it in 1973. It is situated immediately west of the current Cheney Brothers, Inc., office. (762)

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¹⁵Ibid., 207.

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South Manchester Railroad Station (Corner of Park Street & Elm Terrace). Now abandoned, this one-story, gable-roofed, board-and-batten building with gable-roofed south wing is situated immediately north of the Park Street bridge at Elm Terrace and along the former right-of-way of the South Manchester Railroad. It was erected in 1879 to serve as a general office and freight station for the two-mile-long line. Having undergone little apparent external alteration, the station is in fair condition.

School Buildings. Over the years the Cheney family financed construction of several schools and related structures in Manchester. Perhaps chief among these are the red brick buildings that form "Education Square" on South Main Street between School and Wells Streets. This complex, which was completed in 1915, includes two large, almost identical three-story, H-shaped, Neo-Colonial classroom structures oriented north to south between School and Wells Streets; a similarly rendered gymnasium situated between the classroom buildings and along the south side of School Street; and a three-story trade or technical school on the opposite side of School Street. Other significant educational buildings are the circa 1920, three-story, hip-roofed, red brick high school at 1146 South Main Street; the Lutz Museum, a 1 1/2-story, hip-roofed, white frame structure, which served formerly as a Cheney family school, at 126-28 Cedar Street; and two early 20th-century red brick elementary schools at 94 and 110 Cedar Street adjacent to the museum. The latter buildings and the museum are situated along the eastern edge of the playground in the west side housing area. All these edifices continue to serve educational purposes.

Churches and Related Structures. Within the historic district are two churches founded largely by Cheney operatives and built on land donated by the Cheney family. At 112 Cooper Street is the 1 1/2-story, two-by-three-bay, gable-roofed white frame Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church erected in 1892-3, and adjacent at 120-122 Cooper is a 2 1/2-story white frame rectory built in 1893. Across the district, at 1208 South Main Street, is the massive South United Methodist Church. It was constructed of local gray fieldstone in the Tudor Gothic style in 1924-25.

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V. Boundary Justification. The boundary of the Cheney Brothers Historic District includes all the principal extant Cheney manufacturing structures, all the extant mansions of Cheney family members prominent in the operation of the company, several buildings importantly related to the social and religious activities of the mill community, and the most significant of the extant operatives' houses. South and east of the East Side Houses, north of the North Side Houses, and north of the West Side Houses are additional workers' dwellings built and financed by Cheney Brothers. Generally, however, these outlying houses are either newer, less concentrated, more altered, or less well-maintained than those within the district bounds. Moreover, just as Hartford Road and I-84 form a logical manmade boundary along the southern edge of the district, neighborhood deterioration and encroaching modern development suggests the eastern boundary, predominant post-1925 construction dictates the western boundary, and an east-west ridge provides a natural northern boundary roughly along High and Laurel Streets.

VI. Boundary Description. As indicated in red on the accompanying maps [(1) U.S.G.S. 7.5' Series, Conn., Manchester Quad., 1963, photorevised 1968; and (2) Manchester Town Engineer's Map, 1974, revised 1975], a line beginning at the northwest corner of the intersection of Hartford Road and Pine Street and extending westward along the north curb of Hartford Road approximately 600 feet to a point opposite the southwest corner of the Dressing Mill at 210 Pine Street; thence, northward approximately 225 feet along a plane parallel to the west end of the Dressing Mill and extending to the north curb of Cooper Hill Street; thence, westward along the north curb of Cooper Hill approximately 800 feet to a point opposite the northeast corner of the town lot at number 114 Cooper Hill; thence, south about 100 feet along the east side of said lot to its southern boundary; thence, west about 90 feet along said southern boundary to the rear (east) boundary of the town lot at number 27-29 West Street; thence, southward approximately 450 feet along the rear of the lots fronting on the east side of West Street to the north curb of Hartford Road; thence, westward approximately 750 feet along the north curb of Hartford Road to a point opposite the southwest corner of the town lot at number 387-391 Hartford Road; thence, northward approximately 1,200 feet along an irregular line that follows the west side of said lot and the west sides of the town lots along the west side of Fairfield (continued)

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Street to the south curb of West Street; thence, eastward approximately 500 feet along the south curb of West Street to the point at which it curves due south and continuing eastward from that point about 350 additional feet along the north edge of the town lot at 87 West Street to the west edge of the town lot at 136 Cooper Street; thence, northward approximately 450 feet along the rear (west) side of the town lots at 136, 130-34, 120-122, 112, and 104 Cooper to the north side of the last of these; thence, eastward approximately 1,750 feet along the north side of the town lot at 104 Cooper and the rear (north) sides of the lots fronting on High Street between 127 High and 19 High to the west side of the town lot at 26 Elm Terrace; thence, northward about 225 feet along the rear (west) side of the town lots at 26, 14, 10, and 4 Elm Terrace to the south curb of Walnut Street; thence, east about 100 feet along the south curb of Walnut to the western edge of the Penn Central right-of-way; thence, northward approximately 300 feet along said right-of-way to an unmarked point directly west of the northwest corner of the town lot at 49 New St.; thence eastward approximately 250 feet due east to the said corner of 49 New Street and then approximately 900 additional feet eastward along the south curb of Laurel Street to the northeast corner of the town lot at 90 Chestnut Street; thence, southward approximately 400 feet along an irregular line that follows the rear (east) sides of the lots fronting on Chestnut Street to the north edge of the town lot at 91 Park Street; thence, continuing southward about 100 additional feet along the east side of the lot at 91 Park to the north curb of Park; thence, westward approximately 850 feet along the north curb of Park to the eastern edge of the Penn Central right-of-way; thence, southward approximately 225 feet along the eastern edge of said right-of-way to the westernmost southwest corner of the property line of the L-shaped apartment complex occupying the southwest corner of the intersection of Park and Chestnut Streets; thence, due east along the apartment complex property line 480.94 feet to a point; thence, south along the apartment complex property line 190.04 feet to a point; thence, east along the apartment complex property line 165.08 feet to the west curb of Chestnut Street; thence, southward approximately 750 feet along the west curb of Chestnut to the south curb of Forest Street; thence, eastward approximately 1,600 feet along the south curb of Forest to the northwest corner of the town lot at 1090 South Main Street; thence, southward about 140 feet along the west side of said lot to its south edge; thence,

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east about 150 feet along the south edge of said lot to the west curb of South Main Street; thence, south approximately 225 feet along the west curb of South Main to a point opposite the north curb of School Street; thence, eastward approximately 250 feet along the north curb of School to the southwest corner of the town lot at 19 School Street; thence, northward about 385 feet in an irregular line along the western edges of the town lots at 19 School, 24 Eldridge, and 17 1/2-19 1/2 Eldridge; thence, eastward in an irregular line approximately 900 feet along the rear (north) edges of the lots fronting south on Eldridge to the eastern edge of the town lot at 240 Spruce Street; thence, southward about 145 feet along the west side of the town lots at 240 and 248 Spruce to the south curb of Eldridge Street; thence, east about 90 feet along the south curb of Eldridge to the west curb of Spruce Street; thence, southward approximately 380 feet along the west curb of Spruce to a point opposite the southeast corner of the town lot at 94-96 School Street; thence, westward approximately 700 feet along the rear (south) edges of the town lots fronting (north) on School to the west curb of Vine Street; thence, south about 150 feet along the west curb of Vine to the north curb of Wells Street; thence, westward approximately 600 feet along the north curb of Wells to the west curb of South Main Street; thence, south approximately 750 feet along the west curb of South Main to the north edge of the right-of-way of I-84; thence, westward approximately 2,000 feet along the north edge of the interstate right-of-way to the southwest corner of the town lot at 146 Hartford Road; thence, northward approximately 470 feet to the north curb of Hartford Road; thence, westward about 825 feet along the north curb of Hartford Road to the point of beginning.

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afterward, several schools either built by or situated on land donated by Cheney Brothers Manufacturing Company, and approximately 210 individual and multifamily mill houses either built or purchased by the company for its mill operatives between 1850 and 1920. Most of the structures are little altered externally and in good condition.

History

The silk industry in America dates from about 1620 when James I encouraged it in Virginia. In subsequent years entrepreneurs attempted to produce silk in almost every colony, and the American Philosophical Society supported their efforts enthusiastically. None of these early commercial ventures proved successful, but after the Revolutionary War silk became an article of domestic manufacture from Virginia to Connecticut, and in 1810 Rodney and Horatio Hanks built the Nation's first silk mill in Mansfield, Conn. The Hanks's mill proved impractical, but in 1827-28 Alfred Lilly and his associates built a successful one nearby. Soon silk mills sprang up in several States, and although silk manufacturing remained a small industry, many persons demonstrated a strong belief in its future.

In the mid-1820's a new, hardier, faster-growing mulberry tree, morus multicaulis, was introduced into the United States from China, and for a time popular expectations for the industry seemed about to come true. During the next decade the apparent ability of the plant to survive in New England, coupled with a protective tariff on sewing silk, sparked considerable speculation in the new trees. Among those who participated were Ward, Frank, and Rush Cheney, three of eight Cheney brothers who descended from a clockmaking and farming family near Manchester, Conn. While mulberry trees rose precipitously from \$4 to \$500 a hundred between 1834 and 1839, Ward, Frank, and Rush operated nurseries in Connecticut, New Jersey, and Ohio. In 1838 they joined Edwin Arnold in forming the Mount Nebo Manufacturing Company to make silk thread on Hop Brook near the Cheney family homestead in present Manchester. Scarcely 2 years later, however, the mulberry boom burst. The crash cost the Cheney's their investment in nurseries and forced

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them to close their mill. By 1844 widespread mulberry blight had killed most of the new trees in the United States, the silk worms had died, and a veil of uncertainty had fallen over the entire silk industry.

Meanwhile the three Cheney Brothers, with financial help from their brothers Seth and John, both of whom later became well-known artists, reopened their factory in 1841, and by 1843 they employed 18 workers under the new name "Cheney Brothers Manufacturing Company." Most of the work was done by hand, and frequently the Cheney Brothers worked alongside their employees. Despite the difficulties facing the industry generally, the brothers persisted, and in time their firm became one of the leading producers. In fact, says Grant, eventually it was "the first to master the intricate art of silk weaving in the United States."⁴ In the meantime, during the mid-1840's Ward Cheney learned silk dyeing from Edward Valentine in Northampton, Mass., and soon the brothers were marketing colors, along with a fine "Italian" sewing silk under the name "Fratelli Chinacci," from a small sales office in New York. About this same time, 1847, says Grant, "Frank Cheney's invention of a power spinning machine . . . combined doubling, twisting, and winding," and "production took a leap forward in both quality and quantity."⁵ This enabled the Cheney Brothers to meet a growing market for strong silk threads to be used in Isaac Singer's new home sewing machines.

The decade of the 1850's saw Cheney Brothers Manufacturing Company, in which all the brothers now participated in one manner or another, emerge, in Grant's words, as "the largest and probably the most profitable" of more than 500 American silk mills, most of which operated in Connecticut and Pennsylvania.⁶ A major step in the company's rise occurred in 1855 when Frank perfected a method of spinning waste silk taken

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⁴ Grant, Yankee Dreamers and Doers, 179.

⁵ Ibid., 182.

⁶ Ibid.

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from imperfect cocoons. Formerly all raw silk had been reeled by hand only from perfect cocoons, and so the Cheney's ability to utilize pierced cocoons led soon to the manufacture of silk products at popular prices. In 1857 removal of the raw silk duty provided another opportunity for growth in American silk manufacturing, and the Cheney's wasted little time in taking advantage of it. Frank, bearing credit equivalent to 50,000 British pounds, traveled to China early in 1859 to purchase a year's supply of raw silk. After finding Chinese commercial methods and transportation facilities unsatisfactory, he sailed within a few months to Japan where trade conditions proved better. As a result, over the next few years the Cheney's became the first American firm to import Japanese raw silk in quantity.

In the 1860's, says Leggett, the United States achieved international "supremacy in silk manufacturing," and Cheney Brothers, by making "the cheapest and most serviceable silks . . . on the market," continued as "the leading firm of its kind" in the country.⁷ Much of the impetus for the American rise to preeminence in silk making stemmed from the admission of French silks to England free of duty. This forced English silk throwsters and weavers out of work and encouraged them to bring their skills, and often their machinery, to the United States. Further help came from the Tariff Act of 1861, which increased the tax on imported silk products by as much as 20 percent. Under these conditions, Cheney Brothers emerged from the Civil War stronger still. Moreover the company could boast of a special contribution to the war effort. In 1860 Christopher Spencer, who had been superintendent of the Cheney machine shop since 1855, patented his famous repeating rifle, and after the Federal Government ordered 200,000 of the weapons, Cheney Brothers organized and financed the Boston factory that produced them.

The next 50 to 60 years marked a period of both continued growth for Cheney Brothers and expansion of its reputation for technical innovation. In the postbellum years the company

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⁷Quoted in Young, Textile Leaders of the South, 704, 705.

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imported velvet looms from Germany and improved their design in the Cheney machine shop. Subsequently, according to Manchester historian William E. Buckley, "the production of plush and velvet became one of the chief activities" of the firm.⁸ About this same time James M. Grant, a long-time Cheney employee, perfected the Grant reel in the company shop. This device, explains Buckley, "guided the thread from skein to bobbin or spool in a fashion which prevented snarling."⁹ It could be used in the production of cotton and wool as well as silk. As the Cheney company's production capabilities increased, so did its need for space and workers. The firm built major new Manchester factories in the mid-1870's, mid-1880's, and early 1900's; erected hundreds of individual and multifamily residences for workers; and either financed or constructed a host of community improvement projects such as schools, utilities, and a recreation hall.

By 1920 Cheney Brothers was near its peak. Three years later the company realized the highest annual sales in its history, \$23 million. Afterward a steady drop in raw silk prices dictated lower prices for silk goods and a rapid decrease in the value of stocks on hand. Moreover, although "Cheney silks [were] the best in the world," says Grant, rayon was beginning to replace silk in many markets.¹⁰ These conditions, coupled with the general effects of the Great Depression, almost ruined the company. A Reconstruction Finance Corporation loan in 1934, sale of company-owned housing and utilities throughout the late twenties and early thirties, and formation of a successful subsidiary (Pioneer Parachute) kept the company going through World War II, however. In fact, during the war Pioneer Parachute became the leading American supplier of nylon parachutes and anti-aircraft tow targets. After the war, though, synthetics and instability in the garment industry made large-scale silk manufacturing unprofitable for Cheney, and in 1954 company stockholders voted to sell the firm to J. P. Stevens. Today, Northern Star Textile Corporation owns most of the remaining Cheney factory buildings and produces fine velvet through its subsidiary Cheney Brothers, Inc.

⁸William E. Buckley, A New England Pattern: The History of Manchester, Connecticut (Chester, Connecticut, 1973), 142.

⁹Ibid., 144.

¹⁰Grant, Yankee Dreamers and Doers, 187.

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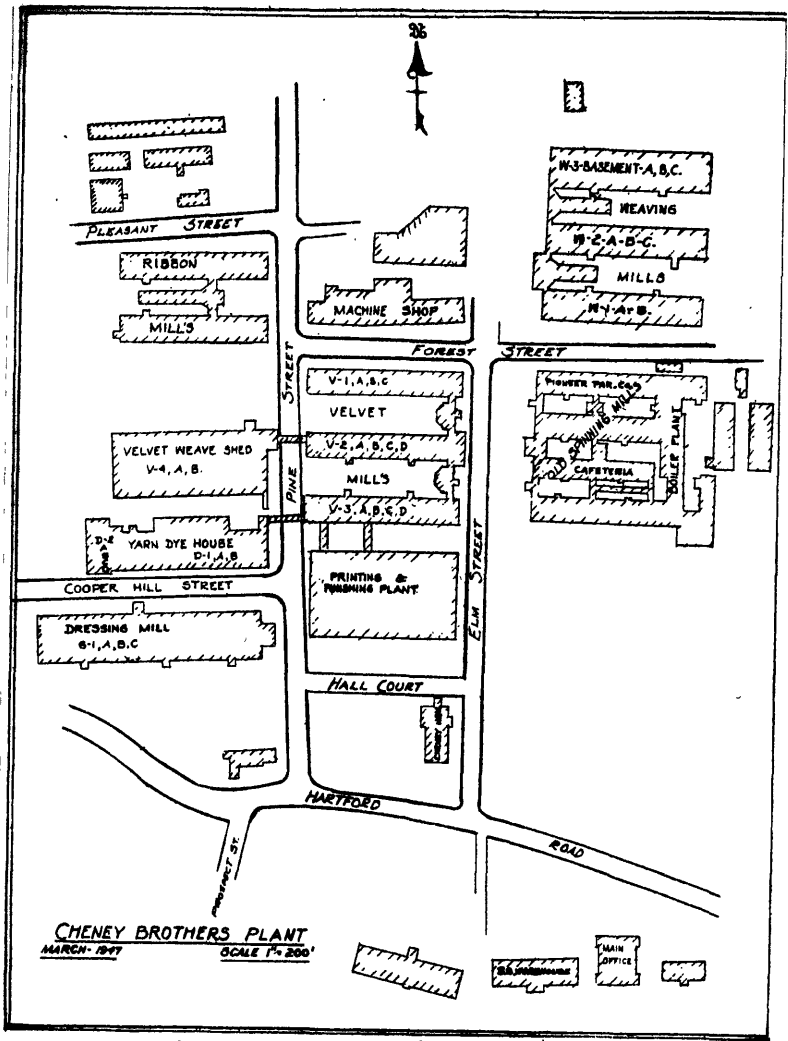
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Cheney Brothers Historic District
Manchester, Conn.

Cheney Brothers Plant Map
March 1947
Reduced from scale 1" = 200'

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