

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

Harrisville Historic District

AND/OR COMMON

Harrisville Historic District

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER On Harrisville-Dublin Road 3 mi. north
of N.H. 101 10 mi. west of Keene NOT FOR PUBLICATION 2

CITY, TOWN

Harrisville

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

New Hampshire

VICINITY OF

CODE

33

COUNTY

Cheshire

CODE

005

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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

Multiple (See continuation sheet.)

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COUPHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Cheshire County Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

12 Court Street

CITY, TOWN

Keene

STATE

New Hampshire

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE National Register of Historic Places

Historic American Buildings Survey (New England Textile Mill

Survey II)

DATE

1971; 1968 & 1971

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

National Register; Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

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 Harrisville Historic District encompasses approximately 200 acres and includes the Harrisville Pond; the brick Upper or Harris Mill and attendant structures; the granite Lower or Cheshire No. 1 Mill and attendant structures; the Cheshire and Harris boarding houses and three small clusters of workers' houses; the home of the town's first settler and the dwellings of nine owners or partners in the Harris and Cheshire Mills; two 19th-century churches, an 1857 schoolhouse, an 1840 general store and assembly hall, and several municipal structures; and about 35 other residences. Most of the buildings are red brick or white frame and date from the middle of the 19th century. The majority are little altered, and as a group, along with Harrisville Pond and Goose Brook, they constitute what Sande calls "an eloquent reminder of the industrial villages common in pre-Civil War New England."¹¹ The principal district structures are described below.

I. Mills and Associated Structures.

Upper or Harris Mill (East corner of Main and Prospect Streets). This 2 1/2-story red brick mill was erected across Goose Brook by Milan Harris in 1832-33. It is rectangular-shaped, measures about 80 by 36 feet, and has a gabled roof with an eyebrow monitor, the earliest kind of factory rooftop. Along the first and second floors of the north and south sides and on all three floors of the east and west ends, 12-over-12 sash windows light the interior. The structure rests on a granite rubble foundation and displays barn floor framing rather than slow-burn mill framing. It has undergone two major alterations, but apparently both occurred before 1862. These were the extension of the west end by 20 feet and the addition thereto of a four-story brick tower with winding stair and open octagonal cupola. Now restored, the building is used by Harrisville Designs. Outside the structure, along its north side, are its iron gate-control mechanisms.

Harris Mill Storehouse (Northwest corner, Main and Prospect Streets). This 2 1/2-story, gable roofed, red brick structure with partially raised basement sits on a granite rubble "platform" over the mill pond north of the Upper Mill. Although atypical as a storehouse because of its large number of windows,

(continued

¹¹Sande, Industrial Archeology, 36.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(See continuation sheet.)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY circa 200 acres **E** 1.8 73.712.0.0 4.7578.0.0
F 1.8 73.610.5.0 4.75910.5.0

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>1.8</u>	<u>73.640.0</u>	<u>4.716.02.5.0</u>	B	<u>1.8</u>	<u>73.715.0</u>	<u>4.7591.0.0</u>
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	<u>1.8</u>	<u>73.745.0</u>	<u>4.7591.0.0</u>	D	<u>1.8</u>	<u>73.755.0</u>	<u>4.7578.0.0</u>
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

(See continuation sheet.)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

George R. Adams, Director, Historic Landmarks Project

ORGANIZATION

DATE

American Association for State and Local History June 1977

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

1400 Eighth Avenue South

615/242-5583

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Nashville,

Tennessee

37203

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

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

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

723

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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CONTINUATION SHEET Harrisville ITEM NUMBER 4 PAGE one

OWNERS OF PROPERTY

John Colony, Jr.
Harrisville, N.H. 03450

Peanut Row Workers' Houses
(Part corner).
Cyrus Harris-Henry Colony House
(1828).
Water rights to Harrisville Pond.
Misc. property (some with Charles
Colony).

John Colony, III.
Harrisville Designs
Harrisville, N.H. 03450

Bethuel Harris House (1819)
(Post Office).

Charles Colony
Harrisville, N.H. 03450

Peanut Row Workers' Houses (Part
Owner).
House NW corner Church & School St.
Misc. property (some with John
Colony, Jr.).

John P. Hansel
President
Filtrine Industries
Harrisville, N.H. 03450

Granite Mill of Cheshire Mills.
Brick Mill and other Associated
structures of Cheshire Mills.
Cheshire Mills Storehouse.

Historic Harrisville, Inc.
Harrisville, N.H. 03450

Upper Mill of Harris Mills.
Cheshire Mills Boardinghouse.
Old Harris Mills Boiler House.
Harris Mills Boarding House.
Harris Mills Sorting House &
Storehouse.

Board of Selectman
Town of Harrisville
Harrisville, N.H. 03450

Town Library (The 1839 Vestry).
Selectmen's Office (former Library).
Fire House.
Boston & Maine R.R. depot.

Harrisville Congregational
Church
Harrisville, N.H. 03450

Congregational Church.
Almon Harris House (1835).
Island Cemetery.

Father Horan
St. Denis Roman Catholic Ch.
Harrisville, N.H. 03450

St. Denis Catholic Church.

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Herbert Allen
Harrisville, N.H. 03450

Abel Twitchell House
(1774).

Mary Clark
Clark General Store
Harrisville, N.H. 03450

General Store (1840).

Lauren Libow
Harrisville, N.H. 03450

Old Schoolhouse (1857).

Richard Merrifield
Harrisville, N.H. 03450

Milan Walter Harris House
(1852).

John Clark
Harrisville, N.H. 03450

Milan Harris House (1833).
Misc. property.

Walter Richardson
Harrisville, N.H. 03450

Abner Hutchinson House (1835).

Robert Rawley
(Wilmington, Del.)
Address to: Harrisville, N.H. 03450
P.O. will forward.

C.C.P. Harris House (1835).

Lawrence Winn
Harrisville, N.H. 03450

Old Blacksmith Shop (1880).
Adjacent houses on Chesham Road,
including Brooks House (1820).
Tract of undeveloped land.

Al Lefleur
c/o Monadnock Lumber Co.
Peterborough, N.H. 03458

Edwin Heald
Harrisville, N.H. 03450

Heald Farm.

Frank Lane
Harrisville, N.H. 03450

Old Steam Bath House.
Lane House.

New England Telephone Co.
(Manchester, N.H.)
Address to Harrisville, N.H.
03450. P.O. will forward.

Framehouse on Main Street
across from Harrisville
Designs office.

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The following persons own either one or more houses and lots or timberland in the district. Each may be contacted by mail at Harrisville, N.H., 03450. The local postmaster will forward all correspondence. Lot numbers were unavailable because town tax map is undergoing revision.

Donald Lazesky

John Spellman

Sarah Saari

William Rainer

Eno Luoma

Phillip Trudelle

Fanny Luoma

Lawrence McClure

Foster Wilder

Harold Blake

Two houses on Chesham Road;
one is currently listed for sale.

Justin Vakauva

Mary Saari

Arvo Luoma

John Johnson

Paul Brown

Modern house; does not contribute
to historic significance of the
district.

Peter Keough

Charles King

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Robert Watkins

James A. Sibley

The Harrisville School, Inc.

Jorma Kangas

Donald McLane

Arto Lenino

Richard Monohan

William Frye

James A. Putnam

Margaret Messer

Fred Davis

Ray Dundes

R. Gibbons

Robert Capellaro

Christopher Smith

John Korpi

Moses Bergeron

Pat Sheehan

Kieth Randall

Gordon Getty

Jeff Howard

Mary Gillman

Warren Thayer

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the simple yet eloquent slate-roofed building measures about 50 by 32 feet and is compatible in style with the nearby mill. Like the mill, the storehouse is recently restored, and presently it houses the offices of Harrisville Designs.

Harris Mill Boiler House (On Goose Brook south of Harris Mill). This small, rectangular-shaped, red brick structure with slate-covered gabled roof was erected by Milan Harris sometime before 1850. It rests astride Goose Creek between the Upper or Harris Mill and the site of the Middle Mill, which burned in 1882. In sound condition but scheduled for restoration, the tiny building now houses a small toy-making operation.

Middle Harris Mill Storehouse and Sorting House (Northeast corner of Grove and Water Streets). Part of the complex of mill support buildings erected by Milan Harris prior to 1850, this abutting pair of red brick structures consists of a two-story, gable-roofed, rectangular-shaped, five-bay-long building and a slightly taller, gable-roofed, square-shaped, three-bay-wide edifice. The former features 8-over-12 sash windows, while the latter has 12-over-8 sashes. Both have slate-covered roofs, appear to be in sound condition, and are used currently by Harrisville Designs.

Lower Mill or Cheshire Mill No. 1 (Southeast corner of Main and Grove Streets). Designed by Cyrus Harris and built by Asa Greenwood, this 2 1/2-story granite ashlar mill was erected in 1847-50. It is typical of the stone mills that were common at the time in southern Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Rectangular in shape and oriented east to west across Goose Brook several hundred feet south of the Upper or Harris Mill, the structure features a partially raised basement, measures about 111 by 44 feet, has a gabled roof with a clerestory monitor, and displays evenly spaced 15-over-15 sash windows. A four-story granite tower, with winding stair and open octagonal cupola, rises from the west end. Unlike the Upper Mill, the Lower Mill displays slow burn construction. Over the years the building itself has undergone little noticeable alteration, but a number of structures have been appended to it. At present the complex houses Filtrine Industries, manufacturers of custom water coolers and filters, and gets its electric power largely from a Goose Brook-powered 1921 Morgan Smith turbine that draws 60 CFS and turns a 1921 General Electric generator.

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Northern Waterpower, Inc., installed this system within the last year and now is preparing to open an office and shop in the complex and utilize the old Cheshire Mills machine tools.

Cheshire Mill No. 2 (Southeast corner of Main and Grove Streets). Situated north to south immediately below Cheshire Mill No. 1 and attached to it by a one-bay-long three-story wing, this red brick mill, which was constructed about 1860, represents the first major step in the Colony family's expansion of the former Cyrus Harris woolen operation. The rectangular building rises three stories under a slate-covered gable roof, measures about 75 feet long and 44 feet wide, and features eight-over-eight sash windows with granite sills and lintels in both of its nine-bay sides and in its five-bay south end. Over the years the mill has received two additions. A one-story flat-roofed wing was attached along the west side early in this century, and a two-story gable-roofed wing was erected at the south end of the mill sometime in the 19th century. Probably the latter wing was a separate structure initially. In any case it serves now as the residence of the president of Filtrine Industries. Interestingly, Harrisville Designs utilizes a portion of Mill No. 2 in the manufacture of wool yarn.

Cheshire Mills Picker House (Southeast corner of Main and Grove Streets). Now almost hidden from view by subsequent construction, this two-story red brick structure with slate-covered gable roof was erected about 1860 at the same time as Cheshire Mill No. 2. The relatively small structure measures only about 20 by 55 feet, is oriented east to west, and abuts the north side of Cheshire Mill No. 1 near that building's rear quadrant.

New Cheshire Mill (Southeast corner of Main and Grove Streets). This two-story, flat-roofed, red brick mill was erected in 1922. It is rectangular shaped, measures about 60 by 120 feet, is situated north to south, and is attached along its south end to the north side of the picker house. Large, double, 20-light, industrial windows, separated by brick pilasters, light the interior of the structure, which is in excellent condition and houses part of Filtrine Industries' operations.

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Cheshire Mills Storehouse (Southeast corner of Main and Grove Streets). This 1 1/2-story, gable-roofed, red brick structure was erected about 1860 as part of the Cheshire Mills expansion that included mill no. 2 and the picker house. The slate-roofed building is practically windowless and thus more typical of early textile industry storage buildings than are the Harris warehouses.

II. Workers' Housing.

Cheshire Mills Company Boarding House (Southeast corner of Main and Grove Streets). Erected about 1860, this rectangular-shaped, 2 1/2-story, red brick edifice is three bays wide and nine bays long, measures about 36 by 72 feet, rests on a stone foundation, and features a slate-covered gabled roof with seven gabled dormers on each slope. It has a full basement, four brick interior chimneys, and six-over-six sash windows set in rectangular surrounds with stone sills and lintels. The building has undergone almost no exterior and little interior alteration. A solar heating design firm uses a portion of the interior for offices, but the upstairs sleeping area and the first-floor kitchen and dining room are virtually undisturbed structurally.

Harris Mills Boarding House (Southeast corner of Prospect and Water Streets). Similar to but somewhat smaller than the Cheshire boarding house, the Harris boarding house was built about 1850. The west-facing structure rises two and one-half stories over a full, partially exposed basement, has a slate-covered gabled roof, and exhibits six-over-six sash windows with stone sills and lintels. Inside, it is divided into separate living units, each of which has its own entrance. Currently owned by Historic Harrisville, Inc., the dwelling displays little external alteration.

Peanut Row Houses (East side of Pond Street at Prospect). Cheshire Mills built these five workers' cottages in 1864. They are 1 1/2-story, white-painted, frame structures of modest size. Each has a slate-covered gabled roof, two red brick interior chimneys, a one-story rear ell, and a three-bay front with a single door in the left bay and six-over-six sash windows in the center and right bays. The west-facing residences are in good condition and exhibit little exterior alteration. Four still belong to the Colony family.

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School Street Houses (Along School Street off Church). These four cottages were also built by Cheshire Mills about 1864. Two are situated on the north side of the street and two on the south. They are almost identical in design to those on Pond Street, but the easternmost one on each side of School Street is of brick rather than frame construction. Members of the Colony family still own two of these houses.

Grove Street Houses (Along north side of Grove at Prospect). Milan Harris built these four 1 1/2-story, gable-roofed, frame dwellings in the late 1860's. Like the Cheshire houses, they display slate-covered roofs and six-over-six sash windows. The Harris houses are larger, however, and have undergone more modification over the years. Generally this has taken the form of repainting in pastel colors and adding small front porches and new shutters, but the northernmost residence has received wings on both ends. Still, the four edifices remain easily identifiable as mill workers' housing.

III. Mill Owners' and Other Residences.

Abel Twitchell House (South side of Main at Prospect). This 2 1/2-story, gray-painted, frame house with gabled roof and six-over-six sash windows was built in 1774 by Harrisville's first settler and mill owner. It continues to serve as a private residence and has undergone only minimal exterior alteration.

Bethuel Harris House (Northwest corner of Prospect and Water Streets). Bethuel Harris erected this red brick dwelling in 1819. Almost square in shape, it rises two stories over a partially exposed basement and is capped by a hipped roof with four red brick interior chimneys. It has a ground-level entrance on the southeast side and a basement-level entrance on the southwest side. The latter admits to the village post office, which is housed in a portion of the basement. Twelve-over-twelve sash windows light the interior, replacing the two-over-two sashes that the building exhibited only a few years ago.

Cyrus Harris-Henry Colony House (North side of Prospect Street). Situated immediately northeast of the Bethuel Harris House, this 2 1/2-story red brick residence dates to 1828 and is perhaps the most striking dwelling in the village. It sits on

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a stone foundation above a full basement, has a slate-covered gabled roof with four red brick interior chimneys, enjoys a small 1 1/2-story one-bay north wing, and displays a five-bay front distinguished by six-over-six sash windows flanked by green-painted louvered shutters. A three-bay-wide, balustraded, Doric-column-supported, hip-roofed porch completes the front detail. The structure, which is in excellent condition, is little altered and remains in the Colony family.

Milan Harris House (Southeast corner of Prospect and Water Streets). This 2 1/2-story, red brick, gable-roofed residence was built in 1833. It features a slate roof with four red brick interior chimneys, a five-bay front or west facade with a single sidelighted door set in a segmentally arched opening, six-over-six sash windows with stone sills and lintels and, on the first story, white-painted louvered shutters. On the north end is a one-story, rectangular-shaped, flat-roofed, red brick entrance portico topped by a flat-roofed, frame octagonal bay.

Almon Harris House (East side of Water Street across from Harris or Upper Mill Storehouse). This five-by-three bay, 2 1/2-story, red brick residence was erected in 1835. It resembles closely the Milan Harris House but lacks that structure's north portico and bay. In addition the Almon Harris House main entrance, while sidelighted like that of the Milan Harris House, is set in a rectangular opening with a double, stone lintel.

Abner Hutchinson House (Island Street adjacent to Cemetery). Hutchinson, brother-in-law and partner of Milan Harris, built this 1 1/2-story, gable-roofed, red brick residence in 1835. It features a slate roof, six-over-six sash windows, and white-painted louvered shutters and is in sound, little-altered condition.

Charles Cotesworth Pinckney Harris House (Island Street adjacent to Hutchinson House). Built in 1835 by Bethuel Harris' sixth son, this 1 1/2-story, gable-roofed, red brick edifice has received several additions over the years, including a 1 1/2-story, frame west wing and a similar east wing. Recently, architect Robert Rawley restored the entire complex.

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Milan Walter Harris House (Main Street south of Cheshire Mills Boarding House). This 1 1/2-story, gable-roofed, white-painted frame house with Gothic trim and rear ells was constructed in 1852. Still in good condition, it faces east and features a broad gable end that projects forward to shelter a three-bay-wide front porch.

Zophar Willard House (On Chesham Road north of village center, first house on right). A partner of Fred Colony in the 1870's, Willard apparently built this 1 1/2-story, gable-roofed, white-painted frame dwelling about 1880. Two gable-roofed ells have been added to the rear, but the house is in fair condition.

Other Residences. About 35 additional houses are situated within the Harrisville Historic District. Most were built between about 1850 and 1900, are of frame construction, range from one and one-half to two and one-half stories in height, and feature gabled roofs and one or more red brick chimneys. The majority of these houses are painted white, but some exhibit other colors such as red, green, and yellow. Most lie along either Chesham Road to the north, Prospect Street to the east, or Dublin Road to the south, and almost all are privately owned by the occupants and in good, little-altered (except for the addition of wings and ells) condition. One residence, that of Harold Blake on the west side of Chesham Road, was built in 1869 to serve as the Union Hotel, later the Nabanusit Hotel. Except for removal of its front porch, the structure is little changed.

IV. Miscellaneous Structures. Other buildings of special significance in the district include: the 1 1/2-story, gable-roofed, red brick Harrisville Congregational Church built in 1842; the one-story, gable-roofed, frame St. Denis Catholic Church built in 1894; the Town Library, a 1 1/2-story red brick building erected in 1839 as the Congregational vestry and converted into a municipal facility in 1967; the Selectmen's Office, a small, one-story, hip-roofed, white-painted, frame structure built sometime prior to 1880 as a transient house and moved to its present location in that year to serve as the town library, a function it fulfilled until 1935; the Old Union District No. 8 School, a 2 1/2-story, gable-roofed, white-painted, frame structure that was erected at the end of School Street in 1857 and today shows minimal exterior alteration

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while housing a pottery works; the frame Boston and Maine Railroad Depot, a small, 1 1/2-story, 19th-century building with hipped gable roof; and a frame Blacksmith Shop erected in 1880 on the shore of Harrisville Pond near the corner of Island Street and Chesham Road. Of particular importance is the General Store and Eagle Hall, erected at the intersection of Church and Main Streets in 1840. This structure consists of a 2 1/2-story, gable-roofed, red brick store (known originally as Bradley's Store and now called Clark's Country Store) and two gable-roofed, two-story, frame rear wings. For many years the hall served as a town gathering place for various public events. The store, which is remarkably little altered, continues to serve as the community's only retail outlet for groceries and general merchandise.

Boundary Justification. The boundary encompasses the entire village of Harrisville because its national significance as a historic place lies in the completeness of its preservation as an example of a typical 19th-century New England mill village. The lower portion of the village is located in the valley of the Nubanusit River or Goose Brook, and so the lower east and west boundaries roughly parallel the general contour of that valley. The upper portion of the village is situated around the south end of Harrisville Pond, and so that entire body of water is included within the district boundary. Preservation of the pond is essential to preservation of the village setting.

Boundary Description. As indicated in red on the accompanying maps [(1) U.S.G.S. 15' Series, N.H., Monadnock Quad., 1949; and (2) AASLH Sketch Map, 1977], a line beginning at a point, on the north edge of the right-of-way of the Skatutakee Road .13 mile east of that road's intersection with Dublin Road, and extending westward approximately .15 mile to an unmarked point on the north edge of the old right-of-way of the Boston and Maine Railroad (which is an extension of the Skatutakee Road); thence, almost due northeast approximately 3,500 feet in a direct line across timber and meadow land to a point on the north side of the right-of-way of Chesham Road about .1 mile west of its intersection with Nelson Road and corresponding approximately with the intersection of John Johnson's driveway

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with Chesham Road; thence, northeastward approximately 550 feet across a triangle of John Johnson's land in a line parallel to and along side of the western edge of Mary Saari's lot to the west shore of Harrisville Pond; thence, around the shore of Harrisville Pond counter-clockwise about 8,500 feet along a line corresponding to the 12-foot flood rights owned by John Colony to an unmarked point on the east shore of Harrisville Pond opposite the Sunset Beach Memorial and corresponding to the town property line at the north side of said memorial; thence, due east about 1,200 feet along a line roughly parallel to, but about 200 feet north of, the terminal section of Prospect Street to an unmarked point 150 feet north and 150 east of the northeast corner of the residence of Edwin Heald; thence, almost due south approximately 3,600 feet in a direct line across meadow and timber land to the point of beginning.

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History

Picturesque Harrisville is nestled in the Monadnock Highlands of southern New Hampshire. The tiny village was settled in the late 18th century, and since 1799 it has been a center for the manufacture of woolen goods. Because of its isolation and a citizenry concerned with saving the community's physical heritage, Harrisville has changed little over the years. Now, according to William Pierson, "Harrisville . . . is the only industrial community in America that still survives in its original form."⁴ This makes the entire village a highly important historic place, for in Ada Louise Huxtable's opinion, 19th-century American mill villages represented "a trend-setting level of social and industrial planning" that has rarely been equalled.⁵ In Harrisville this planning is readily discernable. The community, says industrial archeologist Theodore Anton Sande, "is an eloquent reminder of the industrial villages common in pre-Civil War New England."⁶

In 1629 Charles I of England gave James Mason a large grant of land that included the future site of Harrisville, but the Monadnock Highlands remained Indian country until the mid-1700's when a group of wealthy Portsmouth proprietors purchased all Mason's unclaimed acreage from his descendants and made it available for settlement. The speculators chartered a tract immediately south of present Harrisville in 1749, and the first settler arrived in the area in 1752. By 1771 this southern block had been incorporated as Dublin. The Portsmouth group chartered another tract just north of present Harrisville in 1752, and by 1774 it had been incorporated as Packersfield. It was renamed Nelson in 1814.

Harrisville, whose first settler, Abel Twitchell, arrived in 1774, straddled the Nelson-Dublin township line and was not incorporated as a separate community until 1870. It was a thriving village from the start, however. Twitchell bought

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⁴Pierson, "Harrisville, New Hampshire," 632.

⁵Huxtable, "New England Mill Village,"/40.

⁶Sande, Industrial Archeology. 36.

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104 acres at the mouth of what is known now as Harrisville Pond and built a combination grist and saw mill on Goose Brook (Nabanusit River), which spills from the 120-acre pond and drops 100 feet within one-half mile. Nearby he erected a simple frame house that still stands as a reminder of Harrisville's early days when the community was called Twitchell's Mill. With the end of the Revolutionary War a new wave of settlers came to the Monadnock region, and soon several enterprising individuals opened small shops near the pond. In 1799 Jonas Clark built a small fulling and finishing mill alongside Goose Brook and launched the woolen textile industry in Harrisville.

Because he had trouble getting and keeping apprentices and collecting debts, Clark operated his factory only a few years. While he struggled to keep it going, Twitchell and his son-in-law, Bethuel Harris, began experimenting with a wool carding machine, which they set up in Twitchell's sawmill. Harrisville now had the two essential processes--fulling and carding--from which full-fledged woolen factories usually grew, and eventually Harris took advantage of the situation "to become," says New England historian John Borden Armstrong, "a pioneer in the manufacture of woolen goods in this country."⁷ Harris proceeded cautiously at first, however. When Clark's business finally failed, Twitchell and his son bought the fulling and finishing mill, but Harris either withdrew from his partnership with Twitchell or took only a minimal interest in the new enterprise. In 1813, though, Harris bought a clothier's works in Dublin and formed a new partnership with Twitchell to manufacture woolen cloth in Harrisville. Three years later, Twitchell withdrew, leaving Harris in full control.

Over the next three decades Harris and his sons--Cyrus, Milan, and Almon--steadily expanded the family business. In 1822-23 they built a new factory on the site of the old Clark mill. Little is known about the new structure except that it was brick and contained water-driven weaving looms. These machines had been patented only a decade earlier, and thus if the Harrises were not pioneers in adopting them, they were "at least quite progressive" in doing so says Armstrong.⁸ Because

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⁷John Borden Armstrong, Factory Under the Elms: A History of Harrisville, New Hampshire, 1774-1969 (Cambridge, 1969), 17.

⁸ Ibid., 18.

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of its position relative to Harrisville factories built later, this mill was eventually called the Middle Mill.

By the 1830's the Harrises and their woolen enterprise so dominated the village of Twitchell's Mill that it became known as Harrisville. In 1832-33 Milan Harris erected, on the side of Abel Twitchell's old grist and saw mill, a large new brick woolen mill, which he operated independently of his father's business. Probably this Upper Mill used a wooden pitchback wheel with power transmitted to the textile machinery by a system of belts. In any case the simple but handsome structure still stands astride Goose Brook and now is the oldest extant mill in Harrisville. At the time of its construction it represented the beginning of a prosperous business venture for Milan Harris, who produced mostly medium grade woolens and after 1850 manufactured some black doeskin, a firm, smooth woolen cloth for men's wear. By mid-century Milan had bought the Middle Mill from his relatives and built a dyehouse, two brick storehouses, and a boarding house for his workers. According to Armstrong most of this expansion occurred in the 1850's, generally a slow time in the American woolen industry, and "so the growth of Milan Harris and Company is that much more impressive."⁹

In 1847 Milan's brother Cyrus Harris launched still another woolen firm in the community, the Harrisville Manufacturing Company. His chief partner, Asa Greenwood, was one of the best stonemasons in New England, and so they built their new Lower Mill out of granite. Consequently today Harrisville has two mills, the brick Upper Mill and the granite Lower Mill, that are in Pierson's words "classic survivals of early types of mill buildings in America."¹⁰ Unfortunately for Harris' partners he died in 1848 before the new mill was operable, and in 1850 they sold it to Faulkner and Colony, woolen manufacturers from Keene, N.H. The new owners organized and chartered a new company, Cheshire Mills, to occupy the empty granite edifice.

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⁹Ibid., 24

¹⁰Pierson, "Harrisville, New Hampshire," 637.

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Josiah Colony and his sons--Timothy, Henry, Alfred, and John E.--proved the dominant figures in the Cheshire enterprise. During the next 2 years they set up 24 looms in the Lower Mill and thereby doubled the community's woolen producing capacity. In addition they installed an oversize, for their mill, 48-inch Fourneyron turbine that, until modified, drew too much water and caused some short-lived friction between them and the Harrises, who controlled the water supply. The Colonys also erected a dyehouse, boilerhouse, brick storehouse, and brick boardinghouse for workers. Cheshire Mills products, mostly flannels, were marketed so successfully through Faulkner, Kimball, and Company, commission agents in Boston, that about 1860 the Colonys expanded their operation by building a brick mill at right angles onto the south side of the granite mill and adding a pickerhouse rear of it.

The village of Harrisville grew slowly but steadily along with the woolen industry. Initially most of the mill workers came apparently from the local populace, but the Colonys found it necessary to advertise for skilled laborers outside the community. Most of the village's operatives in the 1850's were single men and women who lived in the Harris and Cheshire boarding houses. About one-third were foreign-born, and most of these were English, Irish, and Canadian. Few children labored in the mills. In addition to erecting the boarding houses and their own private homes, the mill owners eventually built family housing for their operatives. In 1864 the Colonys constructed five frame tenements on the west bank of Harrisville Pond and four similar houses along what is now School Street west of Cheshire Mills. A few years later Milan Harris put up four larger frame tenements along what is now Grove Street east of the Upper Mill. A general store, town buildings, and churches completed the village scene of the 1860's. Almost all these structures remain today.

In 1870, after the citizens of Dublin and Nelson refused financial support for a proposed Manchester and Keene Railroad line along their common border, the New Hampshire Legislature approved the incorporation of Harrisville as a separate town whose citizenry supported the railroad. Thanks in part to its construction and in part to the community's industry, which now included a chair factory and several other wood products mills, by the 1880's Harrisville's population was

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greater than that of Dublin and Nelson combined. Afterward the growth rate leveled off, and during the last years of the century the population declined somewhat. In this same period Milan Harris and Company failed, largely because Harris overextended himself. In 1867 he replaced his Middle Mill with a larger New Mill and installed \$75,000 worth of new machinery. By 1870 Harris and Company's annual production had risen to 150,000 yards of cloth, up from 90,000 in 1860, but the national woolen market had become depressed. When the Panic of 1873 struck, Harris lost his factories to a Boston commission house, which leased them to Henry Colony's son Fred and two others. They upgraded the mills and produced woolen cloth until 1882 when a fire of mysterious origin destroyed both the New Mill and their company. In contrast, under the skillful management of Henry and Horatio Colony the Cheshire Mills prospered throughout the late 19th century the Colonys improved their power system in 1884 and again in 1900, bought the Milan Harris mill property in 1887, weathered a minor labor dispute in the 1890's, and continued to produce a large variety of quality flannel goods.

During the first half of the 20th century Cheshire Mills continued to be the principal cog in Harrisville's economy, while physically the village changed little. Horatio Colony's son, John Joslin Colony, became president of Cheshire Mills in 1918 and continued in that capacity until his death in 1955, when he was succeeded by his son John Joslin Colony, Jr. In these years the company's business generally fluctuated according to the ups and downs of the national economy, and the community fared similarly. The Colonys added a new brick mill to the Lower Mill's picker house in 1922, and this constituted the last significant alteration in the town's appearance. The general composition of the population changed about 1902, however, with an influx of Finnish immigrants and again after mid-century with a wave of summer residents. Finally, in 1970 a national craze for double knit fabrics spelled the Cheshire Mills' doom. High production costs prohibited manufacture of the new material in Harrisville, and so the mills ceased operating. The town did not fold, though. Filtrine Industries, makers of water filtering and cooling equipment, soon occupied the granite mill complex, and appropriately John J. Colony, III, opened Harrisville Designs, a new woolen yarn making company, in some of the old Milan Harris and Company buildings. A historic district has been created in the center of the community, which continues, little altered, to be a small but active New England mill village.

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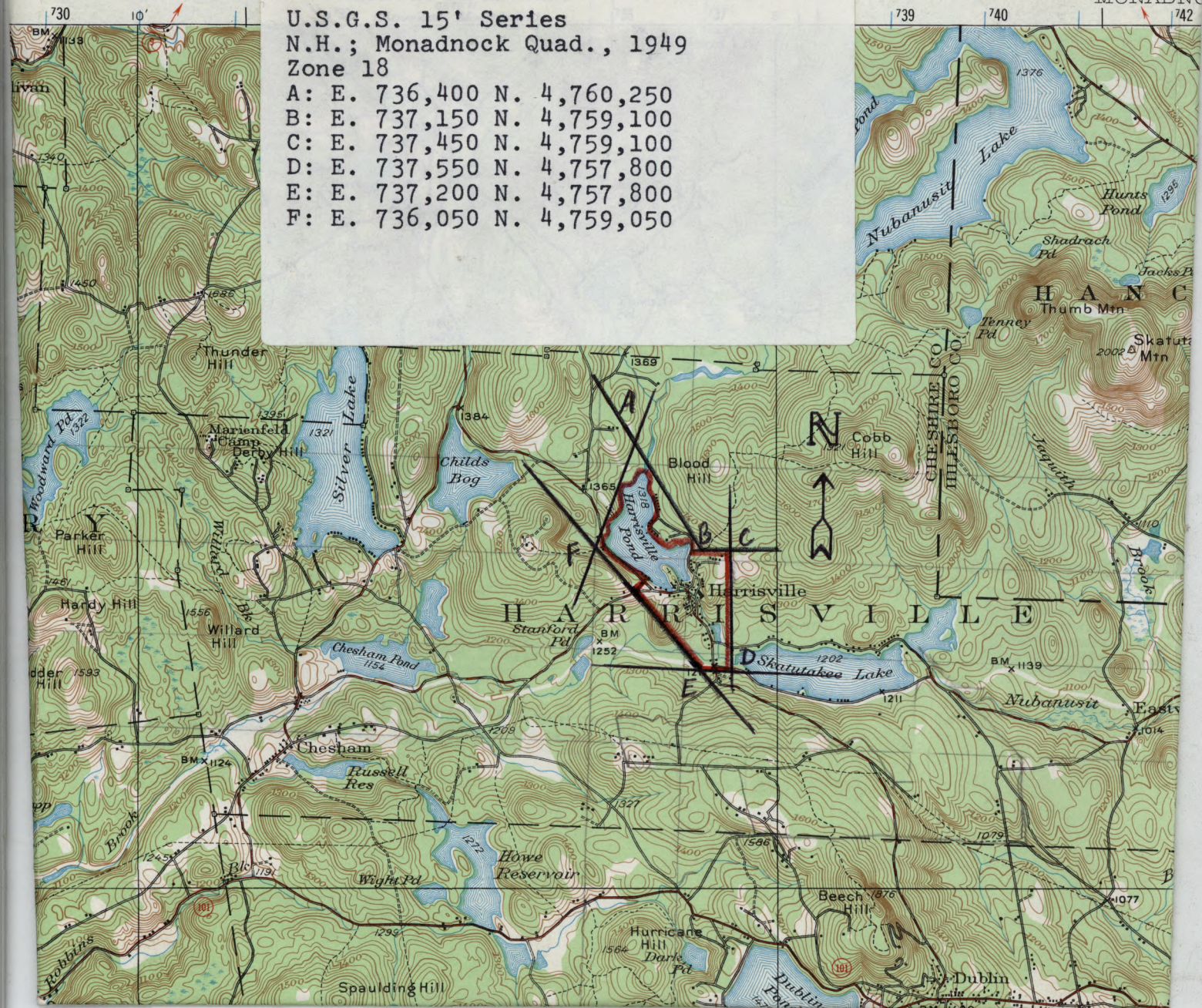
Harrisville Historic District
Harrisville, N.H. *co. Cheshire*

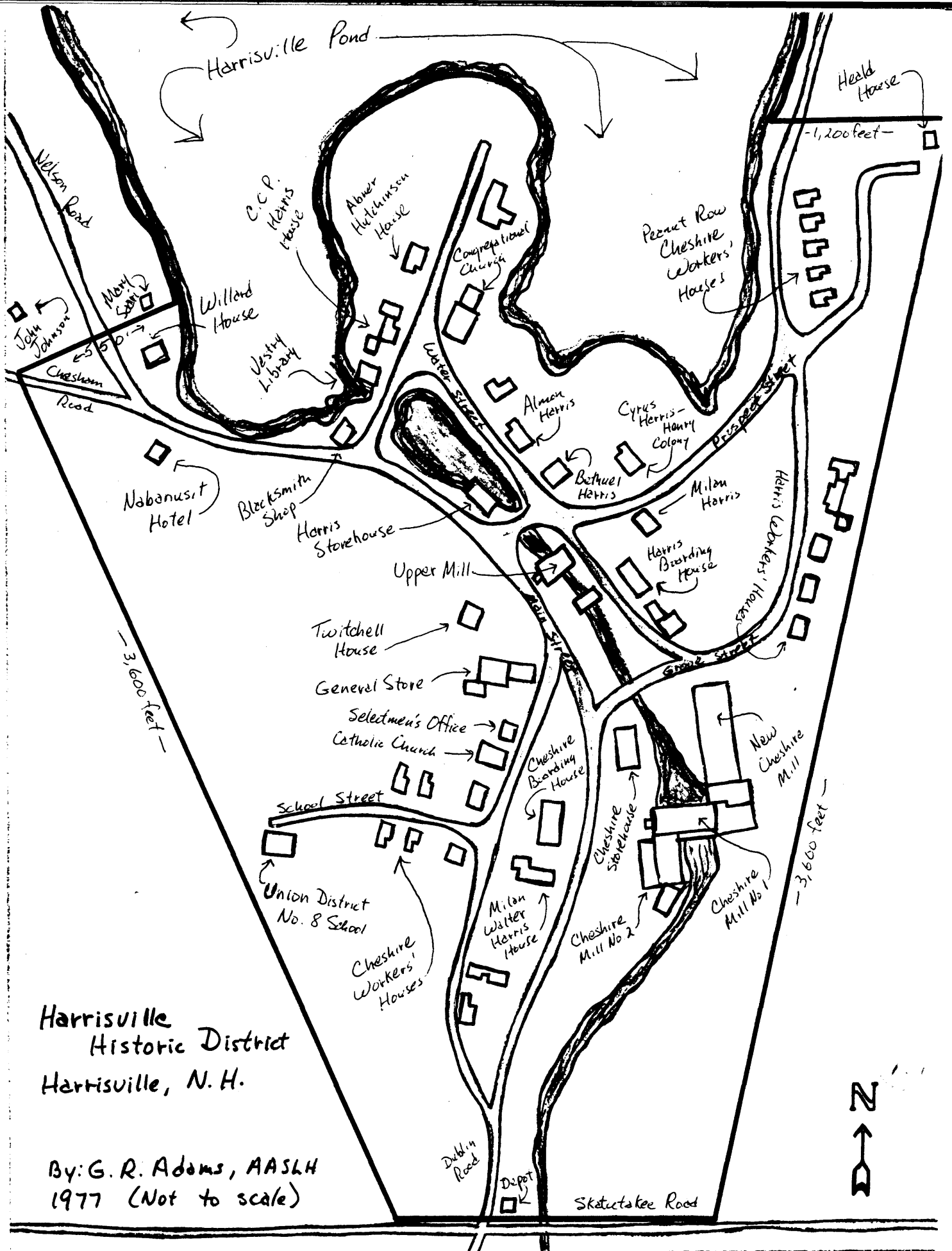
U.S.G.S. 15' Series
N.H.; Monadnock Quad., 1949
Zone 18

A: E. 736,400 N. 4,760,250
B: E. 737,150 N. 4,759,100
C: E. 737,450 N. 4,759,100
D: E. 737,550 N. 4,757,800
E: E. 737,200 N. 4,757,800
F: E. 736,050 N. 4,759,050

HILLSBORO 20 MI.
MUNSONVILLE 1.2 MI.

MARLOW 13 MI. NEW
SOUTH STODDARD 3.7 MI. MONADNOCK





**Harrisville
 Historic District
 Harrisville, N. H.**

By: G. R. Adams, AASHH
 1977 (Not to scale)