

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

received NOV 30 1987 date entered JAN 14 1988

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

1. Name

historic Historic Resources of Harrisville, New Hampshire and/or common (Partial Inventory: Historical and Architectural Resources)

2. Location

street & number not for publication city, town vicinity of state New Hampshire code 33 county Cheshire code

3. Classification

Table with 5 columns: Category, Ownership, Status, Present Use, and other. Includes checkboxes for various options like 'public', 'private', 'occupied', 'unoccupied', 'agriculture', 'commercial', etc.

4. Owner of Property Multiple Ownership

name (see continuation sheets and individual inventory forms) street & number city, town vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Cheshire County Courthouse - Registry of Deeds street & number Court Street city, town Keene state New Hampshire

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Harrisville Multiple Resource. Nomination Survey has this property been determined eligible? X Partially title date 1983 federal state county X local depositary for survey records Historic Harrisville, Inc. city, town Harrisville state New Hampshire Also see individual property and district nomination forms

# 7. Description

## Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

## Check one

unaltered  
 altered

## Check one

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

### Description (for the Whole Nomination)

#### I. Introduction

Harrisville survives into the late 20th century through a felicitous combination of adaptability, frugality and benign neglect, as an unusually intact visual record of the history of rural upland New Hampshire. Currently existing local resources illustrate each period of this community's development from the establishment of the earliest settlers' hill farms, through their "Age of Self-Sufficiency," the early manufacturing era followed by a dynamic though erratic industrial period and resulting growth in village activity, the arrival of the railroad, and the ensuing supremacy of the summer resident. It is of primary importance for Harrisville that these resources not only persist but in many cases are in continuing or renewed use for their original purpose.

#### A. Natural Features

The key to understanding Harrisville's development lies in an appreciation for the intense responsiveness of that development to the area's natural resources and landscape. A town of approximately 13,125 acres or 20.5 square miles located in the Monadnock highlands region of eastern Cheshire County, it lies at an average altitude of 1318 feet within the spiritual as well as physical shadow of Grand Monadnock (alt. 3165 feet). Densely forested hillsides, laced with stone walls and strewn with glacial boulders make up the majority of the town's land surface. Predominant indigenous tree types include hardwoods such as maple, oak, horse chestnut and some surviving elms and conifers like hemlock and several varieties of pine. In 1984, only 13.8 percent of Harrisville is developed land cleared for settlement, cultivation, grazing, or recreation or put to commercial, industrial or public and/or institutional use. However, 79 percent of the town's land area is characterized by severe constraints to development by such factors as poor drainage and steep slopes.

Approximately one-sixth of Harrisville's area is made up of a collection of ponds, lakes, brooks and marshes. One-third of these flow west into the Minnewawa Watershed, the rest east into the Contoocook River and thence toward the Atlantic Ocean. Several of these have been created, altered, and/or harnessed by man for use as power sources. These include Silver Lake, Childs' Bog, Chesham and

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 7 Page 2

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Seaver's Ponds and Russell Reservoir. In addition, a ten square mile drainage area originating in the neighboring towns of Nelson and Hancock empties into Harrisville Pond. As described in John Borden Armstrong's Factory Under the Elms, "the water then runs off into Goose Brook, turbulently descends a steep ravine in a southerly direction, and soon empties into what is known as North Pond. From here, the water runs into a branch of the Contoocook River and eventually into the Merrimack. In the nine miles before joining the Contoocook, the water falls a total of 600 feet."1 Harrisville's mill village straddles the point at which the water courses into Goose Brook from Harrisvill Pond. Beaver Pond is found in the northeast corner of Harrisville. Neighboring Dinsmoor Pond is part of a U.S. government flood control project regulated through the MacDowell Dam in Peterborough.

### B. Man-Made Features

Harrisville in 1984 presents an especially complete range of surviving built resources representing a series of development types and land uses illustrative of its history. Included are early agricultural settlements, examples of small cottages in which early commercial and manufacturing activities took place, "the only industrial community in America that still survives in its original form" (Note Pierson article, p. 632), and modest to magnificent summer residences built for colonies of vacationers from the region as well as the wealthy "from away". There are also examples of more recent trends; a return to looking at the land as a source of income and the increasingly frequent conversion of summer homes to year-round use.

The arrival and activities of the railroad have provided a framework for Harrisville's development during much of the past century as well as having served as the impetus for townhood itself. The three stations, two of which survive, served historically both as foci for Harrisville's three villages (Eastview, Harrisville and Chesham) and links with the world beyond.

This unique community's survival into the late 20th century with such an unusually high degree of integrity has allowed it to play an ongoing pivotal role in the history of historic preservation itself.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

RECEIVED

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 7 Page 3

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Not only does its brick mill village represent a successful example of adaptive reuse, so, too, do its other types of development persist with sufficient wholesomeness to suggest their usefulness as a research control for the understanding of their relationship both to such industrial enterprises and to other similar areas in the state and region.

### C. Current Physical Description

Harrisville (population 850 in 1983) is governed by a three-member Board of Selectmen, just as it has been from the time of its incorporation. It is served by an extensive 277 acre road network which connects its two active villages, Harrisville and Chesham, with Hancock to the east, Nelson to the north, Dublin to the south, and Marlborough and Roxbury to the west. Outlying areas remain sparsely settled with the exception of concentrations of summer activity on the shores of Silver Lake, Lade Skatutakee (earlier known as North Pond) and Russell Reservoir. There is no surviving form of public transportation.

While approximately 25 percent of Harrisville's land is currently being put to farming uses ranging from sheep raising to truck farming and maple sugar and timber harvesting, only one family depends entirely upon farming for its subsistence. Commercial establishments are also few and far between (occupying only .2 percent of total land). One store (currently known as Raynor's) continues to serve Harrisville village as it has for 145 years. Other commercial enterprises include the SolarVision Publishing Company, the National Building News, the Mountain Missionary Press, and several small service businesses and manufacturing enterprises.

Indispensable to Harrisville's survival has been its ongoing ability to recycle its extant industry-related buildings, especially for industrial uses. Under the aegis of Historic Harrisville, Inc., a non-private, not-for-profit corporation formed in 1971 for just this purpose, tenants have been found for virtually all of the 25 core village buildings bought by Historic Harrisville from the Colony family on the occasion of the bankruptcy of the Cheshire Mills Company. A large portion of the actual manufacturing space, the Cheshire Mills complex itself, was sold in 1972 to Filtrine, Inc. a

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 7 Page 4

---

sizeable producer of water filtration and cooling systems. Other manufacturing enterprises include Harrisville Designs, whose products include looms and spun wool for home weavers, Country Life Natural Foods, and Finestkind Timber Frames. The predominantly brick mill complex and its support housing serve as a dramatic visual focus for Harrisville village, which has been listed since 1977 as a National Historic Landmark in recognition of the extreme value and rarity of this important survival.

The overwhelming number of Harrisville's buildings are now, as they have historically been, wood frame residences. An increasing percentage of Harrisville's almost entirely native-born population commutes out of town to jobs in Peterborough, Keene and Dublin. Approximately 35 percent of the town's housing stock is made up of seasonal units owned and used primarily by non-resident summer vacationers.

There is currently very little new construction being undertaken in Harrisville, nor has there been since an early 20th century resort building boom. Frugality and adaptability as well as respect for the past have been at the root of local citizens' preference for the continued use of existing buildings.

In addition to the rare and important survival of virtually the entire central mill complex and support village, Harrisville contains the following concentrations of man-made resources significant to its development:

1. The Harrisville Rural District: a concentration of above ground, near ground and underground hill farm cultural resources characterized by superior integrity and rare homogeneity over an extended period of time,
2. Pottersville: an important early center for the manufacture of redware pottery and woodenware,
3. Chesham Village: a mid-19th century farming/commercial settlement and the site of Harrisville's best surviving railroad station and cast iron fence (at Riverside Cemetery).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 7 Page 5

4. Silver Lake: a summer resort colony built by and for entrepreneurs and professionals of Marlborough and Keene, which continues to serve its original function.

Other important extant resources include several intact farms, remnants of the railroad era, and a handful of imposing summer "cottages" which bear a direct relationship to similar development in neighboring communities such as Dublin. Several buildings are noteworthy for superior artisanry or craftsmanship and/or skillful use of materials. In addition, Harrisville is rich in undisturbed archaeological resources.

II. Historical Development

The History of Harrisville reaches back slightly more than a century to the town's date of incorporation: 1870. However, an additional earlier century must be added to record the activities of persons of European descent within the town's current boundaries.

Harrisville's history, as discussed at greater length in #8, can best be understood within the framework of the following nine periods:

A. Pre-1760: Native Migration, during which native Americans are known to have migrated through what would later become Harrisville, camping temporarily on terraces overlooking local bodies of water. (Note: It is the intention of this nomination to call the area within the post-incorporation boundaries of Harrisville, bodies of water and roads by their current names to avoid cumbersome and repetitive explanations.)

B. 1760-1800: Early Agricultural Settlement, during which a handful of young and adventurous immigrants of European descent from Massachusetts and elsewhere in New Hampshire were lured by strong inducements offered by the Masonian proprietors to "perform the duties of settlement" on rocky Harrisville hilltops. In addition to establishing their self-sufficient farmsteads, they had cleared several roads by the end of the Revolution, organized a Baptist Society, and started three milling operations and two potteries by the turn of the 19th century. Seventeen buildings, all but one residences, which were entirely or partially constructed during this period survive.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

RECEIVED

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 7 Page 6

C. 1800-1823: Agricultural Self-Sufficiency/Early Industrialization, during which hill farmsteads multiplied and thrived, often becoming the sites of small cottage industries which were frequently textile-related. Pottersville, in southwest Harrisville, grew in size and reputation as did a large sawmill, wheelwright and woodenware manufactory nearby. By 1823, textile milling operations at Twitchell's Mills (Harrisville village) had become a complete, self-contained woolen cloth manufacturing operation with a factory in place.

D. 1823-1850: Industrial Consolidation/Early Agricultural Decline, during which agricultural decline was given a brief reprieve locally by "sheep mania" and Harrisville village's industrial character was firmly established by the construction by the Harris family of two new mills, one brick and one granite. Both mills were supported by a full complement of auxiliary structures. Housing needs were satisfied by a flurry of new construction, including brick Neo-Classical homes for mill owners Cyrus, Milan, Almon and C.C.P. Harris and Abner Hutchinson, and a handful of other dwellings, all wood frame. Several social, commercial, and institutional buildings were build during this period. Residences were also built in Pottersville, while some hill farms were facing abandonment. Eastview, still agricultural, became the location for the Dublin Town Poor Farm.

E. 1850-1870: Supremacy of the Mill Village/Industrial Boom, during which rapid expansion of the Harrisville mills was stimulated by the Civil War. The most significant addition to the mill village's building inventory was a full complement of mill workers' housing, the overwhelming majority of which survives. (See the accompanying 1858 map for evidence of the Chesire Mills Company's major building campaign which raised the number of houses in the village to 60.) Pottersville, from which the pottery industry has vanished by the end of the period, stabilized at approximately two dozen houses, while Chesham Village and Eastview grew even smaller.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 7 Page 7

F. 1870-1900: Industrial Fluctuation/Influx of Summer Residents, during which Harrisville incorporated as an independent town over the issue of the railroad. The mill village (see 1877 map) doubled its housing stock and population since 1860. Its residents established a Roman Catholic parish to serve Irish and French Canadian mill workers and built its church. Farming continued to decline despite a relatively brief interest in dairying. An influx of summer residents drawn by a pastoral setting made accessible by the completion of the railroad was the most significant development in the years immediately prior to 1900. (see 1906 map.)

G. 1900-1915: The Supremacy of the Summer Resident, during which village life suffered from the consequences of economic uncertainty and a population decline and saw the arrival of a group of Finnish mill workers and their families. A major impact was left on Harrisville's landscape as well as its economic and social life with the arrival of summer residents ranging from the wealthy and powerful of New York and Massachusetts, who built large architect-designed mansions, to businessmen from Keene and Marlborough, who built picturesque cottages at Silver Lake.

H. 1915-1940: Social Quickening/Industrial Survival, during which the number of summer residences more than quadrupled, summer residents took an active role in the improvement of the village and the Cheshire Mills Company struggled for survival while all other smaller local milling operations were eradicated.

III. Architectural Component

With the notable exception of the core mill village itself, the overwhelming number of Harrisville's buildings are now, as they have historically been, conservatively styled wood frame residences. All were built of native materials (except for Aldworth Manor, IP-15, the only moved building to be individually nominated) and sited in a manner especially responsive to topographical considerations. Several styles popular elsewhere in New England are rare (Gothic Revival) or virtually unknown (Second Empire, Italianate) in Harrisville. Styles which were enthusiastically adopted, the Greek Revival for example, tended to persist to an unusually late date.

No primitive log and daub houses, which were the first building construction efforts of the earliest settlers, survive. However, more than a dozen cape cottages of the period 1760-1800 are still extant in Harrisville. The homesteads of early hill farmers, they

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 7 Page 8

---

are commonly of 1-1/2 wood frame stories and 3 or 5 bays wide with a center entry, center chimney and steeply pitched roof. They are generally quite small, of two room plan, and have usually received several ells or additions and frequently dormers and/or porches. They are most often oriented to enjoy a southern exposure (cf. IP-3, the Eaton/Richardson House) but occasionally they face a spectacular view (cf. PD-4, the Bemis/Starr House) or a barn or barnyard (cf. IP-23, the John Adams Homestead/Wellscroft.)

Surviving cape cottages in Eastview include Glencrest (IP-1, c. 1802), the Gilcrest Homestead (IP-2 & IP-3, c. 1790). All of the contributing houses in the Harrisville Rural District are cape cottages except two. One of them, the Benjamin Mason Homestead (HRD-13A) is likely to be Harrisville's oldest house, a date of 1762 being inferred from its original deed. Another candidate for that title is the Rollins/Phelps House (PD-7, 1765), one of a group of four surviving cape cottages on Brown Road in the Pottersville District. One cape cottage, the Broods House (HVD-94, 1820), occurs in Harrisville village, while others are on scattered hilltop sites. Notable examples include the Willard Homestead (IP-22, 1787), the John Adams Homestead/Wellscroft (IP-23, pre-1773) and Silver Lake Cottage (IP-24, 1798), all in western Harrisville. Two, the Merrill Russell House (PD-30, 1859) and the Clymer House (IP-10, 1932) indicated by their very late dates the strong persistence of the colonial image and identification with early settlers as a powerful element of New Hampshire's collective cultural memory.

Two frame houses of a more substantially late Georgian variety common in less rural communities survived in Harrisville. One the Abel Twitchell House (HVD-90, c. 1774), was the home of Harrisville village's first settler. It shares with the Farnum/Upton House (PD-9, c. 1779) its 5-bay, center entry configuration, 2-1/2 story height and four-room plan.

Harrisville's earliest houses often continue to survive as the pivotal structure of the farms of which they served as principal residences. They participate in several different choices of building arrangement: 1) part of a U-shaped pattern with sheds and barns (cf. HRD-1A, the Abijah Twitchell Homestead, and IP-10 the Clymer House, a Colonial Revival example), 2) separate with scattered sheds and a barn across the road (cf. IP-3, the Gilcrest Homestead)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

RECEIVED

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 7 Page 9

---

or 3) as the anchor section of a chain of connected auxiliary structures (the local vernacular "additive architecture" (cf. CVD-7, the Josiah Knight Farm, and the farm at IP-14 for two of many Harrisville examples). The Smith/Mason Farm at IP-19 is an especially well-maintained complex which demonstrates both the "additive" and "barn across the road" arrangement. As is the case in most northern New England communities, Harrisville's largest and oldest barns are threatened by the high cost of their upkeep in an area in which dependence on agriculture is radically diminishing.

The pivotal contribution to Harrisville's comprehensive and otherwise representative catalog of surviving upland New Hampshire resources is its mill village, the only one of its kind to survive in virtually its original form. Its Neo-Classical brick buildings and their orderly arrangement do have precedence, but they are quite unlike the rest of the community and their integrity surpasses that of any similar resource anywhere.

The unique assets in this village fall into three categories, 1) the mills themselves and their support structures, 2) the mill owner's houses, and 3) the surviving evidence of landscape and planning principles which afford them such cohesion.

The Harris Mill (HVD-47, 1832-33) and its storehouse (HVD-49) and sorting house (HVD-51) which date from the second quarter of the 19th century, are of classical inspiration and fashioned of locally manufactured red brick. The rectangular mill itself, with its gabled roof, trap-door monitor, and added tower with cupola, was inspired by earlier Rhode Island examples. The Cheshire Mill #1 (HVD-39, 1846-49) similar to mills in the Blackstone River area of southern Massachusetts and northern Rhode Island, is of Marlborough granite ashlar and features a clerestory monitor and an original vertical circulation tower with cupola. Cheshire Mill #2 (HVD-38, 1859-60) is a 3-story red brick addition to HVD-39 which has Greek Revival features typical of its construction date (heavy rectangular granite lintels, pronounced cornice returns, etc.) and a series of three round-arched windows in each gable end which gracefully echo similar forms on the earlier Harris Mill and its storehouse. Also typical of mill construction of its period is the 1922 New Cheshire Mill (HVD-42), Harrisville's largest mill as well as its largest building.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

RECEIVED

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NOV 3 0 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 7 Page 10

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It is a brick flatroofed, rectangular pier and spandrel design reputed to have been copied from another mill whose identity is now lost. (note: An 1867 mill, with a mansarded tower of vaguely Second Empire inspiration otherwise unknown in Harrisville, burned in 1882) The Chesire Mills complex support buildings are all red brick, gable-roofed structures built during the mill's 1860's building campaign.

The survival with such integrity of Harrisville village's mill workers' housing is one of its most outstanding assets. Examples, which in the majority of cases are still residences, include: the large brick Harris (HVD-52) and Chesire Mills (HVD-24) Boarding houses, similar to those no longer extant at Lowell, Massachusetts and Manchester, New Hampshire; the School Street (HVD-27, 28, 30, and 31), Grove Street (HVD-58 - 61), and Peanut Row (HVD-65 - 69) Houses, predominantly frame single family houses identical in their Greek Revival vernacular style to the most locally popular choices elsewhere in Harrisville; and "The Acre" (IP-7), a later Greek Revival frame treatment with several locally unusual Italianate features.

The conservative Bulfinchian Neo-Classical style of which the Harrisville mill owners' houses are such good examples have at least one precedent elsewhere in the community: The Jededeiah Kilburn Southwick House (PD-24, c. 1808), home of a prominent Massachusetts-born Pottersville potter. It shares with mill owners' houses in the mill village itself, most of which were built in the 1830's, its locally manufactured brick material and its classical proportions featuring a symmetrical, five-bay, center-entry principal facade punctuated by crisply cut openings.

Unique among the mill owners' houses is that of Bethuel Harris (HVD-72, 1819), the first brick residence in Harrisville village. Almost square, it rises two stories over a partially exposed basement and is capped by a hipped roof with four red brick interior chimneys. Other owners' houses are typically gable roofed and rectangular, of 1-1/2 or 2-1/2 stories, and have commonly received small additions. The Abner Hutchinson House (HVD-78, 1835) and its neighbor the C.C.P. Harris House (HVD-79, 1835) are virtually identical.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

NOV 30 1987

Section number 7 Page 11

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

The Harrisville mill village, focused as it is on the water course from which it has historically drawn its economic vitality, graphically illustrates subtle planning principles designed to establish order in the rugged Monadnock uplands. The mills, which visually eclipse the meetinghouse, are surrounded by workers' housing laid out on safe cul-de-sacs in regular, orderly fashion on descending terraces facing Goose Brook ravine. The early mill owners' houses still dominate the upper slopes of the village while additional private housing flanks the three roads connecting the village with the rest of Harrisville.

The first inroad of romanticism into Harrisville's atmosphere of corporate conservatism was made, surprisingly enough, by the eldest son of mill owner Milan Harris. When Milan Walter Harris built his own home (HVD-23) next to the Cheshire Mills Boardinghouse (HVD-24) in 1852, he chose an eclectic stylistic blend: a wood frame Greek Revival temple form structure decorated with lacy bargeboards and pronounced Gothic window and door labels. This house, while clearly unique, exemplifies the vernacular yet creative treatment some nationally popular styles received locally.

The democratic Greek Revival mode was adopted in Harrisville with more enthusiasm and pervasiveness than any other. It represents the overwhelming majority of all local village residences (in Harrisville, Pottersville and Chesham) and persisted to a very late date (cf. IP-13, 1901). It was generally expressed as a basic, box-like shape to which one or two clearly recognizable "Greek details" were applied (corner pilaster, pronounced cornice returns, etc.) One especially handsome and widely adopted hallmark was the entry, occasionally recessed as at the Aaron Smith House (PD-21, 1822), with transom and sidelights, often complimented by a reeded surround with corner block trim. The Calvin Smith House (PD-22, 1849) is the best example in Harrisville of a regional vernacular Greek Revival interpretation also found in northern Massachusetts and the Connecticut River Valley. Characterized by temple form orientation with a very broad gable usually incorporating 1-1/2 of 2 stories and proportionately short side walls, it can also be seen at the M.K. Perry House (HVD-17, of the early 1850's) in the mill village and at CVD-1 (c. 1854) in Chesham.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

RECEIVED

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 7 Page 12

---

Harrisville's single most popular mid-19th century building model, ubiquitous in all of Harrisville's villages as well as at isolated farmhouses such as the Jabez Townsend House (IP-4, 1853), is the one chosen by the Cheshire Mills Company for the five mill workers' houses on Peanut Row, and the four on School Street. A small 1-1/2 story, 3-bay, side-hall plan house, its popularity and functional design were deciding factors in its selection as the subject of a 1978 National Trust for Historic Preservation study which resulted in a set of measured drawings of the typical Peanut Row house.

Greek Revival vernacular was also the unanimous mid-19th century choice for commercial, educational, and religious structures. It was adopted for the Chesham School (PD-17, 1840) and store (CVD-4 of about one quarter century later) and the Harrisville School (HVD-29, 1857) and store (HVD-36, c. 1838). The presentation of the Chesham Baptist Church (PD-18, 1797) is currently Greek Revival as well, the results of several mid-19th century remodellings. In the mill villages, two brick churches with a pronounced Greek Revival flavor were underwritten by the Harris family (The Vestry, HVD-80, 1839, and the Congregational Church, HVD-75, 1842).

As conservative as the Greek Revival in Harrisville was, the imagination shown by Milan Walter Harris' charming recessed porch and fancy carpenter work are not entirely unique. In 1855, B.O. Hale built a private residence in the mill village at HVD-100. Though its ornate woodwork, in this case brackets which appear to imitate stylized Ionic columns, many porches, and later life as a hotel, it serves as a surviving visual link to Harrisville's next and most recent period of architectural greatness, that was characterized by the supremacy of the summer resident.

The Stick Style and its later stylistic cousins, the Queen Anne and Shingle Style, came to Harrisville on the railroad, whose completion in 1880 made this upland New Hampshire agricultural/industrial town accessible to the summer visitor/resident. Those seasonal newcomers who chose not to adapt an earlier house as was done at the Rollins/Phelps House (PD-7) and the Smith/Mason Farm (IP-19), very often elected the romantic bracket style of the railroad station itself (in Chesham, CVD-8) for their own new homes. This approach

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 7 Page 13

was especially common at Silver Lake where many rustic porched cottages of natural materials were built in the quarter century following the construction of the first one in 1886.

A Queen Anne Arts and Crafts summer cottage (IP-6, 1892) is the earliest to survive of the now changed settlement at Lake Skatutakee, near the mill village.

Harrisville also boasts a number of surviving very large, usually isolated, architect-designed summer resort "cottages" whose generous scale and major landscaping programmes ally them with similar developments in neighboring Dublin. The earliest of these, Crowhurst (at SHD-2, 1884, probably by Rotch & Tilden), burned; but a number of its outbuildings remain, including a charming Stick Style carriage barn now remodelled as a year-round residence. Crowhurst was a major example of the Shingle Style, as were the three nearby "cottages" in the 1900 Thayer compound.; (Two of these survive, SHD-5 & 6. The third was replaced in the mid-1970's by a harmonious post-Modern design.) Two smaller houses on Brown Road built for sisters (PD-10 and PD-12, both of the first decade of the 20th century) have similar shingle siding and vaguely Georgian Revival details.

One handsome, entirely Georgian Revival mansion survives near the Dublin border: Lois Lilley Howe's Sky Field (SHD-2, 1916). Sited with a Monadnock view on the highest point on the Old Harrisville Road, it is a large, U-shaped three-story brick house with several dormers and elaborated chimneys crowning its original slated roof. Well maintained on both the exterior and interior, it still contains its original wallpaper and antique Salem, Massachusetts fireplace surrounds.

Two grand houses of the summer resort period are each the result of one person's romantic private vision: Aldworth Manor (IP-15) and Fasnacloch (IP-16). The first, the very large Arthur E. Childs mansion, was "Victorian" in style until its removal by railroad from Worcester, Massachusetts to Harrisville in 1908, where it was completely reworked to reflect a Neo-Renaissance look similar to that of houses designed by Charles A. Platt in nearby Dublin. Covered with stucco and accented with panile roof, columns and loggias, its move and installation on a caisson-like foundation also represents a significant engineering accomplishment.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 7 Page 14

---

An equally individual expression is Fasnacloich, built in 1911 and enlarged in 1916-17, patterned after Kelmscott Manor, the English home of William Morris. Although the plans were prepared by A.S. Bell, the wife of the owner, Fanny MacVeagh, was its actual designer, overseeing all the ornamental and technical details of the house. An English Medieval two-story stucco, U-shaped country house with elaborate surrounding gardens, it survives with considerable integrity both outside and in and continues to house its original artworks and furnishings.

All of Harisville's surviving resources, from the earliest cape cottages to Fasnacloich, represent important components of this community's unusually complete inventory of upland New Hampshire building and development types and are significant to each successive period of local history.

#### IV. Methodology

The survey upon which this nomination is based was conducted by:

Marcia M. Cini - Preservation Consultant-- Project Director

Lucinda A. Brockway - Preservation Consultant

Duffy Monahan - Preservation Consultant

Douglas George - Archaeologist-- Office of Public Archaeology, Boston University

Mary S. Meath - Historic Researcher

Lucy Shonk - Historic Researcher

Henry V. Taves - Preservation Consultant

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

RECEIVED

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 7 Page 15

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Dr. William Morgan - Associate Professor of Architectural History,  
University of Louisville

Roberta Wingerson - Archaeologist

A prodigious body of information about Harrisville's history and architecture was already in place before the survey was begun. It was, therefore, the intention of the participants in this project to supplement, flesh out and synthesize existing information, to build on it rather than retracing or regenerating it. The historical portions of this work owe a considerable debt to John Borden Armstrong which is acknowledged with gratitude and respect. Architectural discussions of the mill village used as their foundation the earlier National Register nominations prepared by Richard M. Candee (1970) and George Adams (1977) and the work of representatives of the Historic American Buildings Survey who compiled the New England Textile Mill Survey #11 (1971).

Nevertheless the project staff undertook an entirely new overall visual survey following standard, established procedures. Special care was taken to ensure comprehensiveness. The entire area within the incorporated boundaries of the town of Harrisville was inspected and rechecked against current maps provided by the Southwest New Hampshire Regional Planning commission to guarantee that no property had been missed. (It is important to note here that no property lot number system exists in Harrisville, so those numbers cannot be provided to further document this submission.) Resources and potential districts, including already listed or eligible districts which might warrant expansion, were singled out for further investigation both on site and thorough examination of primary and secondary sources.

Once the historic and/or architectural significance according to National Register criteria and the integrity of the targeted resources were confirmed, they were actually inventoried. This involved recording and summarizing their features on field check lists. This information was later supplemented with data gleaned from deed and tax research and numerous personal interviews, then compiled onto building forms specifically designed for the Harrisville project. Those forms prepared for individually nominated properties are included with this nomination. A complete set

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

NOV 30 1987

Section number 7 Page 16

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

including those for contributing properties within districts and for some which currently narrowly miss qualifying as individual nominations will be stored in Historic Harrisville's permanent archive. There they will join the old photographs, vintage postcards, artifacts, framing measurements, pieces of furniture and costumes which have been obtained by or given to Historic Harrisville as a result of this project. They will, of course, continue to be accessible to the public, from scholars to school children, and are the nucleus of a new permanent research center.

\*Three years lapsed between the time of the survey and initial submission to the State Historic Preservation Office and the final document submission. All photographs and data that were included in the final submission were reviewed and corrected. Though some photographs were taken in 1983, the appearance of the property has remained unchanged and these photographs are included in the final submission document. Where alterations did occur in the appearance of any property photographs were retaken and the nomination was updated.

### V. Archaeological Component

It has been Historic Harrisville's intention from the start of this project that the foundation for its investigation of this rural community be tripartite, that is, based on a survey and evaluation of resources of the following three types:

1. historic and architectural
2. archaeological and
3. natural

The natural resources inventory and evaluation has been deferred for lack of funding. However, an overview of Harrisville's archaeological resources has been accomplished in conjunction with this nomination, thanks to a prompt and generous matching grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Preservation Services Fund.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

RECEIVED

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 7 Page 17

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Using the University of New Hampshire's Archaeological Research Service's investigations and available documentary information as a starting point, professional archaeologist Douglas George visited, photographed and sketched known sites in three categories:

1. small 19th century mill sites (primarily woodenware manufactories) scattered evenly throughout the community on small watercourses or at pond outlets,
2. pottery sites in Pottersville (Chesham), and
3. abandoned hill farm sites in the Harrisville Rural District.

In some cases, test excavations were made and artifacts recovered. George's subsequent evaluation of the sites' importance, with special emphasis on the type and significance of information which they are likely to yield upon further investigation, has been made part of this nomination. In the cases of the Pottersville and Harrisville Rural Districts and the individual nominations associated with the Mosquitobush woodenware and sawmill site, his conclusions have measurably enhanced the significance of the cited resources under Criterion D.

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#### FOOTNOTE

1. John Borden Armstrong, Factory Under the Elms: A History of Harrisville, New Hampshire, 1774-1969. (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1969), pp.1-2.

# 8. Significance

| Period  | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below           |  |                              |  |
|---|---|--|------------------------------|--|
| ..... prehistoric                             | ..... archeology-prehistoric                            | ..... community planning                                   | ..... landscape architecture | ..... religion                                     |
| ..... 1400-1499                               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic | ..... conservation   | ..... law                    | ..... science                                      |
| ..... 1500-1599                               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture         | ..... economics  | ..... literature             | ..... sculpture                                    |
| ..... 1600-1699                               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture        | ..... education  | ..... military               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/        |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | ..... art   | ..... engineering  | ..... music                  | ..... humanitarian                                 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | ..... philosophy             | ..... theater                                      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1940 | ..... communications                                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry               | ..... politics: government   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation |
|   |   | ..... invention  |                              | ..... other (specify)                              |

Specific dates 1762-1940

Builder/Architect Mentioned when known

## Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

### I. Introduction

Harrisville presents the nation's most complete surviving example of early industrialization's impact on and interrelationship with the development of rural New England. Its comprehensive catalogue of surviving resources and their superior integrity make it a valuable laboratory for the study of upland New Hampshire history as well. Harrisville is blessed with a unique surviving mill complex with intact support village, including a complete range of private residences, mill housing and social institutions, undisturbed early agricultural settlements, small but important 19th century pottery and woodenware manufacturing village, a railroad nucleus and an extensive inventory of summer resort building types. The integrity enjoyed by Harrisville's historic and architectural resources is shared by its archaeological and natural assets which intensifies the value of the whole when viewed in combination.

An area of sturdy, self-sufficient agricultural settlement during the waning years of the 18th century and the early decades of the 19th, development in northern Dublin and southern Nelson (the two towns from which Harrisville was formed in 1870) soon became clustered around the sources of power and raw materials for small manufacturing enterprises. Pottery and later woodenware were produced to meet local needs and to supplement farm income. By the mid-19th century, all of those activities had been eclipsed by the increasingly large and sophisticated woolen manufacturing concerns along Goose Brook in Harrisville village. The introduction of railroad service in 1880 had the unexpected consequences of providing the impetus for an important and continuing summer tourism/residence industry which stimulated the community's economic as well as social life and added significantly to its architectural inventory.

This nomination includes five districts and 27 individually nominated properties. The Harrisville Village District is already listed as a National Historic Landmark under the name "Harrisville Historic District" (1977). One additional district, the Harrisville Rural District, has been declared eligible for the National Register. Individually or in districts as nominated, these resources retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association and meet Criteria A, B, C and D of the National Register of Historic Places.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 8 Page 2

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II. Historical Development

A. Pre-1760: Native Migration

Harrisville's remoteness as well as its rugged terrain discouraged settlement by families of European descent until the wave of emigration from older established southern New England communities in the second half of the 18th century. No specific documentation of local activities of native Americans has come to light, but it is known that one trail, the Nebinasok, crossed directly through western Harrisville on a path which appears to correspond approximately with Chesham Road. Predictive speculations have been made that Indians camped temporarily on terraces overlooking local bodies of water, but it is likely, as the town histories of both Dublin and Nelson suggest, that they did not take up permanent residence in what was to become Harrisville.

B. 1760-1800: Early Agricultural Settlement

At the close of the French and Indian War, proprietors who had purchased Masonian grants from the heir of the original claimant offered strong inducements to the young and adventurous to purchase such lands and clear them for farmsteads. Territory in Dublin (chartered in 1749, incorporated in 1771) and Nelson (chartered in 1752 as Packersfield, incorporated in 1774), included in these grants and thus subject to their conditions for settlement, attracted newcomers from several eastern and northern Massachusetts communities.

By the mid-1760's, roads and farms were being carved out of the rocky floor of the mixed hardwood and evergreen forest. Only in northwest Dublin, later known as Pottersville, was there a break in the continuous forest cover. It was near there that one of Harrisville's two oldest surviving houses was built (in 1765--PD-7, the Rollins Phelps House). The other (HRD-13A - 1762) stands on Beech Hill in the Harrisville Rural District. By the end of the 18th century, the upland hills were dotted with independent, regularly scattered farmsteads, their very self-sufficiency minimizing the difficulty arising from their remoteness.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 8 Page 3

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By 1773, Dublin and Nelson were connected by road (probably roughly along Old Harrisville Road to Seaver Road to the Old Nelson Road). Shortly thereafter, the Harrisville-Nelson Road was cut through. A decade later a Baptist Society was organized which had built a meetinghouse by the end of the century (1797). Short periods of schooling were also offered by this time.

From Harrisville's earliest years its farmers supplemented their agricultural activities with small industries suggested both by their needs and by the area's resources and topographical characteristics. Even before he owned the land on which it stood, Abel Twitchell built a saw and grist mill at the outlet of Brackshin (Harrisville) Pond where its waters descend a steep ravine into Goose Brook (1774). Shortly thereafter the mill was joined by a blacksmith and triphammer shop established by Jason Harris, the first resident member of the family after which Harrisville would eventually be named. Widespread home weaving activities provided the impetus for the additional establishment of a fulling and finishing mill by the end of the century (1799).

In the Pottersville area of northwest Dublin a grismill and a sawmill were also built during this period south of and downhill from the original farmsteads on Pratt Brook (PD-35). However, unlike their neighbors at Twitchell's Mills, farmers in this vicinity supplemented their agricultural activities and basic milling and sawing needs with pottery manufacture. The high quality and abundance of clay found in a pocket of glacial deposits under what is now Russell Reservoir were the major attraction for a group of residents newly arrived from the Essex County, Massachusetts, pottery center of South Danvers (now Peabody). By 1795, two potters, David Thurston and Nathaniel Furber, were well established locally in their trade.

The earliest settlers' ability to consolidate their gains and meet the challenge of the early 19th century to their profit was greatly enhanced by a population boom between 1775 and 1790 (Dublin 305--905, Nelson 186--721). By the end of the 18th century Harrisville was firmly if thinly settled territory with a viable economic base.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 8 Page 4

Surviving 18th century buildings include:

The Eaton/Richardson House in Eastview (IP-3, c. 1790)

The Timothy Bancroft House in Mosquitobush (IP-12, part 1785)

In the Harrisville Rural District:

The Abijah Twitchell House (HRD-1A, pre- 1774)

The Amos Emery House (HRD-3A, 1778)

The Jonathan Morse House (HRD-5A, pre- 1790)

The Benjamin Mason House (HRD-13A, part c. 1762)

The Abel Twitchell house in the Harrisville Village District (HVD-90, c. 1774)

In Pottersville:

the Rollins/Phelps House (PD-7, c. 1765)

The Bemis/Starr House (PD-4, c. 1794)

The Farnum/Upton House (PD-9, c. 1779)

The Baptist Church (PD-18, part 1797)

In western Harrisville:

The Adams/MacVeagh Farmhouse (IP-17, part c. 1780)

The Smith/Mason Farmhouse (IP-19, part 1791)

The Willard Homestead (IP-22, part 1787)

The Adams Homestead/Wellscroft (IP-23, pre- 1774)

Silver Lake Cottage (IP-24, 1798)

All but four (PD-9, HVD-90, IP-12 and PD-18) were the cape cottage residences of industrious settlers newly arrived from Massachusetts or other parts of New Hampshire. They generally did not change hands often during their first century and their owners were often pillars of the community. Their survival in such numbers, especially in the homogeneous and undisturbed setting of the Harrisville Rural District, make them significant to architecture and land use planning as examples of building techniques of hill farm settlements and their distribution within the restrictions of the Masonian grant system.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 8 Page 5

The extraordinary research potential of the homesteads within the Rural District when combined with that area's natural and archaeological resources has already been recognized by the National Register of Historic Places as the basis for that district's positive determination of eligibility (August 1982). The existing volume of raw documentary data as well as the integrity of the resources themselves are also certain to illuminate such socio-economic issues as variations of status, cultural and environmental self-sufficiency, market systems, cottage industries and the ongoing interrelationship between the hill farms and Harrisville village's activity.

Two of Harrisville's 18th century houses have been the homes of artists of widely recognized reputation: PD-7, the birthplace and residence of German-trained landscape painter William Preston Phelps, and IP-3, the homestead for half a century of renowned itinerant stenciller Moses Eaton Jr.

A half dozen of the pre-1800 houses in western Harrisville (IP-17, PD-4, PD-7, IP-19, IP-22 and IP-23) served summer residents in the early years of the 20th century. They are thus significant to two periods of local history and illustrations of one of its central themes: survival through adaptability. Two of these (IP-19 and IP-23) are now occupied year round.

C. 1800-1823: Agricultural Self-Sufficiency/Early Industrialization

The first quarter of the 19th century saw the maturation of developmental trends established in the earliest years of settlement. The agrarian economy continued to stabilize and was augmented by small grist and saw milling operations, textile related cottage industries and small enterprises such as the store and cobbler shop operated by Gershom Twitchell at HRD-11A.

Subtle changes in local industries' scale as well as their technological capabilities would prove to have tremendous impact on Harrisville's future. The potteries in northwest Dublin grew in size and reputation, especially during the period of the War of 1812, stimulating the growth of a village cluster of approximately a half dozen additional houses. One (PD-24, 1808), the home of prominent local potter Jedediah Kilburn Southwick, is nationally known and Harrisville's earliest example of what William H. Pierson, Jr. calls the "serene, beautiful and consistent" Neo-Classical architecture which spread throughout New England during the early 19th century.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 8 Page 6

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While cape cottages were still Harrisville's residential style of choice during this period, another potter chose to build a handsome Greek Revival house (PD-21, the c. 1822 Aaron Smith House). Dubbed Pottersville and nominated as a district, this settlement has been called by an established authority, "the most important community of clay workers in southwestern New Hampshire."

On Pratt Brook in Pottersville, Eli Greenwood established a saw mill and wheelwright shop in 1800 on a site which would see increasingly large and differentiated operations and a shift to woodenware manufacture over more than a century (PD-35).

However, Jonas Clark's combination of two textile manufacturing processes in one operation on Goose Brook in 1799 was to have the most far-reaching consequences in establishing Harrisville's future as a regional manufacturing center. Within the first decade of the 19th century another Harris brother, Bethuel, joined with his father-in-law Abel Twitchell to combine fulling and machine carding of woolen fibers under one roof. Business was brisk, aided by the shortages caused by the War of 1812. By 1816, Bethuel Harris was sole proprietor of a factory for carding wool and dressing and dyeing cloth, "a new career, in which he was to become a pioneer in the manufacture of woolen goods in this country."

In 1823 he consolidated his position and launched a new era in Harrisville history by erecting across the Goose Brook ravine the first local mill to combine all the processes necessary for the production of woolen cloth.

The next year this mill's operating capacity was completed with the addition by Bethuel's son Milan Harris of water driven power looms. Thus patterns characteristic of the woolen industry in Harrisville became evident even at its outset. It was highly centralized, geographically located to take advantage of a natural power source, and unlike that of Lowell, Massachusetts, was guided by a single, energetic, close-knit family and supported by local capital. Harris' original factory does not survive nor do several other buildings from the early years of the tiny nuclear settlement which began to form at Twitchell's Mills. Two extant dwellings from this period are the Brooks House (HVD-94, a cape cottage of 1820) and the handsome square red brick home of Bethuel Harris himself (HVD-72).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 8 Page 7

## D. 1823-1850: Industrial Consolidation/Early Agricultural Decline

By 1830 agriculture was clearly in decline in northern New England. It was, however, given a brief reprieve in Harrisville, as in some other local areas, by the "sheep mania" of 1830-45, triggered by the introduction of the successful Merino breed in 1809. Farmers, who had supplemented their income with various home occupations and activities like shoemaking and weaving, turned to raising sheep and managing woodlots specifically to supply the needs of the growing mills

During this period a woodenware mill was established in East Harrisville (NH 42-33, 1838) and the one in Pottersville was joined by another north of the village in 1949. But more significant developments were taking place on the banks of Goose Brook in the village known from the 1830's as Harrisville after its most prominent family. In 1832, Milan harris built a second brick mill (HVD-47, known as the "Upper Mill") to the highest contemporary standards; only fourteen years later his brother Cyrus built a handsome "Lower Mill" (HVD-39) of local granite more responsive in style to the mills of Rhode Island than to those of northern New England. Both mills were supported by a full complement of auxiliary structures.

These mills were manned in their earliest years by a small number of local native-born citizens. A flurry of social and commercial institutions grew up in the 1830s and 1840s to serve the village growing around them: in 1838, a store, HVD-36; in 1839, the Harrisville Engine Co.; in 1840, a Congregational Church, HVD-75; in 1840, a school; in 1839, the Vestry, HVD-80; in 1842, the Island Cemetery, HVD-77; and in 1848, a post office. By 1839 there were 10-12 dwellings in the village, many of them chaste, Neo-Classical examples built and occupied by the mill owners themselves. The mills, however, retained their prominence as the visual as well as functional focus of village life. The unique integrity and rarity of the Harrisville mill village's built resources, both individually and collectively, and their ongoing symbiotic relationship with their setting and each other have already earned this local and National Register district National Historic Landmark status. Important

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 8 Page 8

surviving resources from the period 1823-1850 include: The Harris Mill (HVD-47), its storehouse (HVD-49), sorting house (HVD-51) and boardinghouse (HVD-24); the Cheshire Mill No. 1 (HVD-39) and homes for Cyrus (HVD-71), Milan (HVD-53), Almon (HVD-73), and Charles Cotesworth Pinckney Harris (HVD-79) and Abner Hutchinson (HVD-73).

In Pottersville, which was larger than Harrisville until the 1860s, growth also occurred in the second quarter of the 19th century. Although the pottery industry had passed its peak, the village continued to grow toward the south along the road to Dublin. At least five houses were added during the period. A schoolhouse (Dublin PD-17) was added in 1840. By 1842 a new church had been established, the Methodist Episcopal, at the lower end of the village. Its construction may well have been the impetus for the moving and remodeling of the Baptist Meetinghouse (PD-18) in 1844.

Tiny East Harrisville, however, retained its purely agricultural character during this period. It became the location of the Dublin Town Poor Farm in 1837. In 1838, George Handy established a woodenware manufactory at NH 42-43, today an important archaeological site.

By 1850 there were five main roads in Harrisville affording access to neighboring communities as well as to Keene, Peterborough and Concord. Stage coach routes were established through Dublin, Harrisville and Nelson.

E. 1850-1870: Supremacy of the Mill Village/Industrial Boom

The period from 1850 to 1870 is dominated by the rapid expansion of the Harrisville mills substantially stimulated by the Civil War. The fortunes of the Harris family, however, faltered even as the mills grew. Milan Harris' patriarchal control was to weaken over these two decades to the point where he would be forced into reorganization. His brother Cyrus, who with several other investors had incorporated in 1847 as the "Harrisville Manufacturing Company" upon the completion of the granite mill, died in the spring of 1848. The next year, the mill, land and water rights were sold to prominent Keene woolen manufacturers Faulkner & Colony, who would do business as the "Cheshire Mills Company." A decade later a large new mill

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 8 Page 9

(HVD-38) was attached perpendicular to the southern flank of granite mill. In 1867, the first or "Middle Mill" was dismantled to make way for a larger and more stylish replacement. Innovations of the Faulkner and Colony operation included technological advances like introduction of a turbine to replace a pitch back waterwheel, a policy of working through commission agents in Boston, the careful tailoring of their products to meet the needs of the marketplace, and the maintenance of good working conditions.

Both the Harris and Faulkner & Colony mills provided much needed workers' houses during this period. A complete catalog of virtually intact examples still survives on stone-walled terraces on either side of the Goose Brook ravine. (Note: Harris' wooden boardinghouse succumbed to fire, a significant and continuing threat to local buildings.) Rare extant mill housing which makes such a major contribution to the significance of the National Historic landmark include: The Cheshire Mills Boardinghouse (HVD 65-67), the Grove Street (HVD 51-61) and School Street (HVD-27, 28, 30 and 31) Houses; and several individually constructed dwellings. In a complete break from the aesthetic tradition established by his family, Milan Walter Harris built for himself in the village a frame house (HVD-23, 1852) which combines Gothic and Greek Revival features in a naive and charming way.

Village life underwent a marked change during this period, no doubt a combination of rapid growth and the major influx of non-native-born mill hands (primarily English, Irish and, toward the 1870s, French Canadian). By 1870, 60 houses sheltered a population of 400. An element of rowdiness crept into Harrisville's social life. Local entrepreneur Zophar Willard had opened a hotel by 1860 (HVD-100).

Dublin acknowledged the growth of the village by establishing in it in 1857 Union District School #8 (HVD-29) significantly changing the location of the school from the present junction of Venable Road and Old Harrisville Road. The school had followed the population downhill.

The pottery industry had disappeared from Pottersville by the end of the period and that village ceased to expand at approximately two dozen buildings. In 1867, the Baptist meetinghouse moved again,

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 8 Page 10

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signifying the southerly shift of the center of village life. East Harrisville was also stabilized at a handful of houses and farms with a very large woodenware factory still prospering at NH 42-33.

For the most part the extreme agricultural decline experienced by the rest of northern New England, spurred by the opening up of attractive opportunities to the west, was delayed somewhat in Harrisville by the presence and prosperity of the mills. Farmers continued to supply cordwood and wool in addition to meat produce, and maple syrup for boardinghouse tables. The Cheshire Mills Company established its own farm on a hilltop north of the village (HVD-84).

### F. 1870-1900: Industrial Fluctuation/Influx of Summer Residents

Ongoing tensions between the neighboring farming communities of Dublin and Nelson and the mill town on their common border reached a breaking point over the issue of the railroad. A line had long been proposed by the Manchester and Keene Railroad to follow an east-west route through Harrisville both because of the favorable political climate in Harrisville and because it was the lowest route through the highlands separating the Merrimack and the Connecticut Rivers. When town meetings in both Dublin and Nelson refused to fund the gratuity required by the construction company to actually build the line, Harrisville citizens, led by Henry Colony and Milan Harris, resolved to form an independent town. Harrisville was chartered on July 2, 1870, a roughly rectangular community formed of the three northernmost ranges of Dublin (lots 1-22) and the two southernmost ranges of Nelson.

Railroad service got off to a fitful start, taking a full decade to be established with any regularity. Harrisville's three nodes of settlement, East Harrisville, Harrisville village and West Harrisville, were each recognized with a station. Important surviving railroad-related structures in Harrisville include the 1879 Chesham (CVD-8) and 1878 Harrisville (HVD-1) stations plus the stationmaster's house in Eastview (IP-5). Note the introduction of the new names: Chesham for west Harrisville or Pottersville and Eastview for East Harrisville, in keeping with the railroad's policy of giving its stations names readily distinguishable from each other.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 8 Page 11

---

Farming continued its steady decline in the years just before 1900. Dairying, however, became increasingly popular with the railroad providing transportation for the dairyman's product.

The mill village, which had doubled its population and housing stock since 1860, continued to boom. In 1874 the Catholic mission of St. Denis, whose membership of primarily immigrant mill workers would grow sufficiently to build its own church by 1894 (HVD-33), was established. A town office for the new three-member Board of Selectmen, a meeting-hall, and a public library were provided. The Dublin Stage Company provided regular service to the village as did a hotel (HVD-96), a livery stable and a pool room.

However, 1870 to 1900 was a period of erratic economic fortunes for the mills themselves. 1882 saw the burning of M. Harris Company's "New Mill," followed in 1887 by the purchase of the entire assets and water privileges of the M. Harris Company by the Cheshire Mills Company. Despite some emigration resulting from economic stresses at the mills, the village ended the 19th century having experienced moderate growth and a strengthened civic position with little reduction of its physical attractiveness and at least one positive addition (St. Denis Church (HVD-33)).

The most significant new development during Harrisville's last quarter century was the influx of summer residents attracted by the town's pastoral scenery, clean air and water and the easy accessibility provided by the arrival of railroad service in 1880. A large Shingle Style mansion, Crowhurst (1884), probably designed by Rotch & Tilden, was built on the site of an early hill farm with a view of Mt. Monadnock. On Beech Hill in the south central part of town, it was the first of Harrisville's grand "cottages" which were built for the wealthy and famous from Massachusetts and New York and were closely allied to similar development in neighboring Dublin. Although the mansion does not survive, several of its support buildings are extant at SkyField (SHD-2).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 8 Page 12

Chesham village, a mere farming crossroads whose growth was stimulated by the arrival of summer visitors to western Harrisville, soon had its own store and livery stable. In 1886, Daniel Tenney of Marlborough built a picturesque cottage (SLD-28) on the east shore of Breed Pond (soon to be renamed Silver Lake) a little over a mile from the Chesham Station. In the next quarter century, almost three dozen similar Stick Style cottages would be built on 100 rod square lots by prosperous and influential businessmen from Keene and Marlborough as summer retreats for their families. Because of the integrity and homogeneity with which the majority of these cottages have survived the past century and because of the important contribution they make to Harrisville's inventory of upland New Hampshire architecture, they are being nominated to the National Register as a district.

"Point Comfort" (IP-6, 1892) is a stylistically similar cottage built by a Keene resident near lower Harrisville village. It is the earliest and best preserved house on Lake Skatutakee, a resort area which, unlike Silver Lake, has experienced a great deal of change and growth to the present. In the last year of the 19th century, Marienfeld, one of the first boys' camps in the country, was moved from its first location in Pennsylvania to a 200-acre tract in northwest Harrisville by its founder, Dr. C.H. Henderson.

G. 1900-1915: The Supremacy of the Summer Resident

Village life during the first decade and a half of the 20th century was profoundly affected by the combined vicissitudes of national recession and a decline in population. It was characterized by poor library use and church attendance. Negative economic pressures forced mill management and the small entrepreneur alike to respond with energy, adaptability and ingenuity.

Harrisville's ability to interact with the outside world was greatly enhanced by the arrival of the first local automobile in 1900 and the establishment of its first telephone exchange two years later. In 1902 the first mill workers were hired from Harrisville's most recent major immigrant group, the Finns. Assimilated into village life with somewhat more difficulty than earlier newcomers, families of Finnish extraction continue to form a large portion of the community's population (note the surviving early 20th century sauna at (HVD-88).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

RECEIVED

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 8 Page 13

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However, the most significant characteristic of this period is the strong influence the major influx of summer residents had on Harrisville's economic and social life as well as its physical appearance.

In western Harrisville, Chesham had achieved such a strong sense of identity that there was a movement, albeit unsuccessful, to establish it as an independent town in 1904. The economy of the settlement around the pivotally important railroad station, nominated as the Chesham District, was stimulated by the arrival of a steady stream of Silver Lake cottagers. Independent farmers as well (like Willington Seaver of IP-25 and Corban Farwell of IP-26) soon found advantage in supplying summer residents with such necessities as milk, eggs, ice and cordwood.

As in neighboring Dublin, artists (like William Preston Phelps of PD-7) were attracted by the same stimulating scenery and fresh air which drew vacationers.

The most important consequence of this renewed interest in Harrisville's rural landscape was the profound change it produced in its land use and physical appearance. One by one, the outlying areas of the moribund hill farms were purchased by summer residents who were likely to be wealthy and accomplished citizens of Massachusetts or New York. In 1904, Mrs. Sara W. Coe of New York City bought the important Mason farm (IP-19), adapting the farmhouse for her own summer use. Massachusetts State Senator Wellington Wells had done the same for the Willard homestead in 1900 (IP-22).

A more common tactic of newly arrived seasonal settlers in Harrisville and Dublin was the erection of a brand new architect-designed "cottage," grand in scale and vastly expensive. Outstanding and architecturally significant local examples include the Shingle Style Thayer compound of 1900 (of which two dwelling of three survive, SHD-5 & 6); the impressive Scottish manor house of diplomat Charles MacVeagh, Fasnacloich (IP-16) with the Adams farm (IP-17) as a support complex; and Lois Lilley Howe's Sky Field (SHD-2), completed in 1916 on the site of the burned Crowhurst. The most notable example of the boundless enthusiasm and great financial resources characteristic of the builder/owners of the period was the move by rail from Worcester, Massachusetts and total redesign of the Childs' mansion, Aldworth Manor (IP-15). All of these examples

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 8 Page 14

---

illustrate the establishment of summer estates on an earlier farm site which was subsequently overwhelmed by the sweeping scale of the new development: the most important trend in the history of land use in early 20th century Harrisville.

H. 1915-1940: Social Quickening/Industrial Survival

Electricity arrived in Harrisville in 1915, improving its residents' quality of life and expanding their capacity to interact with the outside world. Like similar rural New England villages, the town responded to what Harold Wilson has described as "the post-World War I period's quickening influences." Small social organizations multiplied. Old Home Week, established in 1917 as a celebration of New Hampshire roots, was observed in Harrisville.

Summer resort activity continued to play an increasingly important role in town life. Silver Lake and the area around Lake Skatutakee burgeoned. The number of seasonal residences doubled between 1906 and 1940. Thriving Marienfield, with a population of 250 boy campers in the 1920's, was granted one of the earliest licenses in New Hampshire for a radio transmitting station.

The positive contributions of prominent summer residents were many. Arthur Childs of Aldworth Manor (IP-15) instigated the first tarred road in town in 1920 and was an early and vigorous supporter of the Village Improvement Society. George Stewart of Sky Field (SHD-2) gave the town its beach in the 1930's. Railroad service to Harrisville ended in 1936. Extreme agricultural decline continued, resulting in widespread reforestation.

Significant changes in Harrisville's industrial life occurred during this era. All of the town's mills with the major exception of the factories in the mill village itself burned or were otherwise destroyed. These include the important and long lived Russell Mill (PD-35) in Pottersville which burned in 1917 and the Winn Chair Factory (HVD-8) in the lower mill village which met a similar fate in 1933.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 8 Page 15

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The Cheshire Mills Company went through a series of difficult economic times punctuated by marked prosperity stimulated by the two World Wars. In 1922, the company built a new mill (HVD-42). the last major addition to the industrial landscape of the village itself. Significant changes were made over time in the mills' sources of power. In 1926, the Cheshire mills Company bought its first electricity, which was supplied by the Public Service Company of New Hampshire from the newly constructed Minnewawa hydroelectric facility in Marlborough. (Note: Construction associated with the powering of this station would have a profound effect on bodies of water in western Harrisville, raising the level of Russell Reservoir, Child's Bog, and Silver Lake. Beach front cottages at Silver Lake found themselves at the water's edge.) By 1947, all Cheshire Mills Company power was purchased and its rope driven system used to harness the force of Goose Brook had fallen into disuse.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 8 Page 16

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### III. Harrisville's Research Potential

A positive climate for preservation, albeit subconscious in the minds of local citizens before 1970, has clearly been the pivotal factor in Harrisville's survival with such significance and integrity to date. The completion of this nomination and the survey on which it is based are the most recent major steps in the community's program, spearheaded by Historic Harrisville, Inc., to recognize and protect its resources. Further, as indicated above, Historic Harrisville already holds covenants on a major percentage of the mill village's buildings which allow it to review proposed changes to those buildings' exterior features and uses. The covenant document is written to allow for its application to buildings in any part of town. Historic Harrisville is also looking into the advisability of establishing a town-wide easement program.

One of Historic Harrisville's long-range goals has been the establishment of a permanent research facility which, in addition to housing an archive and artifact collection, would provide a favorable production environment for academic and professional research projects on topics generated by among other things, this survey and nomination process. This goal was measurably advanced in 1983 by the opening and furnishing of a spacious office in the Cheshire Mills Boardinghouse (HVD-24).

Research topics which will be investigated can be expected to be based on information drawn from Harrisville's historic, architectural, archaeological and natural resources. The town's comprehensive catalog of surviving built resources from every type and period of upland New Hampshire historical development makes it an especially useful laboratory for regional studies and adds immeasurably to its significance. The rich repository of documentation available (mill records, deed and tax information, etc.) is an especially valuable complement to its architectural legacy.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED  
NOV 30 1987  
NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 8 Page 17

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Archaeological properties, in which Harrisville abounds, have been determined by the survey to fall into three categories, all available for further investigation. These include: (1) small 19th century mill sites (primarily woodenware manufactories) scattered evenly throughout the community on small water courses or at pond outlets, (2) pottery sites in Pottersville (Chesham), and (3) abandoned hill farm sites in the Harrisville Rural district.

The small mill sites, typical of those found throughout the area, represent the rise and fall during the 19th century of modest manufactories of goods for local and regional consumption. Based on a pattern of local resource exploitation common in New England hill towns of the period, many of these first operated in response to a local need for lumber used in building construction. Later a market for products related to more domestic uses developed. Production of items like clothespins, two types of which were made at the Eastview Mill (NH 42-33) and chairs, made at the Winn Chair Factory (HVD-8), responded to this demand. Harrisville thus used its available wood resources to good advantage, maintaining itself as a viable industrial as well as agricultural community from its earliest years to the 20th century.

The small mill sites identified town wide illustrate the type of location selected for such mill construction. Further, they can be investigated to determine the form of their power delivery systems as well as their economic impact. The physical remains at these sites include building foundations and the remnants of water powered systems. While three of the mills (NH 42-5, NH 42-6, and NH 42-45) were located at the outlets of large ponds, the remainder had only small streams to rely on for their source of power. The elaborate dam and mill tunnel systems located at these streamside sites are significant for what they reveal about how the constant, but not abundant, flow of water was controlled and diverted to provide an efficient and inexpensive power supply. Although techniques such as this refined control of a valuable natural resource allowed Harrisville's small industrial entrepreneurs to contribute to an economic system which successfully mixed agriculture and milling until well into the 20th century, none of these mills

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NOV 30 1987

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

Section number 8 Page 18

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survives. Unable to compete with more mechanized operations as this century progressed and faced with a decreasing demand for their product, they were closed. Either dismantled or burned, only the stone foundations of their structures, their dams and evidence of their power systems remain to be studied.

The pottery sites, of which four have been investigated, represent the residential/manufacturing setting for what has been called "the most important community of clay workers in southwestern New Hampshire." They, in all their aspects, are the subject of a recently begun Master's thesis.

The Harrisville's natural resources' relationship to its cultural ones and their future has been the subject of a two-part study by Harvard University's Graduate School of Design's Carl Steinitz and his students. A thesis and design project on a mill village landscaping subject is also underway. A great deal of work, including a natural resources inventory, remains to be done in this area.

It bodes well for the future of Harrisville's cultural resources that they continue to be the subject of such lively and widespread interest. It is even more important that the very first General Policy of The Comprehensive Planning Program: Harrisville, New Hampshire (1983) is to "preserve the sense of history that has been a major part of the town's development pattern over the years. An additional goal is to "preserve the individual identity and development patterns of each of the town's three villages." The survey and this nomination should be of considerable assistance in the achievement of those goals and it is hoped that the Harrisville Planning Board and the Southwest New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission will take advantage of the information contained in them.

It is further hoped that listing on the National Register of Historic Places will have Harrisville's cultural resources enhanced respect as well as legal protection.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

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Section number 8 Page 19

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See continuation sheets, district data, individual forms

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property See district data and individual forms

Quadrangle name Monadnock

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References

See district data and individual forms

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Verbal boundary description and justification

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

|       |     |      |        |      |
|-------|-----|------|--------|------|
| state | N/A | code | county | code |
| state | N/A | code | county | code |

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marcia M. Cini and project staff

organization Historic Harrisville, Inc. date May 1984; June 1986

street & number Box 79 telephone (603) 827-3334

city or town Harrisville state New Hampshire 03450

## 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*R. Stuart Waller*

title New Hampshire State Historic Preservation Officer date November 23, 1987

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

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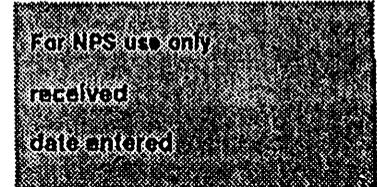
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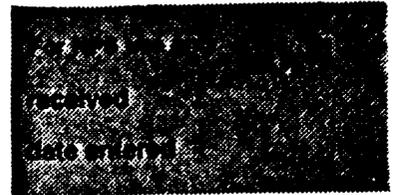
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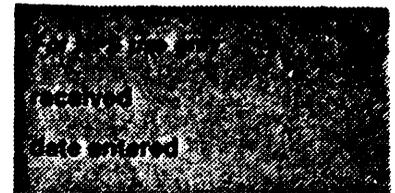
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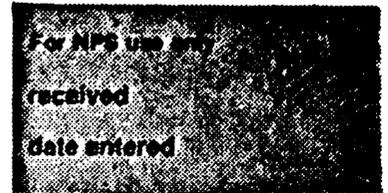


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| Continuation sheet | Bibliography | Item number | Page | 9 -11 |
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This project has in part been accomplished as a result of a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

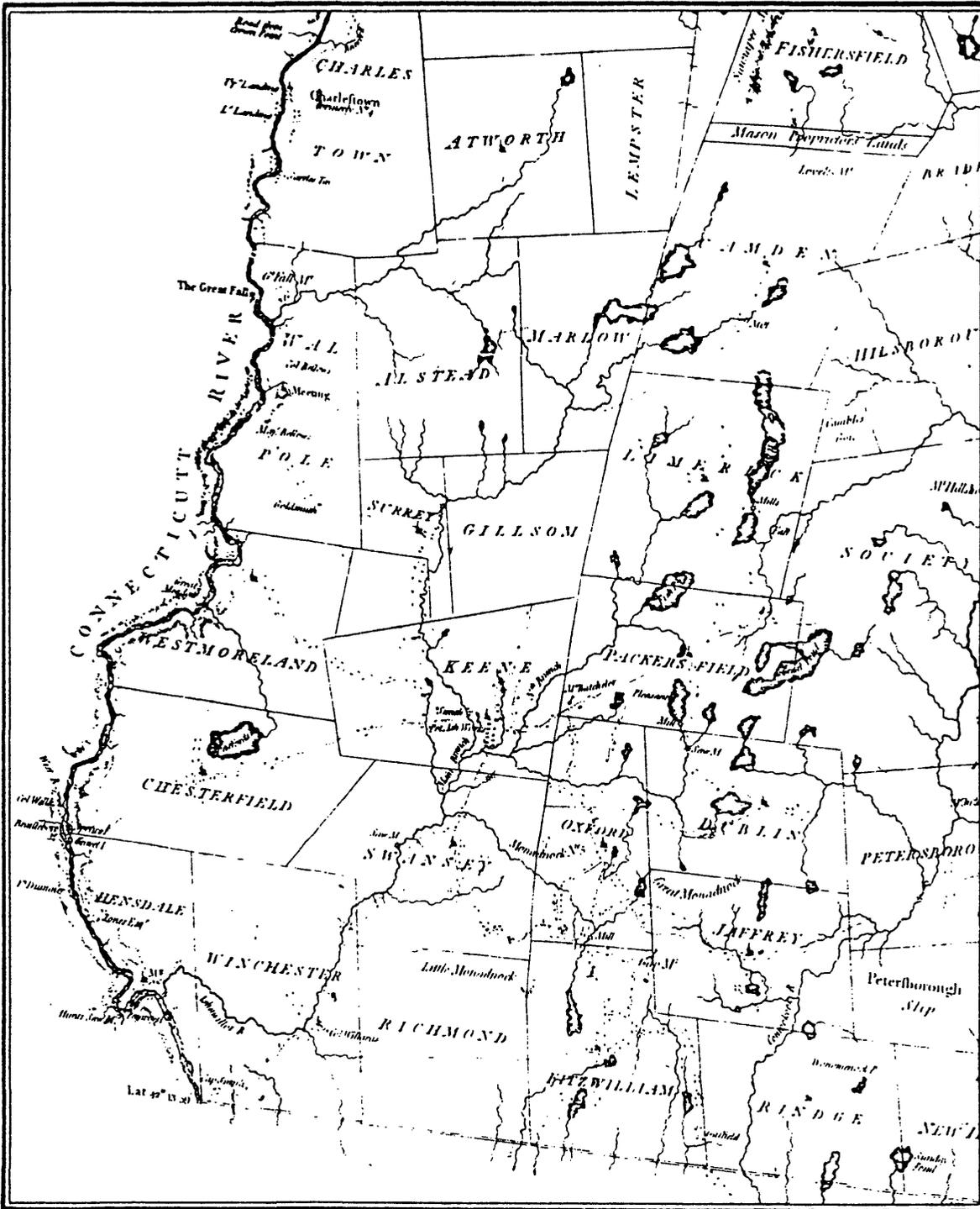
This National Register nomination project has been financed in part with federal funds from the National Park Service of the United States Department of the Interior, through the New Hampshire State Preservation Office. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior or the State Historic Preservation Office, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior or the State Historic Preservation Office.

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Director, Office of Equal Opportunity  
United States Department of the Interior  
Washington, D. C. 20240

Sincere thanks are due members of the Harrisville and greater New Hampshire community for their assistance, information and especially their encouragement which has been so generously provided the staff of this project. The following have earned our special gratitude.

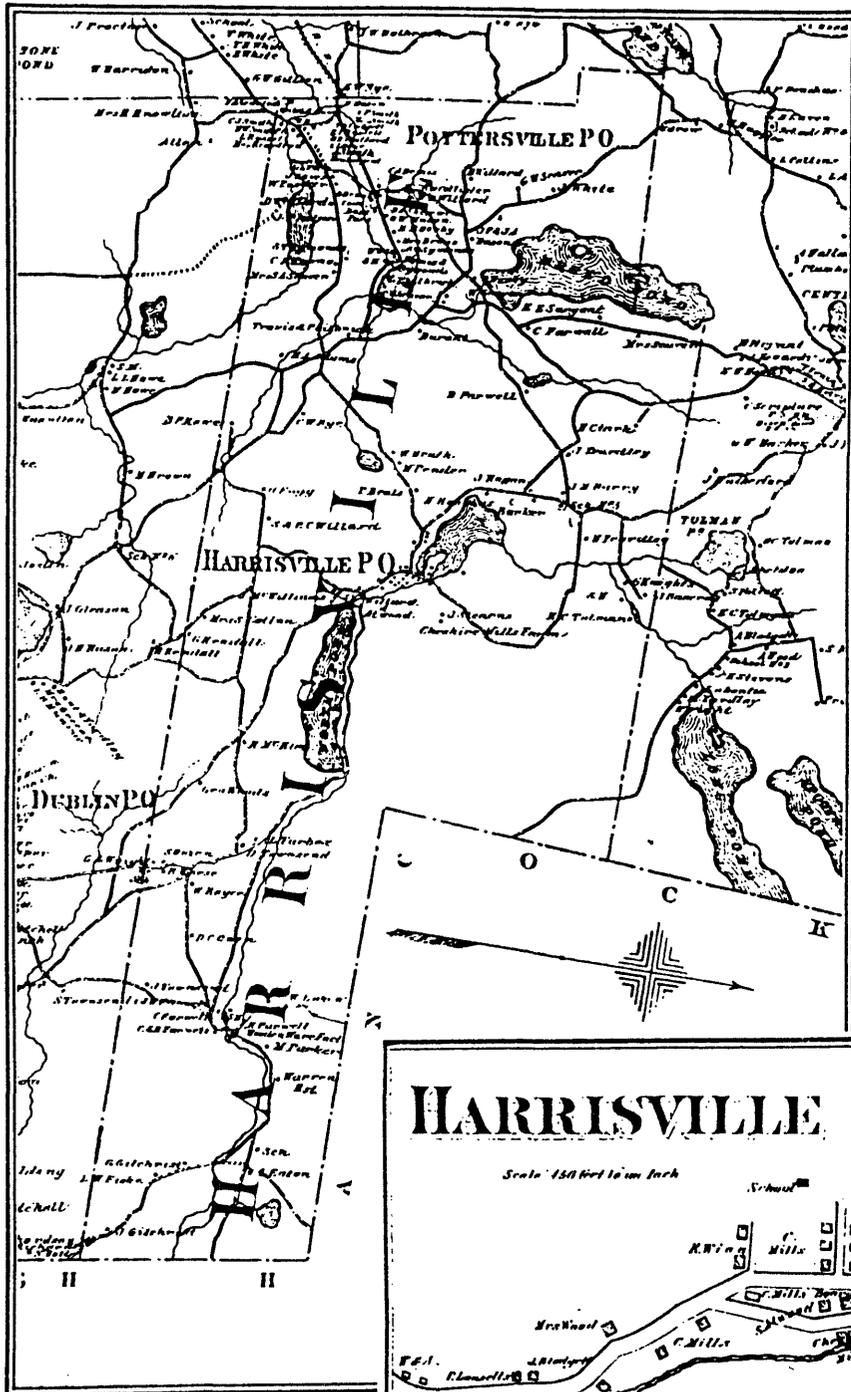
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Elizabeth Dort Austermann  
Russell and Linda Bastedo  
Max and Connie Boyd  
Daniel Burnham  
W. Dennis Chesley  
Harold and Lucy Clark  
Arnold and Louise Clayton  
John J. Colony, Jr.  
John J. Colony III  
Jane Dunn  
Leslie Downing  
Alaric Faulkner (University of Maine, Orono)  
Francis F. Faulkner  
Paul Geddes  
Ed Goodrich  
Paul Harris  
William B. Hart, Jr.  
William House  
Mary Ann LaFleur (University of New Hampshire, Durham)  
Alan Laufman  
Mary Beth McAllister  
Lucy Royce McGeachey  
Barbara A. McMillan (Dartmouth College)  
Suzanne Mitchell  
Martha Pinello  
Helen Ring  
James A. Rowse  
Norma Sanders  
Staff of Harrisville Designs, Inc.  
Staff of Harrisville-Nelson Newsletter (Carol Arteta, Editor)  
Staff of Keene Library  
Staff of Cheshire County Registry of Deeds  
Staff of South West New Hampshire Historic Preservation Office  
Ernest and Judith Taves  
Warren Thayer  
Betty Ann Vakauza  
Richard Waldbauer (Brown University)  
Wellington Wells, Jr.  
Robert Wingerson  
Albert B. Wolfe



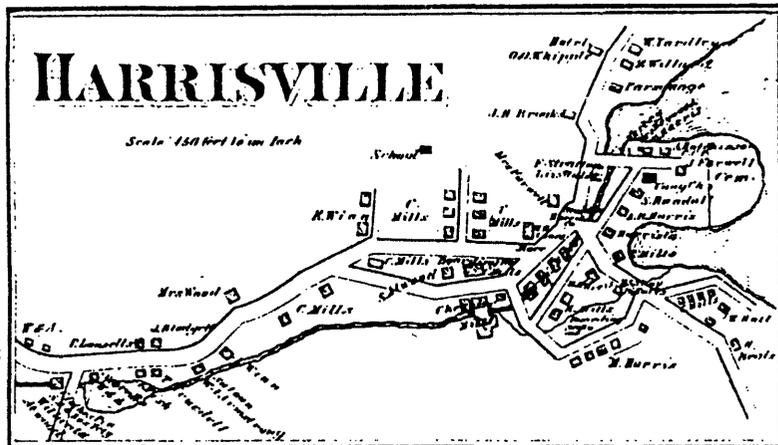
### 1784 Cheshire County

MAP 4

Samuel Holland: A Topographical Map of the State of New-Hampshire (detail)  
 Cheshire County: The Early Maps, 1753-1816  
 ©1983 Old Maps West Chesterfield, N.H.



1877 Cheshire County  
 Comstock & Cline  
 27 Warren Street, N.Y.



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265  
4

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Harrisville MRA  
State Cheshire County, NEW HAMPSHIRE

~~Substantive Review~~ *over*

Patrick Andrus 1/14/88

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. Beech Hill Summer Home ✓  
District

~~Substantive Review~~ *for* Keeper

Patrick Ward Andrus 1/14/88

Attest

Betty L. Savage 1/14/88

2. Chesham Village District

~~Entered in the National Register~~ Keeper

Shelton Byers 1/24/88

Attest

3. Eaton, Moses, Jr., ✓  
House

~~Substantive Review~~ *for* Keeper

Patrick Andrus 1/14/88

Attest

Betty L. Savage 1/14/88

4. Gilchrest Homestead ✓

~~Substantive Review~~ *for* Keeper

Patrick Andrus 1/14/88

Attest

Betty L. Savage 1/14/88

5. Glenchrest ✓

~~Substantive Review~~ *for* Keeper

Patrick Andrus 1/14/88

Attest

Betty L. Savage 1/14/88

6. Harrisville Rural District

~~Substantive Review~~

Keeper

J. Rogers 2-18-87

Attest

7. Pottersville District

~~Entered in the National Register~~ Keeper

Shelton Byers 1/24/88

Attest

8. Silver Lake District

~~Entered in the National Register~~ Keeper

Shelton Byers 1/24/88

Attest

9. Stationmaster's House ✓

~~Substantive Review~~ *for* Keeper

Patrick Andrus 1/14/88

Attest

Betty L. Savage 1/14/88

10. Townsend, Jabez, House ✓

~~Substantive Review~~ *for* Keeper

Patrick Andrus 1/14/88

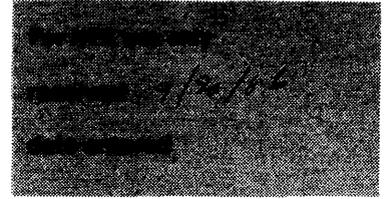
Attest

Betty L. Savage 1/14/88

- 50  
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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 2

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Harrisville MRA  
State Cheshire County, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

- |  |                               |            |                        |
|--|-------------------------------|------------|------------------------|
| 11. Acre (The) ✓                         | <del>Substantive Review</del> | for Keeper | Patrick Andrus 1/14/88 |
|  |                               | Attest     | Beth L. Sarge 1/14/88  |
| 12. Adams, Moses, Farm ✓                 | <del>Substantive Review</del> | Keeper     | return S               |
|  |                               | Attest     |                        |
| 13. Adams Farm ✓                         | <del>Substantive Review</del> | for Keeper | Patrick Andrus 1/14/88 |
|  |                               | Attest     | Beth L. Sarge 1/14/88  |
| 14. Aldworth Manor ✓                     | <del>Substantive Review</del> | for Keeper | Patrick Andrus 1/14/88 |
|  |                               | Attest     | Beth L. Sarge 1/14/88  |
| 15. Adams, John, Homestead--Wellscroft ✓ | <del>Substantive Review</del> | for Keeper | Patrick Andrus 1/14/88 |
|  |                               | Attest     | Beth L. Sarge 1/14/88  |
| 16. Bancroft, Timothy, House ✓           | <del>Substantive Review</del> | for Keeper | Patrick Andrus 1/14/88 |
|  |                               | Attest     | Beth L. Sarge 1/14/88  |
| 17. Beal, Persia, House ✓                | <del>Substantive Review</del> | for Keeper | Patrick Andrus 1/14/88 |
|  |                               | Attest     | Beth L. Sarge 1/14/88  |
| 18. Bemis, Elbridge G., House ✓          | <del>Substantive Review</del> | for Keeper | Patrick Andrus 1/14/88 |
|  |                               | Attest     | Beth L. Sarge 1/14/88  |
| 19. Bemis, George, House ✓               | <del>Substantive Review</del> | for Keeper | Patrick Andrus 1/14/88 |
|  |                               | Attest     | Beth L. Sarge 1/14/88  |
| 20. Cheever, George, Farm ✓              | <del>Substantive Review</del> | for Keeper | Patrick Andrus 1/14/88 |
|  |                               | Attest     | Beth L. Sarge 1/14/88  |

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Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 3

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Harrisville MRA  
State Cheshire County, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

- |                                     |                    |     |        |                        |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|-----|--------|------------------------|
| 21. Clymer House ✓                  | Substantive Review | for | Keeper | Patrick Andrus 1/14/88 |
|                                     |                    |     | Attest | Beth L. Sarge 1/14/88  |
| 22. Farwell, Corbin C., Homestead ✓ | Substantive Review | for | Keeper | Patrick Andrus 1/14/88 |
|                                     |                    |     | Attest | Beth L. Sarge 1/14/88  |
| 23. Fasnacloich ✓                   | Substantive Review | for | Keeper | Patrick Andrus 1/14/88 |
|                                     |                    |     | Attest | Beth L. Sarge 1/14/88  |
| 24. Kendall Cottage ✓               | Substantive Review | for | Keeper | Patrick Andrus 1/14/88 |
|                                     |                    |     | Attest | Beth L. Sarge 1/14/88  |
| 25. Needham House ✓                 | Substantive Review | for | Keeper | Patrick Andrus 1/14/88 |
|                                     |                    |     | Attest | Beth L. Sarge 1/14/88  |
| 26. Point Comfort ✓                 | Substantive Review | for | Keeper | Patrick Andrus 1/14/88 |
|                                     |                    |     | Attest | Beth L. Sarge 1/14/88  |
| 27. Raubold House ✓                 | Substantive Review | for | Keeper | Patrick Andrus 1/14/88 |
|                                     |                    |     | Attest | Beth L. Sarge 1/14/88  |
| 28. Silver Lake Farm ✓              | Substantive Review | for | Keeper | Patrick Andrus 1/14/88 |
|                                     |                    |     | Attest | Beth L. Sarge 1/14/88  |
| 29. Smith--Mason Farm ✓             | Substantive Review | for | Keeper | Patrick Andrus 1/14/88 |
|                                     |                    |     | Attest | Beth L. Sarge 1/14/88  |
| 30. Willard Homestead ✓             | Substantive Review | for | Keeper | Patrick Andrus 1/14/88 |
|                                     |                    |     | Attest | Beth L. Sarge 1/14/88  |

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet \_\_\_\_\_ Item number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 4

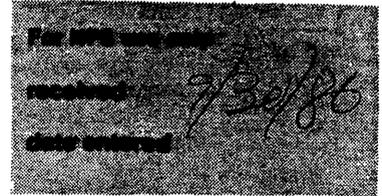
Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Harrisville MRA  
State Cheshire County, NEW HAMPSHIRE

| Nomination/Type of Review | Date/Signature   |
|---------------------------|--|
| 31. Wildwood Cottage ✓    | <del>Statutory Review</del> Keeper <u>Patrick Andrews 1/14/88</u><br>Attest <u>Bob L. Swartz 1/14/88</u> |
| 32.                       | Keeper _____   |
|                           | Attest _____   |
| 33.                       | Keeper _____   |
|                           | Attest _____   |
| 34.                       | Keeper _____   |
|                           | Attest _____   |
| 35.                       | Keeper _____   |
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| 36.                       | Keeper _____   |
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| 37.                       | Keeper _____   |
|                           | Attest _____   |
| 38.                       | Keeper _____   |
|                           | Attest _____   |
| 39.                       | Keeper _____   |
|                           | Attest _____   |
| 40.                       | Keeper _____   |
|                           | Attest _____   |

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

Name Harrisville MRA - Harrisville Village District  
State \_\_\_\_\_

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

Additional Information  
Approval

Substantive Review / Keeper

Patrick Andrews 1/14/88

Attest

Pat L. Savage 1/14/88

Keeper

Attest

Keeper

Attest