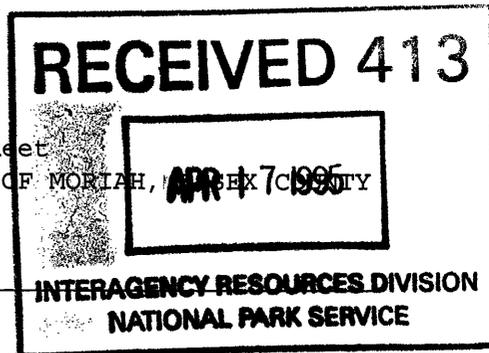




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### Introduction

Historically and architecturally significant resources selected for inclusion in the Multiple Property Nomination for Historic and Architectural Resources in the Town of Moriah are reflective of two major themes. These themes, identified in a reconnaissance level survey undertaken in 1989, are: development of the iron mining industry and religious development. Of these themes, or historic contexts, by far the most central to the town's evolution is the development of Moriah's iron mining industry. Thus the largest percentage of significant resources presented in this multiple property nomination are referenced to this single historic theme. Property types associated with the historical development of the iron industry include residential, industrial, civic and administrative buildings. Religious development is represented by the town's various church buildings.

The following historic overview of Moriah introduces the major themes in the context of the town's two hundred year history. These are subsequently expanded upon in their respective historic context statements.

### Geography

With an eastern border along Lake Champlain, the Town of Moriah occupies an area in the eastern part of the mountainous Adirondack region of northern New York State. Located in Essex County, nearly half-way between Albany and Montreal, its seventy-three square miles are bordered on the east by approximately seven miles of Lake Champlain shoreline. The Town has approximately 5,800 inhabitants (1990 census) and includes the Village of Port Henry, and the hamlets of Moriah Center, Moriah Corners, Mineville and Witherbee.

Two sub-ranges of the Adirondack mountain system run north-south through Moriah in a somewhat parallel manner: the Kayaderosseras range runs through the eastern part of the town, terminating in a high cliff above Port Henry and Lake Champlain; the Schroon range is to the west of the Kayaderosseras range. It includes the higher elevations such as Bald Peak and was discovered to contain some the world's richest deposits of iron ore, leading to the development of Mineville and Witherbee six miles inland from the lake. Between these two ranges are pockets of level land easily adapted to agricultural pursuits. Moriah Corners, two miles inland from the lake, served an early agricultural-based community. Two miles to the north of Moriah Corners is Moriah Center, a mid-nineteenth century hamlet inspired by the lumber industry once located in the vicinity, along Mill Brook. Other brooks and streams run throughout the town. Ponds located in the western half of the town include Ensign Pond, Crowfoot Pond and Newport Pond. Two important north-south transportation

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arteries run parallel to the lakeshore: Route 9N/22 and the railroad line formerly operated by the Delaware and Hudson company.

### Historic Overview

Native American Occupation and Early European Presence: The heavily forested Adirondack region was like a physical boundary between two hostile tribes: the Five Nation Iroquois of central and northern New York, and the Algonquin of Canada. Due to ongoing hostilities, severe winters, and the presence of more easily cultivated lands on all sides of the Adirondack region, few traces of permanent, Native American settlement have been discovered in the Town of Moriah. Evidence of Native American presence has taken the form of a small number of artifacts and burial remains found by early settlers in the vicinity of Crowfoot Pond, Newport Pond, Grove Brook and Cedar Point on Lake Champlain. (Warner and Hall, pg. 13)

The earliest years of European exploration and settlement of the Champlain Valley continued the tradition of the Native American's warlike activities. Samuel de Champlain's first excursion down the lake in 1609, accompanied by a group of Algonquin, ended in a bloody confrontation with members of the Five Nation Iroquois, thus initiating over two hundred years of war which involved the Native Americans, French, English and Americans.

While Moriah was not permanently settled until the latter part of the eighteenth century, it became familiar territory to European settlers by virtue of its close proximity to the forts at Crown Point and Ticonderoga. During the process of strengthening and enlarging the forts, under the control of the British, the first recorded use of Moriah's natural resources by European settlers occurred during the latter 1750's. Following the Treaty of Paris in 1763, land grants were authorized by the King of England for the benefit of retired officers and others who had served with the English army. Early patents along the lakeshore in the Town of Moriah were granted to two sergeants, Porter and Franklin, and to Alexander McKenzie. First attempts at permanent settlement were made during the late 1760's by Porter and Franklin in the vicinity of Mill Brook and the Lake. (Heintz, pg. 50) But these were soon disrupted by the Revolutionary War, in which the Champlain Valley played a major role.

Early Settlement - 1784-1839: Permanent settlement of the Town of Moriah was achieved to the south of Port Henry by William McKenzie in 1784. Saw and grist mills were soon reestablished along Mill Brook to the north of the McKenzie homestead. While the Port Henry area's close proximity to Lake Champlain resulted in early settlement there, the majority of Moriah's first settlers actually preferred the more level, arable land two to three miles inland. Here they found virgin forest and abundant water power. The focus for this developing community of farmers and lumberers became Moriah Corners, the first village center of the town.

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By 1810, Moriah had 584 inhabitants (French, pg. 60), with many new settlers from New England induced by the glowing descriptions of beautiful scenery, good soil and excellent water privileges. During the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the manufacture of lumber and potash were the chief industries in the town, as they were at that time for most communities in the Adirondack region. As a reflection of Moriah's growing population and geographic and political identity, the town was established in 1808, set apart from Crown Point to the south and Elizabethtown to the west and north. (Smith, pg. 566)

Moriah's population continued to increase steadily as a function of important developments in the area's lumber and mining interest. In 1824 the opening of the Champlain Canal imparted a new character to the lumbering operations of northern New York State. By 1833, 36 sawmills were operating in Moriah, with Moriah Corners continuing as the civic, commercial, and religious center of the town. (Heintz, pg. 25) The Champlain Canal also sparked interest in the commercial possibilities of the town's iron resources. In 1824, the town's first blast furnace was constructed in the northern section of Port Henry. Ore was procured two miles north of Port Henry at the Cheever Mine. The ore beds at what would become Mineville, six miles inland, were also being explored during the early 1820's.

Industrial Development - 1839-1869: Moriah Corners remained the focus for the civic and commercial affairs of the town until the 1840's when the lumber industry began losing momentum due to slowly exhausted timber supplies. At the same time, the interest of industrialists in the commercial potential of Moriah ore, as well as improvements in transportation, allowed iron mining to experience large scale expansion. As mining increased in importance, concurrent developments occurred in business and commerce, residential and community growth, religion, and education. These developments were witnessed primarily at Port Henry and Mineville.

With over 160,000 tons of ore being mined annually by 1869, the transformation of Mineville from a mountainous, wooded region into an extensive industrial, commercial and residential center was well underway. The most important development affecting the growth of the mining industry during this period was the construction in 1846 of the plank road from Mineville to Port Henry docks. While numerous speculators were involved in the early development of the Mineville ore beds, two groups emerged as the most powerful associated with Moriah's mining industry: Witherbee, Sherman and Company and the Port Henry Iron Ore Company.

Mid-nineteenth century, residential development at Mineville, and what was to be later called "Witherbee," took the form of woodframe workers' housing constructed by the Port Henry and Witherbee companies to accommodate the growing number of miners required at the Mineville mines. Early religious practices at Mineville centered around this largely Irish Catholic community of mineworkers and their families. Commercial development accompanied the industrial

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expansion, with Main Street in Mineville becoming the commercial center for the area. While agricultural activities did take place in and around Mineville prior to the development of the iron mining industry, some farmland was appropriated for the purposes of mining. Other farms continued to exist, buoyed by the needs of the growing worker population.

In 1869, torrential rains caused the worst flood in the town's history, destroying thirty lumber mills and all of the buildings located along Mill Brook at Moriah Center. By dramatically undermining the local lumber business, the 1869 flood resulted in Moriah's iron industry assuming by far the most significant role in the town's economy. In addition to the large mining-based community at Mineville, a small enclave of workers' housing grew around the Cheever Mine, two miles north of Port Henry.

Like Mineville, Port Henry's commercial and residential growth was inspired during this period by the town's iron industry. Blast furnace operations continued to expand in the north of Port Henry at what became "Furnaceville." (Watson, pg. 391) In providing the main stimulus for development of Port Henry's transportation facilities on the lake, the iron industry contributed to the village's emergence as an important shipping center. A principal north-south travel route, Rte. 9N/22, was also established through Port Henry during this period, leading from New York and Albany to Plattsburgh and Montreal. The village's role as a center for transportation to and from the area, as well as the home of Moriah's most wealthy industrialists and middle class residents, differentiated it from the other town settlements. As the wealth and influence of the Shermans, Witherbees, and other industrialists and professionals increased, so did the extent of their contributions to Port Henry's commercial, social, political and religious life. The village was incorporated under an act of legislature on May 1, 1869.

Industrial, Commercial and Residential Growth - 1870 - 1900: During the latter part of the nineteenth century, Moriah's mining industry developed into one of the largest and most advanced in the country. Its expansion was due in great part to the advent of rail transportation, established between 1869 and 1873. The prosperity of the iron industry was reflected in all facets of residential, commercial and civic development, with the town experiencing a population increase of almost two-thirds between 1870 and 1875 - from 4,683 to 7,898 residents.

The Lake Champlain and Moriah Railroad, constructed from the lake near Cedar Point to the Mineville ore beds, went into operation in 1869. Once at Port Henry, the Mineville ore was either processed at the new Cedar Point furnaces or shipped unprocessed through the Champlain Canal. In 1873 the Delaware and Hudson line was constructed, running north and south between New York and Montreal. It further facilitated the transportation of ore and iron products from Moriah, especially during winter months when lake transportation was not possible.

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While smaller mine and furnace operations such as the Bay State furnace and the Cheever Mine could not compete in a time of changing demands and national economic fluctuations, the larger operations of the Port Henry Iron Ore Company and Witherbee, Sherman and Company were clearly gaining momentum. By the turn of the century, these two groups had consolidated, becoming the world's largest producer of magnetically concentrated iron ore. An unprecedented level of worker employment was achieved, with approximately two thousand men working for Witherbee, Sherman and Company. Additional housing was required at Mineville to accommodate new workers. The construction of stores, churches and schools also reflected community development inspired and, in many cases, directly financed by the iron industry. By 1900, Mineville's character was firmly established as Moriah's leading "company town".

In the brief period between 1870 and 1875, the most rapid residential and commercial development in the history of the Moriah occurred at Port Henry. Eighty or more dwellings were constructed and many of the village's commercial blocks were established along Broad and Main Streets. Most of Port Henry's religious buildings were constructed during this period, as were important civic buildings. While industry at Port Henry took the form of the Cedar Point furnaces, Witherbee, Sherman and Company buildings and the Bay State furnaces in the northern village area, Port Henry's development during the last quarter of the nineteenth century established it as a picturesque commercial village with many modern amenities, beautiful homes and civic, religious and social opportunities.

After the Ensign Pond flood of 1869, some of the buildings at Moriah Center were reconstructed. However, this small community never assumed the importance held by Moriah Corners during the first half of the nineteenth century, or by Mineville and Port Henry during the latter nineteenth century. By 1885, Moriah Corners, once the most active community in the town, had diminished significantly in size and importance, no longer fueled by a prosperous lumber industry.

The Company Town - 1900 - 1938: During the first quarter of the twentieth century, development in the Town of Moriah continued to be synonymous with the development of the town's iron industry. Industrial improvements made possible by the advent of electricity further stimulated productivity and prosperity for Witherbee, Sherman and Company. The construction of company housing at Mineville, the new hamlet of "Witherbee," and near Cedar Point in Port Henry was a principal feature of the town's development during this period and represented the last wave of company-financed, residential expansion. Commercial development at Mineville, Witherbee and Port Henry further attests to the prosperity experienced during the early years of the twentieth century. While the population at Mineville, Witherbee, and Port Henry increased, that of Moriah Corners and Moriah Center remained stable throughout the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries, representing primarily small, land-owning farming families.

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Improved transportation facilities in the form of increased rail service, the 1929 Champlain bridge, modern steam ferries, and upgraded highways also promoted tourist and summer home development during the first quarter of twentieth century. This development reflected a growing awareness of the recreational potential of the Adirondack region and the favorable economic climate preceding and immediately following World War I.

Beginning in the 1920's, the Mineville mines were periodically closed down, a result of the economic pressures associated with competition from fully integrated, steel industries being established in the Great Lakes region. In an attempt to compete successfully in the national steel market, Witherbee, Sherman and Company replaced the old Cedar Point furnaces with a state-of-the-art processing plant. With the onset of the Depression, however, this local company faltered more dramatically and was finally leased, and then sold to the Republic Steel Company.

Prologue: The Republic Steel Era and Beyond 1938 - 1993: By 1939, improvement in the national economy and the arrival of Republic Steel on the mining scene at Moriah would herald a new stage of mining activity, extensive development and upgrading of mining operations and improved working conditions at Mineville. Economic prosperity and stability endured until the late 1950's when the steel industry began to decline. By the beginning of the 1960's, when much of America was realizing modern affluence, Moriah became a target for the War on Poverty. (Rosenquist, pg. 172)

When Republic Steel finally pulled out of mining at Moriah in 1970, it destroyed nearly all of the mine shafts, furnaces, mills and other related industrial buildings to minimize its tax burden. Company houses were sold, in many cases to the workers who had inhabited them for many years. Administrative buildings were purchased by the town or county and churches merged and consolidated in order to survive the economic downturn. Likewise, in an attempt to weather the hardship, while considering options and possibilities, the various districts of the Town of Moriah became more centralized and integrated, with the Moriah Central School built in 1969.

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**E. HISTORIC CONTEXTS:**

**1. DEVELOPMENT OF THE IRON MINING INDUSTRY C.1840-1943**

- a. Pre-settlement Period
- b. Early Settlement (1800-1850)
- c. Industrial and Residential Expansion (1850-1870)
- d. Industry, Affluence and the Emergence of the Company Town (1870-1900)
- e. Twentieth Century Mining under Witherbee, Sherman and Company (1890-1937)
- f. Republic Steel and Beyond (1939-1995)

The following Historic Context is organized chronologically as well as geographically. Industrial development occurred in various parts of the town, but was principally concentrated at three locations: Mineville/Witherbee, Port Henry and at the small community of Cheever. Outlying industrial sites were also found at Fisher Hill, which was northeast of Mineville, and on Ensign Pond Road, west of Moriah Center. As mining expanded and developed at Moriah during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, industrial sites were purchased, developed, and in some cases abandoned by various mining interests. Eventually, mining became concentrated at Mineville/Witherbee under the direction of the Witherbee, Sherman and Company as furnace operations were expanded to the south of Port Henry Village in the vicinity of Cedar Point. Other early industrial facilities such as those developed at Cheever and in northern Port Henry at the Dalliba/Bay State furnace, were abandoned during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

This context statement traces the individual development of each industrial location/community throughout the various phases of Moriah's history, in order to provide a comprehensive view of the many facets of mining-related industry which occurred at Moriah for more than a century.

**a. Pre-Settlement Period**

Prior to European presence in the Champlain Valley, Native Americans who visited the area for hunting and fishing were aware of the presence of iron ore at Moriah, using it for the manufacture of arrowheads and implements. Members of the Iroquois nation first introduced European settlers to Moriah's iron as early as the 1760's. Among these settlers was Sir Philip Skene who was granted 600 acres north of present-day Port Henry in 1771. This patent, referred to as the "Iron Ore Tract," allowed him to procure ore from this area which he then processed at his forge in Skenesborough (Whitehall, New York). The large and easily accessible outcroppings, located closed to Lake Champlain near what became known as the Cheever Mine, made

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this area a good source of ore for Skene's forge - the first in New York State.  
(Warner and Hall, pg. 59)

The Revolutionary War, in which the Champlain Valley played a major role, disrupted earliest attempts at settlement of Moriah. However, the area's iron resources continued to be utilized in the service of the war efforts of that period. Benedict Arnold sent boats of "Skene's Negroes" to dig ore and transport it back to the fort at Skenesborough, now in the hands of the Americans. (Ibid)

**b. Early Settlement (1800-1850)**

During the first quarter of the nineteenth century - the earliest years of permanent European settlement of the Town of Moriah - iron ore did not play a significant role in the lives of the town's early residents. Although some ore was taken by sleigh from the Cheever Mine area, it was not considered valuable. Settlement revolved around diversified, subsistence farming operation, and the quickly expanding lumber and potash industry which was the basis for Moriah's early economy.

**Cheever:** While lumbering was becoming a booming business at Moriah due to the opening of the Champlain Canal in 1823, the 1820's also marked the beginning of serious iron ore excavation and processing at Moriah. Commercial sale of iron ore first occurred at the Cheever Mine, one and one-half miles north of the lakeside village of Port Henry. As early as 1820, the Cheever Bed, Moriah's oldest, was leased to Charles Fisher at a rent of two gross tons of iron per annum, iron being worth about \$100 per ton. Cheever ore was shipped to Troy, New York for processing. While the Cheever Mine area was the first community in Moriah to be inspired by local iron mining operations, no resources remain at Cheever from this earliest period of mining. (H. P. Smith, pg. 577)

**Dalliba Furnace/North Port Henry:** Major James Dalliba and John Dickerson, two industrialists based in Troy, specialized in the manufacture of ordnance. Receiving shipments of Cheever ore, they had the opportunity to test its merits at their furnace operations. Impressed with its quality, Dalliba and Dickerson purchased 4,000 acres of land in the northern part of Port Henry in 1824. Dalliba then constructed Moriah's first blast furnace on the property, a short distance from the lakeshore. Although this charcoal-powered furnace produced only 15 to 18 tons of iron per week, it signalled the beginning of serious iron mining and processing in Moriah. (Warner and Hall, pg. 153) The ore itself was taken from the Dalliba Mine located about three-quarters of a mile from the furnace on the Dalliba property. The pig iron produced in his furnace was shipped to Troy. Dalliba's presence at what would become known as "Port Henry" inspired a new phase of settlement in the northern village area.

In 1827, the Dalliba furnace was converted to a stove and hollow works - the first foundry in northern New York State. Following the death of James Dalliba in 1832, the complex was sold to Stephen Keyes and then passed on to Lansing and Powell,

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who upgraded the stove plant and established a new furnace closer to the lake shore. The earliest iron industry-related building in Moriah, an altered stone casting house (not eligible for listing due to loss of integrity), located at the north end of Tunnel Avenue, is from this period.

In 1838, Horace Gray of Boston purchased the property from Lansing and Powell, and established the Port Henry Iron Company in 1840. Between 1840 and 1852, Gray continued to upgrade and expand the furnace complex. In 1847, the original Dalliba furnace was converted into a more efficient cupola furnace and a second blast furnace was added to the Lansing and Powell furnace near the lakeshore. The latter furnace was referred to as one of the best of the country, with an output of about eight to ten tons daily. The site's close proximity to the lake facilitated shipment of iron products, posing none of the transportation difficulties associated with mining at Mineville. Its location greatly encouraged industrial development of this area at the northern end of Port Henry, which in the 1840's and '50's was known as "Furnaceville." Gray's presence in Moriah also indicated the growing interest in the wealth of iron resources at Moriah on the part of industrialists and capitalists from Boston and New York. A brick carpenter shop and residential duplex<sup>1</sup> (both on Tunnel Avenue) are among Moriah's most intact resources from this period, and, together with the less well-preserved stone casting house, are the oldest buildings in Port Henry directly associated with iron mining and processing.

**Mineville:** While most early settlement occurred near the lakeshore at Port Henry and two to three miles inland in the vicinity of Moriah Corners, a small number of pioneers made their way seven miles inland to the area which became known as Mineville. In 1805, Deacon Sanford, the first settler associated with mining at Mineville, purchased a tract of land in that area which contained some of the richest iron ore deposits in the world. When he had the site surveyed in 1810, the presence of ore greatly disturbed the surveyor's needle, especially along the common lines of those lots which became identified as #21, 23, 24 and 25. However, because iron was not generally recognized as a marketable commodity, it was number of years before any effort was made to obtain iron from this site.

Lot #25 was the earliest to be dug when, in 1824, Mr. Sanford sold two quarter shares to Harry Sherman and Elijah Bishop for the purpose of beginning work on a mine. Their operations were started on the northeast corner of what later became known as the Old Sanford Bed. Lots 23 and 24 also received early attention when the owner, Jeremiah Cook, began exploration on the line between lots 23 and 25. He also sold interests or shares for the purpose of developing a mine; excavation began in 1825.

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1. Additional evaluation required to determine eligibility for listing

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As early as 1824, it was noted in Spafford's Gazeteer that "iron ores of this region (Moriah) are of uncommon richness, yielding iron of the very best quality, though hitherto wrought under many disadvantages incident to small business in a county comparatively new and wanting capital." (pg. 166) While the much more easily accessible Cheever Mine was a source of ore as early as 1771, the more extensive iron ore deposits located in the Mineville region were not mined seriously until 1845 - 1850 due to the lack of capital and transportation difficulties over the steep terrain from Mineville to the lakeshore. Prior to 1846, the aggregate of ore which had been sold from Mineville amounted to only 6,000 tons.

In the spring of 1846, the Old Sanford Bed was conveyed to John Lee, George Sherman and Eliphalet Hall. In 1849, the Hall share was conveyed to S. H. and J. G. Witherbee, two New York industrialists. From this arrangement would later grow the most influential and powerful group associated with 19th and early 20th century mining at Moriah - the firm of Witherbee, Sherman and Company. Transportation of the ore was greatly facilitated when, in 1846, a plank road was constructed from the ore beds at Mineville to the docks in the southern part of Port Henry. From 1846 onward, mining played an increasingly greater role in community and industrial development at Mineville. The earliest examples of mining-related resources can thus be found along the Plank Road (Main Street) in Mineville in the form of modest, wood frame, workers' homes built during the late 1840's, many of which are eligible for listing.

**Colburn Blast Furnace:** Located on the Ensign Pond Road, approximately one mile west of Moriah Center, are the remains of the stone Colburn Blast Furnace, built in 1846.<sup>2</sup> This structure, constructed the same year as the Plank Road, processed raw iron from the mines in the Mineville area. Nearby on Furnace Road are found four or five modest mid-nineteenth century wood frame homes, now greatly altered (not eligible for listing) and surrounded by modern ranch homes. These are all that remain from a settlement related to the Colburn Furnace, which operated between 1846 and 1865.

**c. Industrial and Residential Expansion (1850- 1870)**

**Cheever:** Between 1853 and 1870, the bountiful Cheever Mine was worked vigorously by the Cheever Ore Bed Company under the direction of Benjamin Reed of Boston. Most industrial and residential development of the Cheever area took place during this period. By 1868, the aggregate of ore which had been mined at the the Cheever Mine was 68,000 tons. Most of this was shipped directly to Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Virginia and southern New York State from docks built on the lakeshore a short distance east of the mine area. Some of the Cheever ore was also transported one and one-half miles south to the furnaces of the Port Henry Iron Company (former

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2. Additional evaluation required to determine archaeological significance

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Dalliba furnace). During the mid-19th century, the small community which grew at the Cheever Mine had approximately two hundred residents and included approximately twenty workers homes, a schoolhouse, two stores and superintendent's home, engine house, railroad and a hotel. The small residential settlement which survives today is comprised principally of altered workers' housing built during the late 1850's and 1860's by the Cheever Ore Bed Company, a schoolhouse, and a c.1865 Italianate style superintendent's house.<sup>3</sup> These extant structures are all that mark the site of this once active mining community. No industrial structures remain, and the mine itself has been filled in.

**Mineville:** The mid-nineteenth century was a time in which numerous individuals and small companies endeavored to exploit the iron resources at Mineville. By the 1860's,

"...a cluster of pits and shafts opened into several different ore beds. They ended into a deposit of ore that could be divided by no visible lines, but existed as one uniform and unbroken mass. The operations in these pits so nearly approached that the sound of the implements in one could by distinctly heard in another. As the pits descended and expanded, it was asserted that the evidence augmented of the presence of an inexhaustible deposit." (Watson, pg. 391)

As the magnitude of the Old Bed and Number 21 Mines became evident, the Port Henry Iron Ore Company and Witherbee, Sherman and Company emerged as the most powerful groups in operation at Mineville, eventually assuming control of most of the area's other smaller mines, as well.

By 1869, except for mines located in Sweden, those of Moriah represented the largest bodies of magnetite ore in the world. The following table shows the products of the various mines in Moriah in 1868:

<u>Location</u>	<u>Tons of Ore</u>
Port Henry Iron Ore Company (all located in Mineville's central mining area on Lots 21, 23 and 24)	68,000
Witherbee, Sherman and Company (all located in central Mineville at the Old Sanford Bed and one-half mile west at the New Bed mines)	59,000

3. Additional evaluation required to determine eligibility for listing.

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Fisher Hill Mines, owned by Witherbee, Sherman  
and Company (located one mile north of Mineville  
on Lot 43) 6,500

From their development until 1869, it is estimated that Moriah mines produced 1,100,000 tons, one-third of which was mined between 1863 and 1869. These ores were used in all the manufacturing districts of New England as well as in the mid-Atlantic states and in the South and West. A large supply was maintained at a depot in Cleveland to meet the demands of the state of Ohio and of western Pennsylvania.

D. M. Arnold's survey, undertaken in 1858 and 1863, shows the Mineville area as only partially developed, yet the number of iron industry-related buildings and structures had clearly increased. In addition to mine shafts, which often existed beside the earlier open pits and became an important means for iron ore excavation, steam separators, steam engine houses and "whimsies" were established in the central mining area located one-half miles west of Main Street (Plank Road). The presence of company housing - the regular rows of workers' housing that would eventually characterize the vast majority of residential development of Mineville and what would later be called "Witherbee" - began to emerge at this time, as well.

**Northern Port Henry (Furnaceville):** In the fall of 1852, Benjamin T. Reed of Boston purchased all the property of the Port Henry Iron Company in the north of Port Henry (originally the Dalliba furnace and property), as well as the Cheever Mine. In the following year, he formed the Cheever Ore Bed Company, which ran the mine, and a corporation known as the Port Henry Furnaces, which commenced operating the furnace property at Furnaceville. In 1853, a second anthracite furnace was added to this complex located at the edge of the lake. This was equipped with an iron shell stack, which according to F. S. Witherbee, may have been the first of its type in the world, as they were previously made of stone. Both furnaces were rebuilt in 1866-67; each was 56 feet high and 16 feet in diameter, thus creating an even more substantial industrial complex at the north of Port Henry. The Bay State Iron Company, from South Boston, took over the furnaces in 1867. Having originated with Major Dalliba as a small industrial enclave, it grew by 1869 to include approximately 16 workers' residences, a school, library, coal yard, steamboat landing and store, as well as the extensive furnace complex.

**Village of Port Henry:** Significant to Port Henry's development during the mid-nineteenth century was the fact that Moriah's wealthiest and most influential mine and furnace owners and supervisors chose the village as the location for their homes. These men included S. H. and J. G. Witherbee and George Sherman of Witherbee, Sherman and Company; Thomas Witherbee of the Fletcherville Furnace; Wallace Foote, Clark Butterfield and George Pease of the Bay State Iron Company, and others. Port Henry was selected due to its close proximity to the wharves, where the owners could oversee shipment of their ore and iron products, the presence of the Bay State furnaces, and the exceptional views and natural beauty of this lakeside community.

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**d. Industry, Affluence and the Emergence of the Company Town (1870- 1900)**

**Cheever:** The Cheever Mine was worked consistently until 1884, yielding in total 1.5 million tons of ore. By 1884, the main vein, which was a full one-half mile in length, with an average width of about ten feet, was nearly exhausted. In 1890, Oliver Presbrey purchased the property from his father, John, who was superintendent of the mine. Shortly after the purchase, the vein appeared to have been suddenly cut off and the mine ceased operating in 1892. The national depression of the early 1890's also had a negative influence on other smaller mines located near the Cheever. Smaller mines such as the Goff Bed, Port Henry Ore Bed, and Pilfershire Bed, were all abandoned by the early 1890's. As a result, little community development took place during the last quarter of the nineteenth century and no extant resources in what was once the active Cheever mine community reflect this period.

**Mineville:** Construction of the Lake Champlain and Moriah Railroad in 1869 encouraged further development of the Mineville mines. In 1873, the Delaware and Hudson Railroad line, which ran north and south between New York and Montreal, connected with the Lake Champlain and Moriah Railroad in Port Henry. By this time, nearly all the mining operations at Mineville were conducted by Witherbee, Sherman and Company and the Port Henry Iron Ore Company, who were responsible for construction of the railroad line from Mineville to Port Henry.

By the late-nineteenth century, the properties of the Port Henry Iron Ore Company and Witherbee, Sherman and Company grew to consist of most of the Mineville area mines. The largest of these mines was the Number 21 Mine which was one of the most impressive in the world. In describing this mine, F.S. Witherbee stated: "...to give an idea of its magnitude, I would say that the vein is from 300 to 400 feet thick, while the average iron ore vein is not more than 15 feet thick." By 1885, the Port Henry Iron Ore Company had raised as much as 192,000 tons of ore at its Number 21 and Fisher Hill Mines, giving employment to nearly 800 men. Railroad lines were directed alongside all of these mine shafts with an extension running to the Fisher Hill Mine. Mineville thus became criss-crossed with tracks running to the various mines of the Witherbee, Sherman and Company and Port Henry Iron Ore Company. Most of the mid-nineteenth century, wood frame workers' housing located in Mineville and present-day Witherbee, date from the 1860's and early 1870's, when the most extensive, nineteenth century industrial expansion was taking place.<sup>4</sup>

While Mineville was once home to extensive mining-related industry, the only surviving industrial building from the last quarter of the nineteenth century is a c. 1870 brick engine house (contributing component in district eligible for listing)

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4. Additional evaluation required to determine eligibility for listing.

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located on Lakeview Avenue in Mineville. In 1910-12 this building was converted to a company infirmary; it now houses the Mineville Health Center.

**Port Henry - Bay State Furnaces:** During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the Bay State furnace complex in northern Port Henry began to experience financial difficulties. When the Bay State Iron Company of Boston took over these furnaces in 1867, they represented the most substantial furnace complex in the town. However, in 1883, the Bay State Iron Company failed and soon after a new corporation was formed, composed of W.T. Foote (prior superintendent of the furnaces), the Burleighs of Ticonderoga, and Witherbee, Sherman and Company. This firm became known as the Port Henry Furnace Company. They operated the furnaces for several years until the property again experienced financial difficulties during the depression years of the early 1890's. Finally, Witherbee, Sherman and Company purchased the entire property, running the furnaces until 1896, when the plant was dismantled. Although the latter years of the property were financially unfortunate, from 1860 to 1880, the plant was exceedingly prosperous and undoubtedly earned its cost several times over.

**Port Henry - Cedar Point:** In 1872, a major furnace complex - the second in Port Henry - was established at Cedar Point when the Cedar Point Iron Company erected its first blast furnace at a cost of \$600,000. The furnace was 71 by 15 feet, incorporating four 22-foot Whitwell stoves imported from England. In 1879, the Cedar Point Foundry was constructed next to the furnaces. The foundry and furnaces were principally run on Mineville ores from the Old Bed and New Bed mines of Witherbee, Sherman and Company. By 1885, the annual capacity of this furnaces was 26,000 tons. In the spring of that year, the Cedar Point Iron Company was purchased by Witherbee, Sherman and Company, with the foundry continuing to run steadily until 1903. Its castings were largely used for paper mill and mining machinery, the demand for the work being so great that the foundry was able to run at full capacity when many other industries closed due to the depression of 1893-98. In addition to their furnace property on the edge of the lake in southern Port Henry, the Cedar Point Iron Company also owned a large piece of property across South Main Street in the Meacham Farm area directly west of the furnaces. During the early 1870's, this property was subdivided into small building lots and by 1876 approximately twenty workers' homes had been constructed by the company. Between 1876 and the 1885, when the company was sold to Witherbee, Sherman and Company, further residential development took place here.

**Port Henry - Witherbee, Sherman and Company:** During the period from 1870 to 1875, Witherbee, Sherman and Company began to develop their extensive property holdings between the F.S. Witherbee estate (not eligible for listing due to loss of integrity) on South Main Street and the Cedar Point furnaces. This area had been important as the site of the town's first wharves and, from as early as the 1840's, was the main location for shipment of Mineville ore mined by the Witherbees, George Sherman, and others. When the Lake Champlain and Moriah Railroad was constructed in 1868, it terminated at the lake shore on what had become property owned by Witherbee, Sherman and Company. By 1876, five railroad lines ran along the perimeter of the

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lake on the Witherbee, Sherman and Company property, allowing the railroad cars to transfer their heavy loads to the often hundreds of barges waiting nearby. From the lake, the railroad line ran directly west, crossing South Main Street and then winding its way up the seven miles to the Mineville ore beds. From their main office building (individual component), the company directors could oversee shipment of their ore to distant markets and conduct business in a picturesque village which was quickly emerging as the town's commercial and transportation center.

Not only did the residents of Port Henry benefit in a general sense from the town's strong mining-based economy, but their lives were also enriched through the generosity of the company owners who saw fit to provide the village with important social, educational and religious opportunities. Of these company directors, George Sherman became best known for the great interest he took in town affairs - particularly in the establishment of important educational and civic facilities at Port Henry. The Sherman Free Library, Port Henry Fire Department Building, and Delaware and Hudson Railroad Depot (individual components), all financed by George Sherman, attest to the important role Moriah's industrialists played in the economic, industrial and social evolution of the town.

**e. Twentieth Century Mining Under Witherbee, Sherman and Co. (1890-1937)**

**Cheever:** When the Cheever ore bed ceased operating in 1883, most of the community, some sixty tenements, was abandoned. Oliver Presbrery tried to interest the Lackawanna Iron Company in supplying capital investment but was unsuccessful. In 1893, the year that iron demand fell drastically in the United States, he completely gave up on his operations at Cheever. The laborers, many of them Irish, found work at Port Henry, Mineville and other towns.

About 1906, the Cheever Mine, by then owned by Witherbee, Sherman and Company, was reopened. A small concentrating mill and other modern equipment was added in 1908. The mine employed eighty men when it reopened, although slumps in the iron market caused it to closed intermittently during the next few years. Perhaps due to economic pressures, the mining operations at Cheever began to be conducted in an irresponsible manner. In 1916, three men were killed at the Cheever Mine, and in 1922 the mine was permanently closed. None of the mining-related industrial buildings or structures from this period at Cheever remain,<sup>5</sup> and the two remaining c. 1910 concrete block workers' houses have been altered considerably (not eligible for listing).

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5. Additional evaluation required to determine archaeological significance.

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**Mineville/Witherbee:** In 1900, Witherbee, Sherman and Company reorganized for a final time when the Lackawanna Steel Company acquired the Sherman interest and the company became incorporated as Witherbee, Sherman and Company, Inc. The Port Henry Iron Ore Company continued to be closely related to Witherbee, Sherman and Company, Inc., sharing common stockholders, jointly owning the Lake Champlain and Moriah Railroad, conducting their sales on joint accounts, and undertaking construction and engineering work together. In 1900, Witherbee, Sherman and Company, Inc. owned approximately 23,000 acres in the Town of Moriah, while the Port Henry Iron Ore Company owned an additional 8,000 acres. In 1909, B. S. Stephenson wrote in The Iron Trade Review:

"...the magnetic ore operations at Moriah having played a more or less important part in eastern blast furnace and rolling mill activities for considerably over half a century, have recently assumed more extensive proportions. As a result of vigorous development, work and the installation of improved equipment, they are now yielding the largest output in their history. Their annual capacity is in excess of 1,000,000 tons of high grade ore, and their ores represent a rather wide variety. They have been shipped as far west as Pittsburgh and Ohio furnaces, while several cargoes of high phosphorous products have been used in German Steel works." (pg. 371)

Between 1900 and 1920, as a result of the industrial improvements made possible by the advent of electricity, Witherbee, Sherman and Company, Inc. expanded and improved their mining and furnace operations at Mineville and Cedar Point in Port Henry. Improvements at the Mineville mines included three new mine shafts, three powerhouses, four concentrating mills, cobbing machines and skips that carried both ore and miners into and out of the mines, all electrically powered. The Central Powerhouse (individual component), located west of the Old Bed operations at Mineville, burned coal to produce electricity as well as receiving electric power from two hydro-electric plants in the towns of Elizabethtown and Westport. It is the only extant powerhouse of the five built between 1900 and 1920 and is one of only three industrial buildings remaining from Mineville's extensive mining operations. The other two are a c.1910 concrete block change house on West Road and a c.1915 concrete block repair garage located at the intersection of West and Harmony Roads.<sup>6</sup>

The principal mines at Mineville continued to be located in the central mining site between Mineville and Witherbee. While the Old Bed mines were owned by Witherbee, Sherman and Company, Inc. and the Number 21 mines by the Port Henry Iron Ore Company, the distinction between these two operations and companies began to fade. By 1909, the workings of these mines had broken through to each other. While the Old Bed operations of Witherbee, Sherman and Company, Inc. were conducted through

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6. Both require additional evaluation to determine eligibility for listing.

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the new Joker and Bonanza shafts, the Number 21 and 23 veins were made accessible through the Welch, Miller, Clonan and Number 21 shafts of the Port Henry Iron Ore Company. Other mines worked during this period were the Harmony A and B mines, one-half mile south of the Old Bed in the hamlet of Witherbee, located one-half mile northwest of the Old Bed/Number 21 operations. In total, these mines were yielding approximately three to four million tons of ore annually by 1910.

Witherbee, Sherman and Company, Inc.'s continuing prosperity and dominating presence in all aspects of life at Mineville and Witherbee was clearly reflected in a number of administrative-type buildings constructed by them during this period. Prominently sited on a rise overlooking the central mining area on Lakeview Avenue, and visible from all parts of Witherbee, are three of these buildings: Witherbee Memorial Hall (State/National Registers listed 1990), a massive Shingle Style building constructed in 1893 to house social, educational and health care facilities for the miners and their families; the former Witherbee, Sherman and Company, Inc. Office Building, a 1907 massive concrete block, Neo-Classical style building which housed the administrative offices for the Witherbee/Mineville operations; and the former Police Station and Lock up (now a private residence) constructed in 1908 by Witherbee, Sherman and Company, Inc. During this period (c.1910-12), the company also renovated the c.1870 brick engine house/blacksmith shop to serve as an infirmary. This cluster of administrative buildings, along with a number of other earlier industry-related buildings in the immediate vicinity, comprise a historic district eligible for listing, which provides an excellent representation of the company's developing paternalistic relationship with its employees.

The mid-late nineteenth century had witnessed the beginnings of a "company town" in western Mineville. At this location there had been little or no early settlement and residential development was almost exclusively a result of the growing mining operations in the area. When, in 1900, Witherbee, Sherman and Company, Inc. and the Port Henry Iron Ore Company gained complete control of all the mining operations at Mineville, the west end of Mineville became a separate hamlet called "Witherbee." The different types of buildings and concrete block homes constructed by the company tended to reflect the relative wealth, class and ethnic background of the people who would then occupy them. (Rosenquist) This period represented the last and most significant wave of residential development to take place at Mineville and Witherbee.

**Northern Port Henry - Bay State (former Dalliba) Furnaces:** In 1883 Witherbee, Sherman and Company, Inc. had purchased the former Bay State furnace complex and by 1900 had become the town's largest landholder. As a result of the national iron depression of the 1890's, Witherbee, Sherman and Company, Inc. demolished the

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furnaces and foundry that existed at this site.<sup>7</sup> They left standing the c.1840 brick carpenter shop and the c.1835 stone casting house (neither eligible for listing due to loss of integrity) on Tunnel Avenue, both of which they converted to rental residences between 1910-15. In 1938-39, the company ceased its operations at Moriah and the entire Tunnel Avenue-North Main Street property was sold to the Republic Steel Corporation, as was most of Witherbee, Sherman and Company's extensive holdings throughout the town. In the mid-1950's, Republic Steel began to experience financial difficulties with its Moriah operations and started to sell off property originally purchased from Witherbee, Sherman and Company, Inc. In 1955, the Tunnel Avenue-North Main Street property, whose history dated back to the original Dalliba furnace, store and homestead, was subdivided. The individual buildings - by then all dwellings - were sold, in many cases to the workers who had rented them.

**Port Henry - Cedar Point:** In The Iron Ore Eaters: A Portrait of the Mining Community of Moriah, New York, Valerie Rosenquist states:

"The blast furnace industry in 1920 was concentrated in Pennsylvania, where iron could be shipped by rail or boat to the fuel source, coal. The larger iron companies had become, or were in the process of becoming, fully integrated, owning coal and iron mines, railroads, and the entire means of processing steel. Moriah was unsuitable for large-scale expansion because of its geography. Located in mountainous terrain, Adirondack winters made shipment of iron difficult. The town was located hundreds of miles from a ready coal source. The Witherbee-Sherman company nevertheless decided to ship in the coal by barge or rail, process the iron into high-quality bloomery iron and ship it back to market for further processing into steel. Perhaps they decided it was a now-or-never situation; perhaps the demands and profits of the war years opened their eyes to financial possibilities undreamed of earlier. In any case, they borrowed \$5,000,000 and began to build a state-of-the-art furnace at Port Henry." (pg.82)

This new furnace complex replaced the old Cedar Point furnaces in southern Port Henry which had been leased to the Northern Iron Company by Witherbee, Sherman and Company, Inc. The new furnaces constructed by the company in 1922 included the No. 1 and No. 2 furnaces, as well as a sintering plant and electric powerhouse. The docks and lake shore also received improvements during the 1910's and 1920's, and were filled in extensively. The docks, which ran along the lake front for one mile, had a storage capacity of 250,000 tons, accommodating holdings during the winter when shipment by boat was suspended. The docks were built with a series of overhead tracks which allowed the dumping of ore into concrete ore bins. A traveling, cantilever crane - the largest of its kind in the world at that time - facilitated the loading of ore and furnace products onto barges. The only extant, industrial

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7. Additional evaluation required to determine archaeological significance

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resources remaining from this period are a concrete block warehouse and a long line of concrete block ore bins.<sup>8</sup> All company-built workers' housing associated with the Cedar Point complex had been constructed by the turn of the century.

**f. Republic Steel and Beyond (1939-1993)**

The most recent period in Moriah's history (post-1939) has been marked by dramatic improvements in the living and working conditions of the miners and their families. When Republic Steel leased, and then purchased, the Witherbee, Sherman and Company, Inc. operations, complete with hospital, housing, schools and tax base, the presence of the town's wealthy mine owners disappeared and a new, more impersonal industrial authority took its place. In the process, the mining industry at Moriah was completely upgraded and modernized. The stark differences between life at Port Henry and Mineville were eased as the miners received better working conditions and pay, with most eventually purchasing their rental homes. Economic prosperity and stability endured until the late 1950's, when the steel industry began to decline. When Republic Steel finally pulled out of mining and processing at Moriah in 1970, many residents were struggling to support themselves with the help of welfare and other types of state and federal aid.

**Mineville/Witherbee and Port Henry:** In late 1938, Republic Steel leased the Witherbee, Sherman and Company, Inc. operations, purchased all the equipment, and began working the mines and mills at Mineville and Port Henry. The concentrated and sintered ore was sent by rail to the Republic Steel plants at Buffalo, NY; Cleveland, OH; Youngstown, OH; and Warren, OH. When Republic Steel first leased the operations, the capacity of the Mineville mines was equivalent to approximately 500,000 long tons of shipping product per year. After upgrading the mining and processing operations during the early years of World War II, the company was in a position to produce one million long tons of shipping product. The mining operations became centralized at the Harmony/Old Bed Mine, the Number 21/Bonanza/Joker Mine, the New Bed Mine and the Fisher Hill Mine. The concentrating and sintering was done at two facilities: the new Number 7 Mill, one mile east of Moriah Center, and the new Number 6 mill, located on the site of the Witherbee, Sherman and Company's No. 1 and No. 2 furnaces at Cedar Point in Port Henry. Through the Defense Plan Corporation, the Federal government invested heavily in the expansion of Moriah operations under Republic Steel. During the 1950's, wages reached record highs at Moriah and most families associated with the mines earned far more than they ever had.

In the late 1950's, just as Moriah's miners and laborers were beginning to experience greatly improved economic status, the mining operations under Republic

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8. Additional evaluation required to determine eligibility for listing.

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Steel began to falter. The mines closed periodically and in 1960 the company shut down its operations for a number of months and began to undertake a local reorganization. The mines closed for several months during 1960 and the work force of 800 was cut by half when they reopened. In 1961, Moriah was officially declared an economically depressed area.

When Republic Steel finally pulled out of mining in 1970, it destroyed nearly all of the industrial buildings and other related structures at Mineville in order to decrease its tax burden. The larger homes of the mine owners have been taken over by fraternal and social organizations; the Witherbee, Sherman and Company, Inc./Republic Steel office buildings are now owned by the town, indicative of local government's role in addressing the economic, administrative and social void left by the mining industry in the wake of mine closings. Also remaining are the regular rows of concrete block and wood frame workers' homes - the most powerful representation of a local mining industry which contributed significantly to the nineteenth and early-twentieth century development of this country.

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**F. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES:**

**1. RESOURCES ASSOCIATED WITH WITHERBEE, SHERMAN AND COMPANY**

- Subtypes: A. Public and Civic Resources  
B. Administrative and Industrial Resources  
C. Residential Resources  
D. Archaeological Resources

**DESCRIPTION**

During much of the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, the physical evolution of the Town of Moriah was intrinsically connected to its iron mining industry. Although iron is no longer mined at Moriah, a wide variety of extant historic and architectural resources, as well as historic archaeological resources, reflect the central role mining played in the cultural and physical development of the community. The vast majority of these resources are directly attributed to the town's most powerful local mining firm, Witherbee, Sherman and Company, which operated at Moriah for nearly a century, from the mid-1800's until 1939.

For much of its history, Moriah - and particularly the communities of Port Henry and Mineville - exhibited many of the characteristics of a "company town." Extensive industrial development was once evident at both locations, remains of which consist of a small number of industry-related building and structures. The mining company's paternalistic relationship to the community allowed them to exert control on many levels - sociological and economic - thus allowing for a maximization of profits. The extent of the company's paternalism is, perhaps, best illustrated at Mineville/Witherbee. At these adjacent communities, a handful of civic, religious and administrative buildings and the dozens of concrete block, workers' homes continue to reflect an early-twentieth century community entirely dependent on the local mining interest.

Company-built resources associated with the development of civic, religious and educational opportunity are present at the picturesque, lakeside Village of Port Henry as well. While the influence of Witherbee, Sherman and Company was strongly felt in both communities, the quality of life at Port Henry was enhanced by its attractive setting, the stately homes of noted industrialists, and a broad commercial base. The physical characteristics reflected in public and civic resources at Port Henry, as compared with those at Mineville/Witherbee, clearly speak of the socio-economic and physical distinctions which historically separated these two, very different communities.

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**Subtype A: Public and Civic Resources**

Public and civic resources associated with Witherbee, Sherman and Company were constructed during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, a period of considerable prosperity for Moriah's local mining firm. These buildings are enduring reminders of the important role mining-based wealth played in the cultural development of the town and are, without exception, physically substantial and stylistically distinctive features of the community. Public and civic buildings constructed by Witherbee, Sherman and Company were designed to enhance the educational, religious and social opportunities available to local citizens, while reinforcing the paternalistic relationship between company and community.

Extant examples of such buildings retain architectural detailing characteristic of the popular styles of the day. At Port Henry and Mineville/Witherbee, civic and public buildings provided by Witherbee, Sherman and Company during the last quarter of the nineteenth century are easily identified by their massing, the use of brick and stone, and the influence of Romanesque design. Because company-built civic and public resources from this period are all distinctive examples of Romanesque and Richardsonian Romanesque architectural influence, stylistic similarities serve to support their common historic association. Early-twentieth century examples exhibit a similar stylistic consistency and scale, with design characteristics typifying the American architectural style of the period: Classical Revival. The rendering of this architectural style in concrete block, a locally-produced building material made from iron tailings, amplifies the sense of historic and architectural significance.

In addressing the civic needs of the community, these buildings served a variety of functions including those associated with religious worship, education, public safety, transportation and recreation. While buildings within this subtype exhibit stylistic consistencies and architectural influence characteristic of the period, their spatial arrangement and respective plans clearly reveal diverse functions. In all cases, internal floorplans continue to reflect each building's respective, original use, as for example, a church, library, rail station, fire station or clubhouse.

**Subtype B: Administrative and Industrial Resources**

Industrial development at Moriah began in the 1840's, as the extent and quality of the ore deposits became recognized. Open pit mining was eventually superseded by shafts and tunnels dug at various locations in and around Mineville/Witherbee and near the lake, at Cheever. At the height of mining operations, Moriah represented the world's second largest source of magnetite iron ore. Mining-related buildings and structures, most of which were constructed between 1870 and 1920, occupied the central mining site between Mineville and Witherbee. A large furnace complex was located at Port Henry, where ore was processed and then shipped by rail or boat. While Moriah hosted one of the most extensive mining-related industries in the East,

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most industrial buildings and structures were destroyed by Republic Steel in the 1970's, as the company withdrew from mining at Moriah.<sup>9</sup>

What remains to mark these once extensively developed industrial sites are a handful of administrative buildings and three industrial buildings. At Port Henry, the former Witherbee, Sherman and Company Office Building (individual component) once overlooked a massive furnace complex and shipping facility. Built in 1875 as a high-style rendering of Second Empire design, it stands today as one of the community's most notable architectural resources - a reflection of the wealth and prominence enjoyed by Witherbee, Sherman and Company during the late-nineteenth century. Occupying an equally prominent position in Mineville/Witherbee, and also overlooking a now vacant industrial site, is a cluster of late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century administrative buildings, including the the former Witherbee, Sherman and Company Office Building (1907), a massive Neoclassical concrete block building from which the Mineville/Witherbee operations were administered; the infirmary, a c.1870 converted brick blacksmith shop/engine house; the former police station and lock up, a c.1908 concrete block, gambreled roof structure; and the massive Shingle Style Witherbee Memorial Hall (State/National Registers listed 1990). These buildings constitute the entirety of extant resources associated with administering the iron mining operations under Witherbee, Sherman and Company.

At Mineville/Witherbee, three industrial buildings remain from what was an extensively developed industrial site: a brick powerhouse dating from 1902 (individual component); a c. 1915 concrete block repair garage; and a c.1910 concrete block change house.<sup>10</sup> These buildings are located in close proximity to the former, central mining site and feature internal plans which continue to reflect an original, industrial use. In each case, external and internal detailing demonstrates a highly vernacular approach to architectural design, as compared, for example, with the company office buildings. Such detailing combines with scale and siting to support a continued association with historic industrial and utilitarian function. At Port Henry, remains of the furnace operations south of the village take the form of a concrete block ore trestle and a long, concrete block building which served the rail facilities.<sup>11</sup> Like the other extant industrial buildings at Witherbee, these structures' siting, scale, design and method of construction, continue to communicate an historic association with Witherbee, Sherman and Company, as well as to reflect their original, industrial use.

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9. See Subtype "Archaeological Resources"

10. Additional evaluation required to determine eligibility for listing.

11. Additional evaluation required to determine eligibility for listing.

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**Subtype C: Residential Resources**

Concentrations of historically significant, residential resources attributed to Witherbee, Sherman and Company are located at Mineville and Witherbee. Spanning a period of seventy years - from c.1850 to c.1920 - these resources take the form of wood frame and concrete block workers' housing. Vernacular, wood frame duplexes date from the mid-nineteenth century; and concrete block housing dates from the early-twentieth century. Stylistic distinctions and variations in massing and internal layout were directly related to economic and social hierarchies. Neighborhoods of early-twentieth century, single-family, concrete block workers' housing represented, for example, a higher standard of living. Large multi-family tenements for eastern and southern European workers represented a much lower standard.

In most cases, residential buildings reflect a highly vernacular approach to design. The exceptions are located on Park Street in Mineville and consist of middle management duplexes dating from the early-twentieth century. These exhibit Tudor Revival design elements, and provided accommodation on a higher scale than the concrete block homes. Taken in total, workers' housing in Mineville and Witherbee continues to exist as the most striking example of Witherbee, Sherman and Company's paternalistic relationship to the people of Moriah, so many of whom were employees.

The workers' housing of Mineville and Witherbee exists in stark contrast to another category of residential development attributed to Witherbee, Sherman and Company. At Port Henry, a handful of architecturally distinguished and substantial private residences reflect the enormous wealth enjoyed by the mine owners. Scale, siting and high-style rendering of popular architectural styles of the day distinguish these buildings, although some have lost integrity of setting. Perhaps the most outstanding example is the former W.C. Witherbee mansion on Stone Street (1895)<sup>12</sup>. With its expansive views overlooking Port Henry and Lake Champlain, mature plantings and open lawns, this building best reflects the high standard of living enjoyed by Moriah's industrialists. This building is a high-style example of the Shingle Style. Other examples in the Village of Port Henry reflect Greek Revival and Second Empire design, although these are far less intact.

**Subtype D: Archaeological Resources**

The most pervasive archaeological resource in Moriah is most certainly associated with the iron mining industry and spans a period of 200 years - from

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12. Additional evaluation of interior features required to determine eligibility for individual listing.

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c.1770 to 1970. Because of the extensive nature and general characteristics of the mining industry, significant and extensive archaeological resources are most certainly present at all locations in which mining and furnace operations took place: at Cheever, Fisher Hill, Mineville-Witherbee, northern Port Henry, and Cedar Point (Port Henry).

The earliest remains of industrial activity at Moriah are most probably present at Cheever and in the northern part of Port Henry. Remains which date from the mid-late nineteenth century are present at Cheever, Port Henry (Cedar Point and Bay State locations) and at Mineville. Twentieth century remains may be found at Port Henry (Cedar Point), Mineville-Witherbee, Fisher Hill, and at the location of the Number Seven Mill in the vicinity of Grover Hills. Archaeological findings may take the form of the remains of all resource types associated with industrial activity including: slag; forge and foundry remains; engine and powerhouse remains; mine shaft structures; and tools and other implements. Industry-related transportation archaeological resources would most likely be found along the original alignment of the Lake Champlain and Moriah Railroad, along the lakeshore and along present roads and highways, taking the form of historic docks, piers, shipwrecks, railroad tracks, trestles and station remains, road beds and historic plank or other paving, and tavern and toll house remains. Archaeological resources associated with mining industry-related residential development can be found throughout the town, concentrated at the main village and hamlet centers. Historic remains of earlier buildings and structures associated with all aspects of community development may exist at all of the town's village and hamlet centers, as well as at scattered sites elsewhere. These may take the form of the remains of early houses, log buildings, stores, schools and meetinghouses.

#### SIGNIFICANCE

The wide array of resources associated with Witherbee, Sherman and Company signify the extent to which iron mining, and particularly the influence of this local mining firm, lay at the heart of Moriah's cultural and physical evolution beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. Prior to the 1840's, Moriah was more or less typical of the pioneer communities which were emerging throughout the Adirondack-Champlain region. Relying on subsistence agriculture and an active lumber industry, Moriah's early residents located near the lake and farther inland at Moriah Corners. Topographical elements were important, early factors in settlement patterns, with the town's more level, arable land being occupied first.

As the iron industry developed, however, the communities of Port Henry and Mineville quickly eclipsed those at Moriah Corners and Moriah Center. With seemingly inexhaustible quantities of high grade ore, Moriah's physical and cultural development became, almost exclusively, a function of its iron mining industry. Wood frame workers' housing and early industrial buildings at Mineville/Witherbee comprised the first significant development of that part of the town. Furnace operations were soon established at Port Henry, as were enclaves of workers' homes.

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By the late-nineteenth century, most aspects of the town's residential, commercial, industrial and civic development could be linked, either directly or indirectly, to the mining operations of Witherbee, Sherman and Company.

The last wave of development under Witherbee, Sherman and Company occurred between 1900 and 1920, after which the company went into decline. Eventually taken over by Republic Steel in 1939, Witherbee, Sherman and Company's demise was reflective of the national trend away from small, locally-owned companies. Historic, company-built resources at Moriah gain significance from their association with a period in which industry was more community-based.

Since most of the resources associated with this context are representative of either high-style examples of specific national styles (eg., Moriah Town Office Building, Sherman Free Library) or of a specific property type (eg., powerhouse, workers' houses), they qualify for listing under Criterion C as well as under Criterion A.

The period of significance for mining-related resources (non-archaeological) in the Town of Moriah is resource-based, with the earliest extant building dating from c.1840. The period of significance extends to 1945, reflecting both the fifty-year, National Register eligibility limit and the period in which Republic Steel purchased, upgraded and added to the industrial buildings and structures associated with the mining industry at Moriah.

#### **Subtype A: Public and Civic Resources**

The public and civic resources in this nomination are historically significant under National Register Criterion A for reflecting the central role iron mining played in the historic development of the Town of Moriah, as well as for their more specific associations with the iron mining firm, Witherbee, Sherman and Company. These resources reflect the extent to which cultural development was largely a function of the company's benevolence, and the paternalistic relationship established between Witherbee, Sherman and Company and the community.

These resources are also significant under National Register Criterion C for embodying the distinctive academic and vernacular forms and methods of construction common during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, particularly those associated with the Richardsonian Romanesque style. Whether a community library or a fire station, stylistic similarities and methods of construction reflect a period in which the wealth and prosperity of Witherbee, Sherman and Company benefited the community in the form of a number of substantial and architecturally distinctive public and civic building facilities.

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**Subtype B: Administrative and Industrial Resources**

The administrative and industrial resources in this nomination are historically significant under National Register Criterion A for reflecting the central role iron mining played in the historic development of the Town of Moriah as well as for their direct associations with Witherbee, Sherman and Company, which was responsible for much of the industrial development that took place at Moriah between 1850 and 1939.

These resources are also significant under National Register Criterion C for embodying the distinctive academic and vernacular forms and methods of construction common during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, particularly those associated with the Second Empire and Neoclassical styles. Industrial buildings are also significant under Criterion C. Although they reflect vernacular building practice, they represent last vestiges of the extensive industrial development which occupied much of the town. In form, plan and detailing, their historic, industrial function is clearly revealed.

**Subtype C: Residential Resources**

Residential resources are historically significant under National Register Criterion A for reflecting the central role iron mining played in the historic development of the Town of Moriah, as well as for their associations with Witherbee, Sherman and Company, which was responsible for much of the residential development that took place in Moriah between 1850 and 1920.

These resources are also significant under National Register Criterion C. Those in Port Henry, which were constructed as the private homes of local industrialists, embody distinctive academic forms and methods of construction common during the late-nineteenth century, particularly Greek Revival, Second Empire and Shingle styles. The workers' housing at Mineville and Witherbee is significant for reflecting vernacular building practice as applied to company housing, in some cases utilizing a building material unique to the region.

**Subtype D: Archaeological Resources**

Archaeological remains associated with the history of the mining industry Moriah are particularly significant for their research potential to yield important information for a number of reasons: 1) because of the pervasive role the mining industry played in the development of the town; 2) because of the early technology involved in the mining processes and other industry-related activities spanning a period of over one hundred years; 3) because of the extensive demolition of most of the mining industry-related resources by Republic Steel during the 1970's, much of Moriah's visible history has effectively been erased from the landscape.

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#### **REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

In order to qualify for listing, all resources (with the exception of archaeological resources) should represent intact examples clearly retaining the associative characteristics of type and style. Integrity of design, setting, and workmanship should strongly reflect both historic association (Criterion A) and architectural identity (Criterion C). All buildings should be located on their original lots, with integrity of scale and design revealing their historic function, as well as their historic association with iron mining and Witherbee, Sherman and Company. Integrity of building material and style should be a central concern in evaluation. Since style and the use of construction materials evolved under the reign of Witherbee, Sherman and Company, a building should retain integrity of both style and materials in order to reflect its place within a continuum of over one hundred years of industrial and community development under the pervasive influence of this company. Archaeological resources need to qualify under Criterion D which requires that they retain sufficient integrity to yield specific data that addresses important research questions.

**Public and civic resources** (Subtype A) are eligible under Criterion A if they were built by Witherbee, Sherman and Company. They are eligible under Criterion C if they functioned as a social, educational, religious or civic facility and if they clearly embody the distinctive characteristics of a particular type, period, style or method of construction.

**Administrative and industrial resources** (Subtype B) are eligible under Criteria A if they were built by Witherbee, Sherman and Company. Eligibility under Criterion C is based upon their historic use as either company offices, or as buildings associated with the physical operation of the iron mining and processing facilities.

**Residential resources** (Subtype C) are eligible under Criteria A if they were built by Witherbee, Sherman and Company. Eligibility under Criterion C is based upon their historic use as either company housing, or as the private residence of an industrialist associated with Witherbee, Sherman and Company. Mid-late nineteenth century workers' homes should reflect the vernacular, wood-frame construction generally associated with the multi-family design typical of the period; twentieth century homes should be single, double or multi-family frame or concrete dwellings. Large-scale residences at Port Henry should exhibit intact detailing reflective or high-style rendering of the architectural style of the day, and should retain integrity of setting.

**Archaeological resources** (Subtype D) are eligible under Criterion D if they are mining-industry related and have retained sufficient integrity to allow them to be accurately interpreted; and have the potential to yield important information concerning the historic technology, transportation, and community development associated with the mining industry in Moriah.

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**G. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS**

This multiple property listing of historic and architectural resources in the Town of Moriah, New York is based upon a 1989 architectural resources reconnaissance level survey of the town and a 1991 intensive level survey of the town's religious properties. The surveys were conducted by Jessica Roemischer Smith, Lauren Murphy and Steven Engelhart, with special assistance from Tania Werbizky of the Preservation League of New York State. The projects were conducted under the auspices of the Housing Assistance Program of Essex County and the Town of Moriah.

The reconnaissance level survey, undertaken during the summer of 1989, identified the major historic themes and inventoried architectural resources with respect to sixteen different architectural styles and six theme-related property types. All published histories of the Town of Moriah and Essex County were consulted, as well as many other historical works and statistical information. Historic maps were a most important source of information for this survey and were particularly useful in charting town and village growth and development, and in identifying the age and former uses of existing buildings. All public thoroughfares in the town were traveled by automobile, with individual buildings and concentrations of buildings noted and located on USGS maps and cross-checked against historic maps. Black-and-white photographs and color slides were used to document many buildings, structures and sites that were exemplary, typical or illustrative.

During the summer of 1991, the intensive level survey of religious properties was prepared. This document consisted of a more in-depth analysis of religious development as a major historic theme, and an inventory of the town's religious properties. The most historically and architecturally significant of these were described fully on Building/Structure Inventory forms. A formal context statement for this theme has been developed and eleven significant properties associated with this theme have been determined eligible for listing on the State/National Registers of Historic Places. It is expected that eventually these eleven properties along with their appropriate context statement will be added to this multiple property document.

In 1993 the "Development of the Iron Mining Industry c.1840-1943" context statement was developed along with its corresponding Associated Property Types statement. This historic theme is recognized as the most influential in the physical and cultural evolution of the town of Moriah and is reflected in a number of significant extant resources. These resources span a variety of property types, indicating the pervasive influence the mining industry exerted on all aspects of community life.

Registration Requirements were developed in conjunction with NYSOPRHP staff and were based upon findings of the initial survey conducted in 1989, a thorough

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knowledge of the town's extant historic mining-related properties, their architectural and historical significance, level of integrity, and on-site evaluations. This process resulted in the identification of a number of historically/architecturally significant resources, including both individual buildings and districts. The six individual properties included in this multiple property submissions were chosen because they are exceptional examples of important styles and types in the town of Moriah, and especially evocative of the historical ways of life associated with the development of organized religion and the iron mining industry. They do not, however, represent an exhaustive list of the town's significant mining-related resources, due to time and budgetary constraints. Additional significant resources associated with the historic mining context may be submitted in the future.

Survey work undertaken for the purposes of producing the reconnaissance level survey and subsequent intensive level survey and multiple property listing, involved no below ground archaeological analyses. However, given the nature of Moriah's history and the fact that many of the industrial resources associated with that history have already been lost to demolition by Republic Steel in the 1970's, it is highly recommended that archaeological investigation be conducted, particularly in relation to any type of development which may significantly disturb archaeological remains.

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Topographical Map of Moriah, New York by the United States Geological Survey.  
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Map of Fisher Hill Mine, Moriah, New York by the Port Henry Iron Ore Company (S.B.  
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These and additional resources may be found at the Blue Mountain Museum, Newcomb, New  
York; the Adirondack Center Museum, Elizabethtown, New York; the Sherman Free  
Library, Port Henry New York; and at the State University of New York, Plattsburgh.

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