
Graniteville Historic District

Description

Introduction

Graniteville is an industrial and residential village in the town of Westford, Massachusetts. According to Rev. Edwin R. Hodgman, author of the 1883 town history, "This village owes its existence to its water power and to the building of the railroad in 1847." It is the location of the former C. G. Sargent & Sons machinery manufacturing company, a branch of the Boston and Maine Railroad and granite quarries from which the neighborhood derives its name. Architectural resources consist of poorly to well-preserved residential, institutional, commercial and industrial properties built during the Federal to Early Modern Periods. It is located in north-central Middlesex County along the banks of Stony Brook. Most buildings are residential but several commercial and industrial resources exist as well as a church, school and multiple unit residential construction. One hundred sixty-four historic buildings exist in the district. Two historic sites and four historic structures are also present. Architectural styles include Federal, Gothic Revival, Stick, Colonial Revival and Victorian Eclectic. Boundaries of the district are determined by changes in density of historic resources and by topographic changes.

The town of Westford is located in the coastal lowland region of the commonwealth, approximately 10 miles south of the New Hampshire border and 30 miles west of Boston. The town is bordered on the east by Chelmsford, on the south by Acton and Carlisle, on the west by Groton and Littleton and on the north by Tyngsborough. The area of the town is 31 square miles.

The village is set along the banks of Stony Brook and on the sloping hills to the north and south. Small residential and industrial lots are typical with some multiple-acre parcels on the west side of the brook where larger homes exist. Residential buildings are within 25 feet of streets except on the west side of the brook where larger homes have dramatic frontage overlooking the millpond. Industrial properties on Bridge Street are oriented more toward the railroad than the street. The densest portion of the district is the residential section comprising Broadway, Cross, School, Church, First, Second, Third and Fourth Streets. A school, church and small businesses such as grocery and hardware stores are located in this area as well. This density combined with industrial activity, rail traffic and the mill pond distinguishes the village from the remainder of the suburban town. It bears a similarity in scale, appearance and function to Forge Village, located a mile and a half to the southwest. The Graniteville Historic District retains integrity of design, feeling, association, materials and workmanship.

Development

Prior to 1847, Graniteville was a sparsely settled section of the primarily agricultural town of Westford. Land was in use primarily as farmland and small-scale industry until the construction of the **Stony Brook Railroad in 1847, Mill #1 on North Main Street in 1858 (MHC #1)** and Benjamin **Palmer's granite quarry** in 1847 on Snake Meadow Hill.

Mr. Sargent arrived in Westford from Lowell in 1854 and began the manufacture of woolen mill machinery in an 18th century farmhouse and shop. The buildings burned in 1855, after which time he erected the existing stone mill building at the corner of Broadway and North Main Street in 1858. Construction of the mill confirmed Graniteville's development as an important regional manufacturing and industrial village.

Mr. Palmer's quarry was joined by several others in the north part of Westford, three of which were located on Snake Meadow Hill. Extraction of surface boulders from barren hilltops around 1820 led to the digging of quarries in exposed rock outcrops. Later, subsurface material was extracted and shipped on the Stony Brook Railroad. Mr. Palmer's operation employed 20 men by 1882. Samuel Fletcher and William Reed arrived shortly after Mr. Palmer and began quarrying granite from adjacent parcels on Snake Meadow Hill. Evidence of the granite quarrying, which gave the village its name, remains in many places on Snake Meadow Hill.

Residences in the district were built in large numbers after 1865. They were the homes of industrial leaders and their employees, independent businessmen and other working class residents. The **William Reed House at 67 North Main Street (#96, 1875)** is a two and one-half-story Victorian Eclectic design with a profusion of ornament, including metal cresting at the roof ridge. The **Charles G. Sargent House #1 on Broadway (#107, ca. 1830)** is a Federal style residence that pre-dates the industrial aspects of the village but was the home of the principal industrialist and namesake for the local school. The **Healy Oil Dealership at 5 Second Street (#97, ca. 1880)** is an example of a small industrial operation serving the residents in the immediate neighborhood as well as those in other parts of town. Houses at **3 and 5 Fourth Street (#98, 99, ca. 1880)** are small but ornamental Victorian Eclectic style residences that illustrate trends in upscale construction for mill employees in Graniteville.

Occupants of these distinct building types formed a cohesive neighborhood with a Gothic Revival style **Methodist Church on Church Street, (#28, 1871)** Stick style **Sargent Elementary School on School Street (MHC #29, 1885)**, several small retail establishments and a community hall at **2 Cross Street** (Now the American Legion). A recreational area, built by C. G. Sargent & Sons, with **baseball fields** and basketball courts is located at the southeast corner of the district off River Street. (ca. 1913)

Quarries

The former **Samuel Fletcher Quarry** (driveway at **49 North Main Street; ca. 1855**) on Snake Meadow Hill continues in operation with some of the historic granite outcrops still visible. The site occupies approximately 45 acres. Most of the floor of the historic quarry has been overtaken by modern gravel manufacturing and rock crushing operations. Vertical outcrops of granite exposed during the nineteenth century remain in several spots on the hillside. These appear as granite walls with evidence of drilling and steel anchors for cables and lifting equipment. Anchors are located on elevated flat areas where derricks were placed for lifting blocks of stone.

The **Benjamin Palmer Quarry (ca. 1855)** is no longer in use but the outcrop remains a prominent part of the landscape of Snake Meadow Hill. The site occupies approximately 15 acres. Vertical walls of exposed granite on the north, east and west rise as much as fifty feet from the surface of the water. Blocks of unevenly piled stone are visible under the water. The elevated vantage points around the quarry provide views of a historic circulation path that curves from the open south side down into the quarry. There is also a toppled derrick that can be seen from points above the water. Metal fittings with attached cables are bolted to the tops of wooden poles that lie horizontally in the water. The poles would have stood in or near the center of the quarry floor. Metal anchors drilled into ledge remain on the elevated edges of the outcrop. Drill holes and other evidence of historic industrial processes survive around the edges of the flooded quarry.

The former **William Reed Quarry** is no longer in use and the floor is flooded. The site occupies approximately 1 acre. Vertical walls of granite surround the flooded quarry floor and rise approximately 20' above the water.

The former **David Reed Quarry** on Snake Meadow Hill is significantly smaller than the other two quarries and is located farthest to the west. It is approximately 20' across and only five feet deep. Blocks of stone remain at the site which is located adjacent to the east side of the crest of Cowdry Hill Road.

Industrial Architecture

The former **Abbot Worsted Company Mill #1 (North Main Street, MHC #1, 1858)** is a two-story granite ashlar building constructed on a long rectangular plan parallel to North main Street. The original roof is a shallow-pitched gabled form that has been raised by the addition of a more steeply pitched wood-framed gabled roof. One-story, flat-roofed additions have been made to the south side of the facade and to the southwest corner. The facade and principal entry are marked by a stone tower with a Mansard-roofed belfry and iron cresting at the peak. Originally, a square smokestack rose from the front of the mill. The current round smokestack was built of brick around 1880 on a square base rises at the south west corner of the building. The street elevation is lit by 21 double-hung sash placed close to the eave. Two doors are placed among the other openings on the facade.

The **Sorting, Washing and Drying Building (ca. 1863)** is located adjacent to the southeast wall of Mill #1. It is a two-story, shallow-pitched, gable-roofed form built perpendicular to the mill. The wood frame building is 12 bays long and three bays in width. The exterior is sheathed in vinyl clapboards and windows are modern replacement sash. The eaves of the shallow-pitched roof are articulated with brackets and a molded cornice. The primary entrance is from the northwest gabled end near Mill #1.

The **Abbot Worsted Mill #1**, the smokestack and tower are dominant architectural elements in the district. They are comparable only to the **C. G. Sargent & Sons Machine Shop (MHC #27, 1877)** on Broadway Street. Like the Abbot Mill on North Main Street, The Machine Shop is a granite ashlar building with a shallow-pitched roof and a tower rising from the facade. The three-story, nine-bay machine shop is the principal mass of a complex of buildings that includes granite and wood-framed additions and ells at the rear. Two one-story granite additions, also with the characteristic shallow-pitched roof, have been made to the west elevation of the shop. A two-story, wood-framed building is a separate structure but is attached to the rear (northeast) of the shop. This also shares the shallow-pitched roof form. The facade of the machine shop is articulated with a Mansard tower with a louvered belfry. A stone beltcourse, brackets, quoins and molded cornices further ornament the tower. Windows are primarily 12/12 double-hung sash with stone lintels and sills. Some 2/2 sash and openings covered in plywood exist on the facade. Doors to access the second floor and vehicle doors to the first floor are located on the east wall. A chain link fence separates the complex from Broadway Street.

The Abbot Worsted Company built two **store houses for raw wool** southwest of the intersection of **River and North Main Streets** by ca. 1875. The current gable-front buildings were constructed ca. 1940, possibly on previously existing foundations. Both resemble barns in form and materials. Exteriors are clad in vertical flushboard siding. Foundations are built of granite and roofs are clad in asphalt shingles. Large vehicle openings pierce the gable ends. No ornament exists on the storehouses.

The **Graniteville Foundry at 41 Bridge Street** was a subsidiary of C. G. Sargent & Sons from the time of construction in 1917 until 1953 when the current owners bought it. The principal mass is a corrugated metal building constructed after a fire in 1965 to house foundry operations. This is a two-story, flat-roofed form oriented parallel to Bridge Street. Three metal storage tanks rise from the south elevation of the metal building. A one-story section with a large vehicle opening at the west side is clad in asphalt shingles and is part of the 1917 construction to survive the 1965 fire. A shed roofed, wood-framed **garage (1917)** is located adjacent to the street south of the foundry. It is clad in wood clapboards with an asphalt shingle roof. Six vehicle bays accessed by paired swinging doors pierce the south facing facade. A gable-roofed **shop (1917)**, also built in 1917, with walls and roof clad in asphalt shingles is west of the garage. The shop is ornamented with gable returns and a molded cornice. Windows are 6/6 double-hung sash with beaded trim. The **shed (1917)** west of the foundry is a flat-roofed, 12-bay building constructed in 1917. The southerly four bays were added in the 1940s. The shed is clad in asphalt and asbestos shingles. Windows are boarded over double-hung sash. Other openings include rolling doors at the ground story and at the second story. The yard of the foundry is occupied by metal castings and slag piles in some places.

The 1965 cinderblock **shop at 31 Bridge Street** was the final location of the C. G. Sargent & Sons company operations in 1990 at the time they declared bankruptcy. The shop is a one-story, flat-roofed building of rectangular form with metal-framed sash in the side walls and vehicle openings on the south-facing facade. The shop is unornamented. A flat-roofed shed with open walls is attached to the northeast corner of the main building. The shed is built on an elevated concrete foundation. A sign says "SARGENT'S" near the roofline. East of the shop is the concrete foundation of a burned building. A metal water tank, cinderblock pump building, slag piles and piles of earthen fill and parking areas also occupy the parcel.

Institutional Architecture

The **Methodist Episcopal Church (MHC #28, 1871)** on Church Street is a Gothic Revival style design that represents the most ornate building in the village. It is a wood-framed, front-gabled form that faces the mill pond to the west and has a wooden tower with a tall slim spire at the northwest corner. A secondary tower and gabled entry porch are located at the southeast corner. The main vessel is enlarged at the sides by aisles which are reflected on the exterior by the shed-roofed expansions. The corner tower on the facade is supported at the corners of the base by buttresses that rise to become minarets. The principal entry is a double door which pierces the base of the tower

below two Gothic arched windows and a Gothic arched louvered vent containing a carillon. Gables ornamented with crosses and quatrefoils on the four walls of the corner tower give rise to the narrow spire, which is clad in wood shingles. A large Gothic arched stained glass window and a small trefoil in the peak ornament the facade gable. Seven Gothic arched sash light the clerestory and aisle walls of the side elevations.

The Stick style **Sargent Elementary School on School Street (#29, 1885)** is an ornate building located immediately east of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The two-story rectangular form has a ridge-hipped roof marked at its center by a louvered ventilator flanked by two brick chimneys. The nine-bay facade is expanded by a two-story gabled entry porch with recessed entry and Stick style half-timbering in the peak. Hip-roofed entry porches of one story are located at the north and south ends of the facade. The facade is ornamented with additional half-timbering and string courses that divide the nine bays. Windows are modern double-hung sash with plain trim.

The **rectory of Saint Catherine's Catholic Church** at 107 North Main Street (**MHC #93, 1927**) is a two and one-half-story, ridge-hipped Colonial Revival style design. It is a large rectangular residence with a one-story, flat-roofed porch at the west side that is supported by Tuscan columns. A single-story shed-roofed entry porch is at the east side. The two bays flanking the center entry project slightly and have hipped roofs and exposed rafter ends at the eave. Hipped dormers occupy the front and side slopes of the roof. The center entry is covered by a flat-roofed, one-story porch which is supported by Tuscan columns and, like the side porch, has a full entablature with dentils. The building is clad in aluminum clapboards, the roof in asphalt shingles and the foundation is built of cut granite. Colonial Revival elements include the ridge-hipped roof, denticulated cornices on the porches and the hipped dormers. Other ornament includes the exposed rafter ends, sidelights and wide trim at the entry, and molded window trim. Windows are typically paired or grouped double-hung sash 4/1 and 8/1 pane arrangements. The projecting bays of the facade have both sash types. Windows on the side walls are 6/1 double-hung sash arranged either singly or in pairs. A single brick chimney is located at the west side. This one of few Colonial Revival style houses in the district. A pyramidal hipped two-bay garage is located behind the rectory.

Saint Catherine's Roman Catholic Church (MHC #94, 1934) is a late Gothic Revival style design executed mainly in brick with cast stone trim. It is a three-bay front-gabled building of one and one-half-stories. The form is rectangular with an ell and a tower at the rear of the west side. A smaller ell is located at the rear of the east side. Gabled entry porches with Gothic arched doorways pierce both side walls. Three shed-roofed dormers occupy both slopes of the roof. The ell at the rear of the west side is a two-story mass with conical tower above. Buttresses of English derivation articulate the facade and side elevations. Walls are built of yellow brick with cast stone trim at the openings, buttresses and eaves. The roof is clad in wood shingles and the foundation is brick. Decorative elements include a Greek cross finial at the front gable peak, a Latin cross atop the tower, a cast stone beltcourse across the facade, and a wheel window and quatrefoil in the gable peak. Rosettes articulate ornamental panels near the wheel window. The principal entry is recessed behind trim composed of five concentric Gothic arches. An addition of two stories enlarges the plan at the northeast corner. Exterior materials are compatible with the historic building.

The former **Graniteville Social Hall**, located at **92 North Main Street (MHC #95)** was built around 1925 in the Bungalow form. It is a single-story building of four bays width and a hipped roof. An enclosed hipped porch with matching dormer projects from the facade. Walls are clad in wood clapboards, the roof in asphalt shingles and the foundation is built of uncut granite. A side entry occupies the south side and is protected from the weather by a small hipped entry hood with carved brackets at the sides. Trim around windows and the entries is plain. Windows are 2/2 double-hung sash. A brick chimney rises from the rear of the hall. The building now functions as a residence.

The **American Legion Hall Post #159** at **2 Cross Street** is the former Abbot Worsted Social Hall, built around 1920. It is a Bungalow form building of one and one-half stories with hipped dormers on the front and side slopes of the hipped roof. Walls are clad in vinyl clapboards, the roof in asphalt shingles and the foundation is built of granite. Windows are modern single pane casement sash.

Residential Architecture

The **Samuel Fletcher House (MHC #31, ca. 1870)** at **57 North Main Street** is a three-story Victorian Eclectic style residence of three by two bays. The side-gambrel roof is articulated by a bell-curved slope below the upper slope and an octagonal cupola. A wall gable above the principal elevation shares the double-pitched roof form. A hipped one-story porch and central second-story bay window further articulate the facade. A gambrel-roofed ell of one story and an attached shed with the shallow pitched roof form typical of the district are at the rear of the house that now serves as a funeral home. Walls are clad in wood clapboard, the roof in asphalt shingles and the foundation is built of cut granite. Other ornament includes the bracketed eaves, corner pilasters, single and double-arched window hoods, Palladian window in the west side gable and corbelled chimney. This house is larger than most others in the district and bears a strong similarity in terms of its form and detail to the **Charles G. Sargent House #2 at 25 North Main Street (MHC # 30, ca. 1870)**

The **Charles G. Sargent House #1 at 67 Broadway Street (#107, ca. 1830)** is a Federal style house of two stories and a five-bay facade. The low hipped roof and its early date of construction distinguish it among other houses in the district. It is rectangular in form with a large one-story cinderblock addition at the rear. A brick chimney is located at each side of the roof ridge. The building is clad in wood clapboards, the roof is sheathed in asphalt shingles and the foundation is cut granite. The rear addition is founded on concrete. The main decorative feature is the Federal style center entry surround that features sidelights, a fanlight, a tall hood and pilasters. Windows are 2/2 double-hung sash. The flat-roofed rear addition functions as a warehouse. A chain link fence separates the house from the street. The Sargent house is in fair condition and has been altered with the addition of the cinderblock mass at the rear. The house was moved in ca. 1870 from its original site, which is now occupied by the C. G. Sargent House #2 on North Main Street.

The **Charles G. Sargent House #2 at 25 North Main Street (MHC # 30, ca. 1870)** is a three-story Victorian Eclectic style residence of three by two bays. The side-gambrel roof is articulated by a bell-curved slope below the upper slope and an octagonal cupola. A wall gable above the principal elevation shares the double-pitched roof form. Gabled dormers with round-headed sash flank the wall gable. A hipped one-story porch with an arcade that wraps around the west side and a central second-story bay window further articulate the facade. Walls are clad in asbestos shingles, the roof in asphalt shingles and the foundation is built of cut granite. Other ornament includes the single and double-arched window hoods, corbelled chimneys and corner pilasters. This house is larger than most others in the district and bears a strong similarity in terms of its form and detail to the **Samuel Fletcher House at 57 North Main Street (MHC #31, ca. 1870)**.

The house at **17 Broadway (MHC #92, ca. 1885)** is a one and one-half-story, two-bay, front-gabled residence of Victorian Eclectic design. A one and one-half-story ell with enclosed porch is attached to the south side. The walls are clad in wood clapboards, the roof in asphalt shingles and the foundation is built of uncut granite. Eaves are fitted with frieze boards, a molded cornice and short gable returns. Wide trim articulates the corners of the main block of the house. The entry is covered by an ornate flat-roofed hood with carved brackets, pendants and scroll designs at the sides. Windows in the principal mass have plain trim. Porch windows and those on the first story have been replaced with modern sash. A single brick chimney is at the north side of the main block. The wood-framed **garage** at the rear of the lot is a single-bay, single-story structure clad in wood clapboard.

The Victorian Eclectic style **William Reed House at 67 North Main Street (MHC #96, ca. 1880)** is an ornate two and one-half-story, deck-hipped form of three bays' width. A two-story ell expands the plan at the rear and three gabled dormers mark the front slope of the roof. A central entry porch surmounted by a four-sided bay projects from the facade. A second bay window is at the first story of the west side elevation. Two brick chimneys are located within the main block of the house and a third rises from the rear ell. Walls are clad in wood clapboards, the roof in slate shingles and the foundation is built of cut granite. Windows are 2/2 double-hung sash except in some aspects of the bay windows which have narrow 1/1 sash. Dormers have peak headed sashes that are paired in the center example. Ornament consists of prominent window hoods, jigsaw brackets and piers supporting the center porch, eave brackets, corner pilasters and metal cresting at the deck hipped portion of the roof. Another dramatic element of the design of the house is the setting, which overlooks the Stony Brook Railroad grade and Stony Brook itself. The village of Graniteville is visible to the northeast. The setting of this house sets it apart from others in the district.

The Victorian Eclectic style **C. G. Sargent & Sons Employee House at 3 Fourth Street (#98, ca. 1880)** is a one and one-half-story, front-gabled, two-bay house with porches at the south side and the rear. The rear addition is a one-story, flat-roofed porch with fixed sash along the west wall. The south side porch is a one-story enclosed form with a low-pitched hipped roof. The facade is covered by a third porch with an integrated bay window. The walls are clad in wood clapboards, the roof in asphalt shingles and the foundation is built of uncut stone. Ornament includes paired brackets at the eaves, molded cornice, frieze, corner quoins, and molded window trim. This and its neighbor to the north are highly ornate examples of worker housing in Graniteville.

The Victorian Eclectic style **C. G. Sargent & Sons Employee House at 5 Fourth Street (#99, ca. 1880)** is a one and one-half-story, front-gabled, two-bay house with porches at the north side and the rear. The rear addition is a one-story, flat-roofed porch with fixed sash along the west wall. The north side porch is one-story with a low hipped roof enclosed in sliding glass doors. The facade is covered by a third porch with an integrated bay window. The walls are clad in wood clapboards, the roof in asphalt shingles and the foundation is built of uncut stone. Ornament includes paired brackets at the eaves, molded cornice, frieze, corner quoins, and molded window trim. This and its neighbor to the south are highly ornate examples of worker housing in Graniteville.

The house at **6 Fourth Street (MHC #100, ca. 1916)** is a two and one-half-story, four-bay, Colonial Revival style building with a ridge-hipped roof. The form is rectangular with a two-story porch at the facade. A one-story, three-sided bay window expands the plan at the west wall and a hipped dormer occupies the front slope of the roof. The house is clad in wood clapboards on the first story and wood shingles on the second. The roof is sheathed in asphalt shingles and the foundation is built of random ashlar. The porch occupies the full width of the first story and half the second. Both are supported by grouped colonettes and a knee wall. Both are articulated with molded cornices. The house is ornamented with deep eaves with frieze board, varied exterior wall cladding and molded cornice. Windows are 2/1 double-hung sash with molded trim. A brick chimney rises from the center of the roof. This is a rare large Colonial Revival style design in Graniteville.

The multiple residence at **8-20 Fourth Street (MHC #101, ca. 1916)** is a two and one-half-story, five-bay plan characterized by the three wall gables and four shed dormers on the principal elevation. Three hipped entry porches further animate the facade. Walls are clad in vinyl clapboards, the roof is asphalt shingles and the foundation is built of random ashlar. Ornament consists mainly of the molded cornice, and Doric columns supporting the entry porches. Windows are 6/6 except where replacements have been installed. The house is distinguished by its size and large number (7) of dwelling units.

The multiple unit residence at **66 Broadway (MHC #106, ca. 1875)** is a two and one-half-story, side-gabled form that houses five dwelling units. Two gabled dormers occupy both slopes of the roof and a full-width hipped porch covers the first story of the facade. A secondary hooded entry is at the center of the south elevation. Siding is wood clapboard, roofing is asphalt shingle and the foundation is built of cut granite. Windows are 2/2 double-hung sash. The center entry has wide but plain trim. Two brick chimneys occupy the center of the ridge of the roof. Trim around windows, eaves and at the corners is plain. The porch is articulated with Colonial Revival elements such as the Doric columns and molded cornice.

At least five residential examples of a two by two-bay, two-story form with a distinctive shallow-pitched, side-gabled roof exist in the district. These are double-houses located at **10-12, 41-43, 48-50, 56-58 Broadway and 3-5 Cross Street**, all built **around 1870**. Paired center entries are located under the hipped full width porch. Paired brick chimneys mark the nearly flat roofline. Very little ornament is present on these houses and most have been re-sided with vinyl clapboards. The most intact example is at 3-5 Cross Street which retains its corner pilasters, frieze board and wood clapboard exterior. Variations on the form consist of a gabled porch covering the center bay at 3-5 Cross Street and one example with four bays across the facade instead of two at 56-58 Broadway. The shallow pitched form exists on some non-residential buildings. The hardware store at **37 Broadway**, the shed at **57 North Main Street**, ancillary mill buildings at both the **Abbot Worsted and C. G. Sargent & Sons mills** all display the characteristic roof form.

Other examples of typical worker housing architecture in Graniteville are represented in designs at **40-42 and 44-46 Broadway**, built in **ca. 1870**. These two-story side-gabled, five by two-bay buildings are enlarged by full width

dormers on the front and rear slopes of the roof. Two chimneys reflect the divided uses of the interior. The duplexes are clad in vinyl clapboards with asphalt shingle roofs and granite foundations.

Commercial Architecture

Parent's Market at 27 Broadway (#91, ca. 1870) is a two-story commercial building with a false front atop the facade of the principal mass. A one-story ell at the east side was added in the mid 20th century. An aluminum store-front covers the entire width of the first story and is canted at the east corner entry. The main block was built in ca. 1875 on a two-bay plan. It was originally clad in wood clapboards that are still visible on side elevations. Brackets and a molded cornice ornament the false front. Second story windows are 2/2 double-hung sash with plain trim. A second story porch provides access to upstairs living space.

J. A. Healy & Sons Oil Dealership at 5 Second Street (#97, ca 1880) is an unornamented industrial building. The low-pitched roof, three bay facade and large vehicle doors lend it a utilitarian aspect. The exterior is clad in vinyl clapboards and the foundation is built of concrete. Windows are modern double-hung sash with plain trim except the left (south) side of the first story which has modern casement sash. A door to the second story with a rolling track above for lifting freight pierce the center of the facade.

The former **Furbush Garage (MHC #102, ca. 1910)** and gas station at **1 Broadway Street** is a one-story light industrial/commercial building built of cinderblock. The eastern side of the facade consists of rock faced block while the west is plain. The facade has a false front with two stepped gables. The west half of the five-bay facade comprises the principal gable and was added to the original building. The main opening is a roll-up door in the west side. A second vehicle door now partly filled in, occupies the center of the facade and two display windows further light the interior. A pass door gives access between the second vehicle door and display window. All openings have concrete lintels. This is one of several former small retail and light industrial businesses in Graniteville. It served as a Chevrolet dealership until ca. 1930.

The former West Graniteville Station of the Nashua and Acton Railroad at **98 North Main Street (MHC #105, ca. 1873)** is a two-story, side-gabled building that has been adapted for residential use. A full-width hipped porch of one story expands the facade. The building is clad in wood clapboard, the roof in asphalt shingles and the foundation is built of cut granite. Ornament consists of the short gable returns, corner boards and a molded cornice. Windows are 2/2 double-hung sash with plain trim. The brick chimney rises from the north slope of the roof.

Bridges

The **bridge carrying Conrail** over Stony Brook and Bridge Street is the only historic bridge in the district. Two plate girder spans cross the stream and the road. Abutments are variously built of concrete, granite ashlar and granite combined with concrete. A causeway for vehicle traffic on Bridge Street is built of uncut granite and concrete. The causeway crosses the stream while passing under the railroad bridge.

Broadway Street crosses Stony Brook at North Main Street on a reinforced concrete **bridge constructed in 1988**. This replaced an earlier bridge with a wooden deck. The cut granite abutments were built at the time of the 1855 fire that destroyed the mill and the former wooden dam. The raceway is integrated into the abutments and survives beneath the modern bridge.

The **River Street Bridge over Stony Brook** is a reinforced concrete structure constructed in 1997. The **River Street Bridge over the Conrail tracks** is a reinforced concrete structure built in 1998.

Pond

The **Mill Pond** between North Main, Broadway and Bridge Streets was created in 1858 when C. G. Sargent and his business partner Francis Calvert rebuilt their burned **Mill #1** and the accompanying dam. The pond was enlarged with the construction of **Mill #2** in **1877**. Its outflow runs between the mill buildings and was used for water power until the late 19th century. It is approximately 10 acres and constitutes an integral component of the village. It

occupies what amounts to the front yard of the **Methodist Church** and is immediately visible for a half mile along North Main Street.

Statement of Significance

Summary

The Graniteville Historic District is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under criterion A for its associations with patterns of 19th century industrial village planning practice and for manifestations of 19th century quarrying activities. It is eligible under criterion C for its embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of its nineteenth century architectural resources. The district retains integrity of design, craftsmanship, setting, feeling and association. The period of significance for the district is 1848-1949, which corresponds to the construction of the Stony Brook Railroad and to the close of the Early Modern Period of history. There are approximately 200 contributing buildings, sites, structures and objects in the district.

The neighborhood of Graniteville survives as a well-preserved example of a cohesive nineteenth century industrial village. The historical associations are generated by the survival of many 19th century workers', the clear representation of nineteenth century planning involving narrow streets, pedestrian-scaled house lots and a similarity of building form, scale, material and siting. Placement of buildings in relation to the street and the density of their construction combine to create a village sensibility representative of the district's historical patterns of development. Increasing amounts of new construction threaten to dilute the nature of the historic district.

Contact Period 1500-1620

Algonquin-speaking Wamesit, Pawtucket and Nashoba tribes of Native Americans inhabited the area between the Concord and Merrimack Rivers. Habitation of Westford was concentrated near wetlands such as those along Stony Brook. Projectile points have been recovered in these areas and in upland sites, which indicates scattered hunting activity throughout the town. None of the three suspected Native settlements in the town were determined to be in Graniteville although it is possible that tribe members exploited the hunting and fishing opportunities in the area. Fishing on Stony Brook during the Contact Period is indicated by the existence of a fish weir that was recorded at the outflow of Forge Pond in the mid 17th century. This is on Stony Brook one and one-half miles west of the district. Travel by Native Americans through the area is conjectured to have been along Stony Brook, possibly the current alignment of North Main Street.

Colonial Period 1620-1775

Travel by White settlers between Chelmsford and Groton began in the mid 17th century on the road that paralleled Stony Brook on the south side (now Forge Village Road, Pine Street, Cold Spring Road) which connected West Chelmsford to Forge Village and Groton. At this time, Westford was part of Chelmsford and residents of that town were responsible for improving the transportation network. In 1655, the town of Groton resolved to build a road leading east to Forge Pond that would connect with roads to West Chelmsford. In Graniteville, Pine Street, Forge Village Road and Cold Spring Road, all south of Stony Brook, were the closest streets to the village. Westford was a hinterland at this time and was viewed as little more than a geographical barrier between established villages. Settlement was sparse in the town and in the district. No buildings from the period remain.

Federal/Pre-Industrial Period 1775-1854

Late 18th century travel continued on the south banks of the Stony Brook and on a newly developed route north of the stream. The road that became North Main Street was in place at least as a path by 1780-1790 according to the 19th century town historian, Rev. Edwin R. Hodgman, and to property deeds that describe residences along the brook's north bank. There is no evidence that River Street or other roads in Graniteville had been built by this time. Population in the district in the late 18th century was no more than 30 although the industrial development of this part of the Stony Brook Valley had begun.

Grist and saw mills associated with at least two residences were in operation on the north bank of Stony Brook by the 1780s. Hodgman (p. 355) states that in 1783 Thomas Cummings owned a house and grist mill below (downstream of) the current C. G. Sargent & Sons mill, near what is now Brookside Road. Residents named Timothy and Isaiah Prescott lived near the site of the Sargent mill and operated a saw and grist mill in 1798 upstream of the current mill. It is probable that the Prescotts were engaged in subsistence farming as well as milling given their relatively large tract of land. The 1798 property deed describes the Prescott mill as a house with a grist, corn and saw mill and mill yard set on 65 acres of land. Stream water was retained by a dam with wooden flash boards.

The path along Stony Brook was clearly represented as a road by the time of the 1831 Hales map of the town. Deacon John Prescott, the subsequent owner of the Isaiah and Timothy Prescott's mill, is shown along with three other unnamed buildings in the district. Deacon Prescott was a descendant of the family who were involved since the 18th century in manufacturing iron in Forge Village at the outlet of Forge Pond. There is no mill pond depicted on the 1831 map, indicating the milling operation had not yet developed to current levels. River Street exists on the map and connects to the current Graniteville Road to Westford Center. Deacon Prescott sold the mill to Thomas Richardson in 1835 who then sold to the machinist Asahel Davis. Mr. Davis sold the mill and farmhouse to Francis Calvert and C. G. Sargent in 1854 who had formed a partnership in Lowell to manufacture wool processing machinery.

The Stony Brook Railroad was built through the village in 1847 as a means of connecting railroads located in the manufacturing centers of Groton Junction (Ayer) and Lowell. Graniteville was one of four station stops in Westford. Other industrial development in the form of mills and a blacksmith shop had occurred at the other Stony Brook Railroad stops in Forge Village, Westford Station at Depot Road and at Brookside on the present Brookside Road. Completion of the railroad was doubtless a factor in the decision by Calvert and Sargent to move here from Lowell and in the profitability of the several granite quarries in the town.

Early Industrial Period 1854-1877

Transportation

The **Nashua and Acton Railroad** was constructed through West Graniteville in 1872-73 and offered connections to the towns of its name as well as Concord, Massachusetts. This railroad crossed over the Stony Brook at a point south of the intersection of West Street and North Main Street. The area around this intersection became the site of one of the district's granite yards.

Population

The number of residents in the village was increasing with incoming machine shop, railroad and quarry employees. At the time of Mr. Sargent's arrival in the village, Hodgman states that there two or three houses in the area. Drake stated in 1880 in his county history that, "When he [Sargent] came there in 1854, there were only five or six houses, and only a saw and grist mill upon the stream." Graniteville had become a separate school district in 1851, according to the historian Hamilton Hurd. In 1875 there "were eighty-nine families and these have since increased to a hundred at least" by 1890. The 1855 Symmes map of Westford depicts increased residential construction on North Main Street sufficient to warrant a post office and store at the corner of Pine Ridge Road. Bridge Street was laid out and constructed off Pine Ridge road between 1857 and 1874. A cluster of homes north of the village is labeled "Irish Shanties", presumably an ethnic enclave housing employees of the nearby granite quarry and mills. A second ethnic group clustered on North Main Street in what was called West Graniteville or "Swedeville". The area from approximately 70-100 North Main Street was occupied by a dense population of Swedish quarry workers. By 1865, approximately 160 people lived here, 20% of whom were from the United Kingdom. Perhaps 120 of the 160 residents were employed at either C. G. Sargent & Sons or Abbot Worsted's factories. Fifty-six employees were women. One family of African Americans was located in the vicinity according to the 1865 state census. 1870 federal censuses show 360 people in the village, which was enumerated separately from other villages and rural sections of town. The number of foreign-born residents increased as more Irish, Scottish and English arrived to work in the machine shop, woolen mills and quarries.

Economic Base

Quarrying

Early activity in Westford's granite quarrying industry involved removing surface boulders with oxen and wagon for building purposes. Columns of the Quincy Market building in Boston were constructed in 1822 from Westford granite transported in this way. Boulders, and then subsurface material were later extracted from quarries located on Snake Meadow Hill, Oak Hill and other unnamed areas in the north part of the town.

In Graniteville, Snake Meadow Hill offered the best quarrying opportunities. By 1855, at least four outcrops were being worked. The largest quarry was owned and operated by Benjamin Palmer who arrived in Graniteville and began removing stone in 1847. At that time, just before the completion of the Stony Brook Railroad, he hauled his product by wagon into the growing city of Lowell. Very Shortly after the arrival of the railroad, Mr. Palmer had a rail siding built to his quarry as a way of facilitating shipment. William and David Reed and Samuel Fletcher were in the quarry business on Snake Meadow and Cowdry Hills by 1855. Other quarries of smaller size existed inside and outside the district into the 20th century.

During the period, the quarrying process involved the use of explosives in conjunction with steam-powered drills to loosen the material. Derricks, or pulleys mounted on moveable poles, facilitated lifting and removing the blocks of stone from the pit. Horses, mules and oxen were employed in pulling lines to lift the stone onto wagons or directly onto railroad cars. Local historians indicate the material was used in construction of the dam across the Merrimack River in Lawrence, Massachusetts, the State Prison in Concord (1870-1880's), plus various construction projects needing stone lintels and sills, foundations, curbstones, paving stones and bridge abutments. Other destinations for granite shipments were Chicago, New Orleans and New York. The total number employed in Graniteville's quarries was approximately 15 men in 1865. By 1870, there were around 21 quarry employees according to the federal census of that year.

C. G. Sargent & Sons Machine Manufacturers

While the district was named for the stone extracted from its quarries, the principal influence on the appearance of the area derived from the machine manufacturing concerns located there. C. G. Sargent's companies manufactured woolen machinery and associated goods with a labor force numbering in the hundreds. The factory buildings, rows of employee houses and various support businesses such as stores and shops contributed most to the development and current historic appearance of Graniteville.

Calvert & Sargent, as the machine manufacturing firm was first known, bought the former Prescott Mill on Stony Brook in 1854 from then owner Asahel Davis. Mr. Davis was a machinist from Harvard who owned the saw and grist mills, mill yard, water privileges and 65 acres (according to the deed of transfer to Sargent) from ca. 1840-54. The complex burned one year after Calvert & Sargent acquired it. While continuing operations in Lowell, they replaced the wooden, semi-residential/industrial complex with the existing stone Mill #1 at the corner of Broadway and North Main Streets in 1858, 1/8 mile downstream (**Mill Building #1; MHC # 1, 1858**). Mr. Sargent recorded in a ledger entitled "Grist Mill Book" the price of grain for 1868-69 indicating the grist mill component of the former Davis operation may have escaped destruction by fire and remained in use. Calvert and Sargent focused on making machines, primarily of Sargent's design, for cleaning, drying and washing wool. Original dimensions of the stone building were 185' x 52' with a 32' x 40' ell. Additional buildings were constructed in 1863 and 1864 for scouring and drying wool. This may refer to the **Sorting, Washing and Drying Building** south of Mill #1. By 1865, industrial statistics of the commonwealth indicate the C. G. Sargent & Sons employed 40 hands

In 1859-60, Calvert & Sargent did business with Amesbury Mills, Lowell Machine Shop where Mr. Sargent began work in the trade, Lawrence Machine Shop, Nashua (New Hampshire) Iron Foundry, Seneca Falls (New York) Knitting Company and Appleton Mills in Lowell, Massachusetts. Perhaps their most important customer was the Abbot Worsted Company who rented their Graniteville factory and bought their machinery from C. G. Sargent. In 1863, Mr. Calvert allowed himself to be bought out of the company's operations, giving Mr. Sargent sole ownership of the machine shop. The company was renamed C. G. Sargent Sons.

Charles Grandison Sargent 1819-1878

Charles Sargent was a native of Hillsborough New Hampshire who demonstrated an early aptitude for machinery repair and design. In his teen years he was apprenticed to a clock maker and later worked at the Lowell Machine Shop, becoming a master of the machining trade. Mr. Sargent had taken a license to manufacture a patented cotton gin in 1840 when he was 21 years old. He invented the “New England Comber” in 1842, and in 1847, a burring machine used to remove impurities from wool or cotton before spinning. Other inventions followed for drying, oiling and carding wool and cotton. His involvement in several industrial concerns in Graniteville from 1854 until his death in 1878 remade the village from a hamlet to an ethnically diverse, economically stable village that was the primary seat of industry in the town during his lifetime. Part of Mr. Sargent’s method of developing Graniteville into a residential village was to buy land around his mill for construction of worker houses. Property deeds from the 1860s and 1870s reflect land purchases at the eastern foot of Snake Meadow Hill and along the east banks of Stony Brook. Rentals in 1869 for his 4 employee houses, probably on Broadway Street, cost \$6.25 per month according to ledgers from the period.

Mr. Sargent invented, refined and manufactured wool and cotton sorting, washing and drying equipment under the company name Charles G. Sargent & Sons in his **1858 Mill #1 (MHC #1)**. In 1858, Mr. Sargent entered into a partnership with J. W. P. Abbot and his son John W. Abbot, local businessmen, to use Sargent machines in the manufacture of worsted yarns for carpets and for decorating furniture. For this purpose, the mill building was expanded with an addition that doubled the original space. Mr. Sargent departed the company in 1859 to focus solely on his machinery manufacturing firm for the next four years. Allan Cameron, a wholesale textile buyer, salesman, worsted carpet manufacturer and bookkeeper was brought in as partner in the worsted branch of the business. Mr. Sargent returned to the Abbot partnership in 1863 and continued to work at both industries until his death in 1878.

Abbot Worsted Company

The Abbot Worsted Company was begun by local residents John W. P. Abbot and his son John W. Abbot who acted as treasurer. The Abbots later hired Allan Cameron as sales agent and bookkeeper. The company began manufacturing carpet yarns at Calvert and Sargent’s Mill #1 in 1858. An addition was made to the mill in 1859 to accommodate increased volume of production. In 1859, Calvert & Sargent negotiated with Abbots to build and lease a separate 100’ x 50’ building for a hosiery and woolen mill. The Abbot Worsted Company called for a building fitted out with propellers and shafts and “water power equal to 40 horse”. This may have been the building described in an 1872 insurance policy as being built of wood, two stories in height with fixed machinery for burring, carding and spinning wool. (The Abbot Worsted Company machinery was bought from C. G. Sargent & Sons, manufactured in Mill #1) By 1865, industrial statistics of the commonwealth indicate the Abbot Worsted Company employed 80 hands. The Abbot Worsted Company built an office at the corner of Broadway Street and North Main Street in 1866. The two-story, wood-framed building, depicted in historic photos, faced North Main Street and served as company offices until the 1950s. The foundation remains visible. In 1877, the Sargent company built a new machine shop on Broadway Street which left the Abbot Worsted Company as the sole occupant of Mill #1.

Three **store houses for raw wool** are located southwest of the intersection of River Street and North Main Street. The original store houses were built in around 1875 and, like the current buildings, are similar in form to gable-roofed barns. Abbot agents bought raw, unwashed wool which was kept in the store houses. Prior to weaving, the product was removed from the store house to an elevator at the northwest end of the gabled, wood-framed **Sorting, Washing and Drying Building** located adjacent to the southeast wall of **Mill #1**. The wool was then brought to the top floor where it was sorted by grade of quality and then moved downstairs for washing and drying. Machines to do this work were designed and built by C. G. Sargent & Sons. Dried wool was taken from the Sorting, Washing and Drying Building to Mill #1 for carding, combing and spinning. After being wound into skeins, it was either shipped to the point of sale or sold from the office under the bell tower in Mill #1.

Abbot Worsted owned 12 buildings for housing employees in 1875. These were located mainly on the west side of Broadway Street. Examples are the double houses at **44-46 and 48-50 Broadway Street, built ca. 1870**.

Pre 1877 Architecture

Institutional

Mr. Sargent's involvement in the community was sufficiently deep that he donated land and a large part of the \$10,786.13 construction cost for the 1871 **Methodist Episcopal Church** on Church Street. He left an additional \$1000 in his will to the congregation. This building is the most architecturally significant resource in the district. The church was constructed by Mead, Mason & Co. according to plans drawn by architect Shepard S. Woodcock, a Somerville architect who designed Queen Anne style houses and public buildings in Boston, Cambridge, Lowell and elsewhere. It occupies a key location in the village that overlooks the **Mill Pond**. The site is similar to Sargent's own house which overlooks the pond from the opposite direction. A photo of the church appeared in a November, 1982 article in Smithsonian Magazine profiling American Churches and Gothic Revival design.

Residential

During the 1870s, Charles Sargent, William Reed, Benjamin Palmer, Samuel Fletcher and their families built houses on the south slope of Snake Meadow Hill overlooking the **Mill Pond**, the **Methodist Church** and **Sargent's mills**. This row of high style Victorian Eclectic houses command the most important site in the district. The front yards rise from the edge of North Main Street with a tall granite block retaining wall at its edge. Mr. Sargent built his side-gabled Mansard-roofed house at **25 North Main Street** with a profusion of ornament in ca. **1870 (MHC #30)**. Local tradition states Mr. Sargent admired the Fletcher House at 57 North Main Street and hired the same contractor for his own. Construction took 7 ½ years due to the intricacy of the design which includes an ornate window imported from Italy in the back wall. The house was subsequently occupied by Mr. Sargent's son Frederick and family members Harriet Sargent Hildreth and Mary Sargent. Samuel Fletcher had his house at **57 North Main Street (MHC #31)** constructed in ca. 1870. William Reed built his Mansard roofed mansion in ca. **1875 at 67 North Main Street (MHC #96)**.

Other examples of residential construction were carried out in the Victorian Eclectic, Gothic Revival, Colonial Revival, Federal, Victorian Eclectic and Craftsman styles. Mr. Sargent contracted with local builders William, C. Edwards, W. G. Howe and J. A. Healy, among others, to build at least 9 houses by the time of his death in 1878. Approximately nine Sargent company employee houses are represented on the 1875 Beers atlas of the village, many of which are duplexes.

Commercial

The Abbot Worsted Company had an office built in 1866 west of **Mill #1** on North Main Street. The two-story, building with shallow-pitched gabled roof appears labeled as "Office" in historic photographs. It is described in archives as having a foundation built of granite supplied by William Reed's quarry. The shallow-pitched gabled form is repeated in other construction throughout the district. The buildings have a nearly flat roof that appears at least five times for multiple-unit residences on **Broadway Street (#s 10-21, 37, 41-43, 48-50, 56-58)** and in other buildings that appear in historic photos but do not survive. The office was demolished in the 1950s.

Industrial Period 1877-1910

The mid 1870s was a prosperous time for industry in Graniteville. Quarries and both the Abbot Worsted Company and C. G. Sargent & Sons flourished. The Abbot Worsted Company purchased and occupied in ca. 1878 the former horse nail factory in Forge Village which became their principal manufacturing facility by 1910 (MHC #38). C. G. Sargent & Sons constructed a new stone mill building in 1877 (Sargent Mill #2, MHC #27) on the site of the demolished wood-framed Mill #2, across Stony Brook from Mill #1 (MHC #1, 1858). Employee housing was built on newly laid out Third and Fourth Streets and on River Street.

Transportation

The Stony Brook Street Railway operated through the village starting in 1907. The route entered Graniteville from the east on Beacon Street and traversed North Main Street toward Forge Village. Streetcars connected Graniteville, Forge Village and Westford Center to Ayer in the west and Chelmsford in the east. The railway remained in operation until 1921.

Population

Residents of the district evolved during the mid-late 19th century from a mainly native-born group to one of significant foreign-born population. In the 1865 state census, approximately 20% of the residents were foreign-born. By the end of the century the percentage of foreign-born residents would be more than half. These groups of immigrants brought with them new religions, such as Catholicism, and activities such as foreign language classes at the community hall. In 1904, immigrants were from Sweden, Finland, Canada and Italy. By 1907, Russians began to appear on lists of residents and in marriage records. Around 1910, agents of the Abbot Worsted Company traveled to Russia in order to recruit laborers. The results of their efforts are evident in increasing numbers of Russian surnames in subsequent census schedules.

The number of Graniteville residents grew to 360 in 1870, outnumbering Forge Village by 120 residents. By 1880, 73 woolen mill employees in Graniteville outnumbered machinists and quarrymen by 2-1. There were in 1880 numerous children between 10 and 15 years of age working in the woolen mill and not attending school. At this time, laborers in the quarries and mills were as likely to be Massachusetts-born as they were to be foreign-born. The village had 200 mill employees in 1890, according to county historian Hamilton Hurd. This number increased to a total of around 250 by 1910.

Catholic residents became sufficiently numerous in the 1870s that visiting pastors from Saint Patrick's Catholic Church in Lowell led services in homes of individuals. In 1892, Westford's Catholic population built a wood church on North Main Street between Graniteville and Forge Village, the locations of the town's densest Catholic populations.

Americanization and education was among the list of priorities for the immigrants, the employers and the town government. Toward this end, the school department operated a night-school program for factory employees beginning in 1892. This program continued well into the 20th century in what were known as the Abbot Company Halls, three of which existed in Graniteville, Forge Village and later at Brookside in the eastern part of town (1 mile downstream on Stony Brook.).

Growth in the village was sufficient by 1909 for the establishment of a fire department. Graniteville's Sargent School was the town's largest in 1909 with four classes. This was more than schools in Forge Village and Westford Center, which had three classes. Other districts had a single class.

Economic Base

Industrial Establishments

The years from 1877 to 1910 saw increasing levels of company productivity in the village. C. G. Sargent & Sons built a second factory building of stone in 1877, among many other secondary buildings. This 1877 Mill #2 combined with the 1858 Mill #1 represent the economic motive force of the district and fostered development of nearly the entire neighborhood from Broadway west to River Street, south to Bridge Street and northwest on North Main Street to West Street. The Abbot Worsted Company expanded their operations into nearby Forge Village; the Palmer, Reed and Fletcher quarries flourished with the construction of the north-south rail link provided by the Nashua and Acton Railroad. As a result of the ongoing economic health of the corporate community, the village of Graniteville experienced new construction of homes and residential streets, a new school that was much larger than what had been in use previously and increased variety of ethnic and cultural groups recruited by company officials to perform work in the factories.

Charles Grandison Sargent oversaw the design and construction of his new Mill #2 (MHC #27) and dam at Broadway Street in 1877. LeRoy Cherrington was the architect of the "Machine Shop Building" and stated in his

specifications that the building should have a tower with name tablet, belfry with louvered panels, corner quoins and iron cresting, all significant elements still visible from the street. This building became the principal machine manufacturing and erecting facility where C. G. Sargent & Sons' products were assembled until ca. 1970. This was one of the final acts of Mr. Sargent in regard to his machine company. He died at his summer residence in Salem, Massachusetts in July, 1878. The architect of Mill #2 was a member of a firm named Cherrington and Cherrington, based in Lowell. They were responsible for the design of the 1875 Gorham Street Firehouse (MHC Lowell # 475).

While Mr. Sargent was the creative influence behind the work done at the factory, his sons Francis and Charles G. Sargent Jr. renamed the company C. G. Sargent's Sons and carried on the business with a great deal of success into the 20th century. Francis Sargent was credited with several patents for new machines and refinements of older designs between 1880 and 1910, indicating that he had inherited his father's industrial creative abilities.

C. G. Sargent's Sons grew during the period from an employer of approximately 20 machinists in 1877 to 75 in 1906. Other employees not considered machinists may also have been employed. By 1878, the company was shipping machinery to California, and by 1908, they had clients in Germany. The company was incorporated as C. G. Sargent's Sons in 1904.

In 1877, The Sargents renewed the lease for Mill #1 to John W. Abbot, Abiel J. Abbot and Allan Cameron, proprietors of the Abbot Worsted Company. John Abbot acted as treasurer, Allan Cameron was the agent or salesman and buyer for the company. This corporate structure endured into the early 20th century. John W. P. Abbot, an original investor and father of John W. Abbot, died in 1872. By 1908, the president of the company was Allan Cameron's son Julian, Abiel Abbot was treasurer and Julian Abbot was agent. Abbot, Cameron and Sargent family members would retain interest in both the Sargent and Abbot companies through the 1950s.

Abbot Worsted incorporated in 1900 and grew during the period from an employer of approximately 200 in 1877 to 500 in 1908. Half of these employees worked in Graniteville and half in Forge Village.

Chauncy Mills was a subsidiary of the Sargent mills engaged in making socks. Miner H. A. Evans (also the former pastor of Graniteville Methodist Church) was proprietor of the company from ca. 1878-1883 which employed 30 people in 1883. The company used prison labor in 1878 to sew socks. This may have been the former C. G. Sargent's Sons hosiery mill which was adjacent to Mill #2 on Broadway Street.

Quarrying on Snake Meadow Hill at the end of the 19th century was a growth industry. The 1889 Middlesex County Atlas lists Samuel Fletcher, Benjamin Palmer, David Reed and William Reed as granite quarry proprietors. Four quarries were in operation in the village in 1906 according to newspaper accounts from that time.

Commercial Establishments

John A. Healy operated a company that performed excavation, landscaping and related tasks as well as an oil dealership in the building at 5 Second Street (# 97, ca. 1880). This company dug trenches for the town water system, excavated foundation holes and landscaped yards for company housing in the village. The 1889 county atlas indicates a store was operated by residents named Wright & Bemis on North Main Street near Bridge Street, a blacksmithy run by David Reed near the Catholic Church in West Graniteville and A. S. Stoddard had a store on Second Street.

Commercial establishments in Graniteville in 1906 according to newspaper accounts included three grocers, three variety stores, one fruit and one cheese store, a milliner, a blacksmith, a provision store and several peddlers and dressmakers supported by the village population of 500.

There was very little farming in the village during the period.

Architecture

Industrial

As part of its ongoing expansion, C. G. Sargent & Sons built the Mill #2, or Machine Shop Building at the crossing of Stony Brook and Broadway. (**C. G. Sargent Mill #2, # 27, 1877**) The “New Mill” was to be 50’ x 100’ with a 76’ high smokestack and a 68’ high tower. Specifications also identify the boiler house which indicates the use of steam power instead of water power. Other buildings in existence at the time include a one-story stocking mill and a separate blacksmith shop.

Institutional

The **Sargent Elementary School** was built in 1885 (**MHC #29, 1885**) by builder William C. Edwards on land bought by the town from C. G. Sargent. Between 1885 and 1910, the Sargent Elementary School housed more classes than both Forge Village and Westford Center, indicating the population growth in the village.

Catholic residents became sufficiently numerous in the 1870s that visiting pastors from Saint Patrick’s Catholic Church in Lowell led services in homes of individuals. In 1892, Westford’s Catholic population built a wood church on North Main Street between Graniteville and Forge Village, the locations of the town’s densest Catholic populations. The wood framed building remained in use until 1934.

Residential

Beacon and Maple Streets were laid out and developed with workers’ residences between 1875 and 1889. Some of these were owned by the Abbot Worsted Company, but others were owned by a private landlord named John Grieg who worked for the Abbot Worsted Company as a superintendent. Mr. Grieg owned four Victorian Eclectic style houses at **6, 8, 10 and 12 Maple Street (1880-1890)**.

By 1889, C. G. Sargent & Sons had at least 15 dwellings for housing employees and the Abbot Worsted Company had 11. These company houses set the precedent for the current high level of density of construction in the village. Much of Broadway Street and others had not been developed by this time, leaving room for future construction. Church Street had been laid out and partially developed, as had First, Second and Cross Streets, but not Third and Fourth.

Modern Period 1910-1949

Transportation

The Stony Brook Street Railway failed in its battle to compete with the automobile and went out of business in 1921. Tracks for the railway were removed from North Main and Beacon Streets in 1930.

Population

1910 federal census figures show that a dramatic increase in the number of foreign-born residents occurred around the turn of the century. Ethnic groups with representatives in the hundreds include Canadians, Russians, Italians and Irish. Smaller groups were Swedish, Scottish, Austrians and English. Abbot Worsted and C. G. Sargent’s Sons company representatives traveled to Europe for the purpose of recruiting laborers for the mills. In 1912, a large number of Russians were enticed to come to Graniteville with the promise of steady work. This sudden increase in Russian residents is reflected in census information as well as in reminiscences of former employees. It is possible in some cases to characterize the groups by their occupations according to census information. Russians were most likely to be listed as woolen mill employees and Italians were most commonly described as laborers.

The wood framed Catholic Church built in 1892 outgrown in the 1930s and the current Saint **Catherine’s Catholic Church (#94)** was built of brick in 1934. The building remains in use today.

Another important custom the Europeans brought with them to Westford was the game of soccer. Interest among employees in playing the game led to team sponsorship by mill owners and even construction of ball fields for their use in Graniteville as well as Forge Village. The ball fields were in place by 1913 according to the Westford

Wardsman newspaper. The fields were home to a semi-professional baseball team sponsored by Abbot Worsted in the 1920s. Their clubhouse became a residence and was moved to its current location at **20 River Street** from the ball fields around 1950. Town reports indicate the town bought the ball fields from C. G. Sargent's Sons in 1925. They remain in use today by the town Recreation Commission for youth baseball and soccer leagues.

Economic Base

C. G. Sargent's Sons had expanded the scope of their operations by including food and tobacco processing machinery and manufacture of auto parts to their line of products and services. A letter exists describing an attempt by the company to use a textile dryer for drying chocolate. The James M. Sargent Company in Graniteville produced valve timing devices, self-starters and hollow shaft bearings. The company was short lived, surviving only from 1911-1919. This may have been due to auto manufacturers' preference to consolidate operations in Detroit around this time.

A 1917 brochure describes the international clientele of wool and cotton washing, drying and cleaning machine buyers from Canada and overseas. Services provided by the company now included engineering and architectural assistance to mill owners during new construction. Staff of the Graniteville company engaged in planning of the physical plants of clients' mills. Expertise in this area, corporate literature claimed, was due to three generations of Sargents having worked in the industry. The number of machine types offered for sale by C. G. Sargent's Sons increased from 19 to 24 between 1917 and 1950, indicating the final period of growth in the business. At least one memorandum written during the 1920s indicates the company's attempt to adapt an existing drying machine for use in drying chocolate. Other food processing equipment was designed specifically for the purpose.

The Abbot Worsted company had moved a large part of its operations to Forge Village in 1928. The company continued to expand in both Graniteville and Forge Village. Abbot Worsted occupied the Mill #1 building into the 1950s.

Many small and family-run businesses operated in the village during the early 20th century. The Sudak family operated a store in their multiple unit residence at **88 North Main Street** from ca. 1920-1940. The house formerly had a storefront where groceries were sold. Gasoline and kerosene were sold from pumps in the front yard. The current **Parent's Market at 27 Broadway Street** has been in use as a market since the 1920s. The **Westford Hardware Store** presently at **37 Broadway Street** was built as a grange hall and served later as a Red & White grocery store in the 1950s. The houses at **51 and 55 River Street** served respectively as a candy store and grocery store in the first half of the 20th century. The **Idle Hour Bar at 8 First Street** has been in business since the 1930s. Ice Cream stands and barber shops appeared at different locations throughout the period.

Architecture 1910-1949

Industrial

The **Sargent Foundries** on Bridge Street were built in 1916-1917 according to the current owner and to local newspaper accounts. This firm did the work of casting machinery designed and assembled in the Graniteville mills. In 1915, Joseph Carpenter built a blacksmith shop at the northern end of Bridge Street. This building is no longer extant.

The Abbot Worsted Company and C. G. Sargent's Sons built several **store houses** southwest of the intersection of River and North Main Streets around 1875. The original buildings were replaced around 1940 with the two existing storage buildings. The buildings resemble barns in their gable-front form. Wool was stored here until the 1950s. The foundations may be from the previously existing store houses. Large vehicle openings in the gable ends exist for off-loading of bales of raw wool.

Institutional

The town voted in 1914 to build a new fire station at **4 Cross Street**. This is currently in use as a residence. This fire station was replaced with the current building on Broadway Street in the 1940s. In order to accommodate the rapidly increasing population, the Sargent School was enlarged from four to eight rooms in 1924.

Company clubhouses existed in 1927 in both Graniteville and Forge Village for movie and stage performances. Graniteville appears to have had two social halls. One was built in West Graniteville at **92 North Main Street (MHC #95, ca. 1925)** for use as a social hall. The language classes were taught here during the first half of the 20th century, probably to incoming Russian immigrant employees. A second former clubhouse is located at the southwest corner of Cross and Broadway Streets. This was built around 1920 on land that Allan Cameron bought from the estate of Charles G. Sargent in 1881. Mr. Sargent's will stipulated that no alcohol or disreputable entertainment such as gambling be permitted on the premises. It functioned as a movie house and Boy Scout meeting hall before WW II. It has been **Post 159 of the American Legion** since that organization bought the building from Abbot Worsted in 1946.

Saint Catherine's Roman Catholic Church (MHC #94) was built in 1934 according to the cornerstone. A wooden Catholic church was constructed in 1892, which proved to be too small by the early 20th century. The current Gothic Revival style brick building occupies the parcel across the street from the original church.

The Saint Catherine's Roman Catholic congregation built the **rectory (MHC #93)** in 1927 according to designs by J. Edward Sheehan. The first occupant was the Rev. Aloysius Malone who lived here from 1927 to 1931. The building continues to serve as a rectory.

Residential

The C. G. Sargent's Sons company had constructed 250 houses for employees in Graniteville, Forge Village and in Brookside by 1927. Construction of some of these residences was described at the time by a columnist in the Westford Wardsman, a local newspaper with surviving local news columns from 1906-1916. The busy contractor P. Henry Harrington constructed a house in December 1911 for Sargent operative Michael Subosky at the north end of North Main Street. In March of 1912, he is noted as having built an 8-room house and a bungalow on the Westford Road in Graniteville (probably Graniteville Road). In July 1912, H. L. Furbush had a house built on Broadway, also by P. Henry Harrington. The teamster Adelard Brule contracted Mr. Harrington for a 2-family house on Maple Street in October, 1915. He built least three new cottages on River Street near the ball field, July 1915 as well as a house on First Street in January 1917 for Abbot Worsted Company. P. Henry Harrington lived with his wife Elizabeth at **8 Cross Street** across from the Sargent School and later at the former Reed House at **67 North Main Street (MHC #96, ca. 1870)**. Residences in the district were wired for electricity beginning in 1912.

The small brick building east of Mill #1, (**6 North Main Street**, in use as Davin Engineering since the 1960s) was built around 1920 to house automobiles of middle level management employees.

1949-Present

Industrial activity continues in the district but both Abbot Worsted and C. G. Sargent's Sons are out of business. Abbot Worsted moved their entire operation to Forge Village in the 1950s and did not survive the decade. C. G. Sargent's Sons achieved a global market by the 1960s with customers in nearly all the United States, the countries of South Korea, Japan, Mexico, and Venezuela and on the continent of Africa. The company occupied Mill #2 into the 1970s, after which it moved all operations into the machine shop at 31 Bridge Street. The company remained in business until it went bankrupt around 1990.

The River Street Bridge over Stony Brook was replaced in 1988. The River Street Bridge over the former Stony Brook Railroad (later Boston and Maine, now Conrail) was replaced in 1997.

An increasing amount of new construction is taking place in the village. A Neo-Colonial residence was constructed on Fourth Street around 1992 which is significantly larger than surrounding historic homes. A residential subdivision consisting of two houses was built off First Street in 1995. At the present time, as many as five more

houses are under construction. New construction appears less compatible due to the dense nature of the neighborhood.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, now the United Methodist Church of Westford, has grown to capacity. Their growing parish has necessitated an addition to house educational and official activities for which they have retained an architect to create plans. The Saint Catherine's Catholic Church completed a large addition to their place of worship in 1997.

A memorial to WW II Veterans was erected on North Main Street to commemorate the efforts of Graniteville residents in that conflict.

Since 1995, the Westford Historical Commission has been active in completing its survey of historic and cultural resources, contracting for the completion of this and other National Register Nominations, and designating scenic roadways. The commission has spearheaded successful movements to encourage public purchase of historically significant properties endangered by development, to choose proper design materials for new civic buildings, and to pass local legislation regulating the demolition of buildings in the town. Graniteville Pride, Inc. and the Mill Pond Restoration Committee were formed in 1997 and 1998 in order to improve the appearance of the village and the quality of life for the residents of Graniteville.

With the help of the local civic groups, the village will continue to retain integrity of design, setting, materials, feeling and association. Its associations with broad patterns of history that shaped the entire region during the industrial period and with the lives of mill owners and employees confirm the village's importance to its residents and to its casual visitors. The architectural resources that resulted from the patterns of development are a vital element of the district that continue to tell the story of its past.

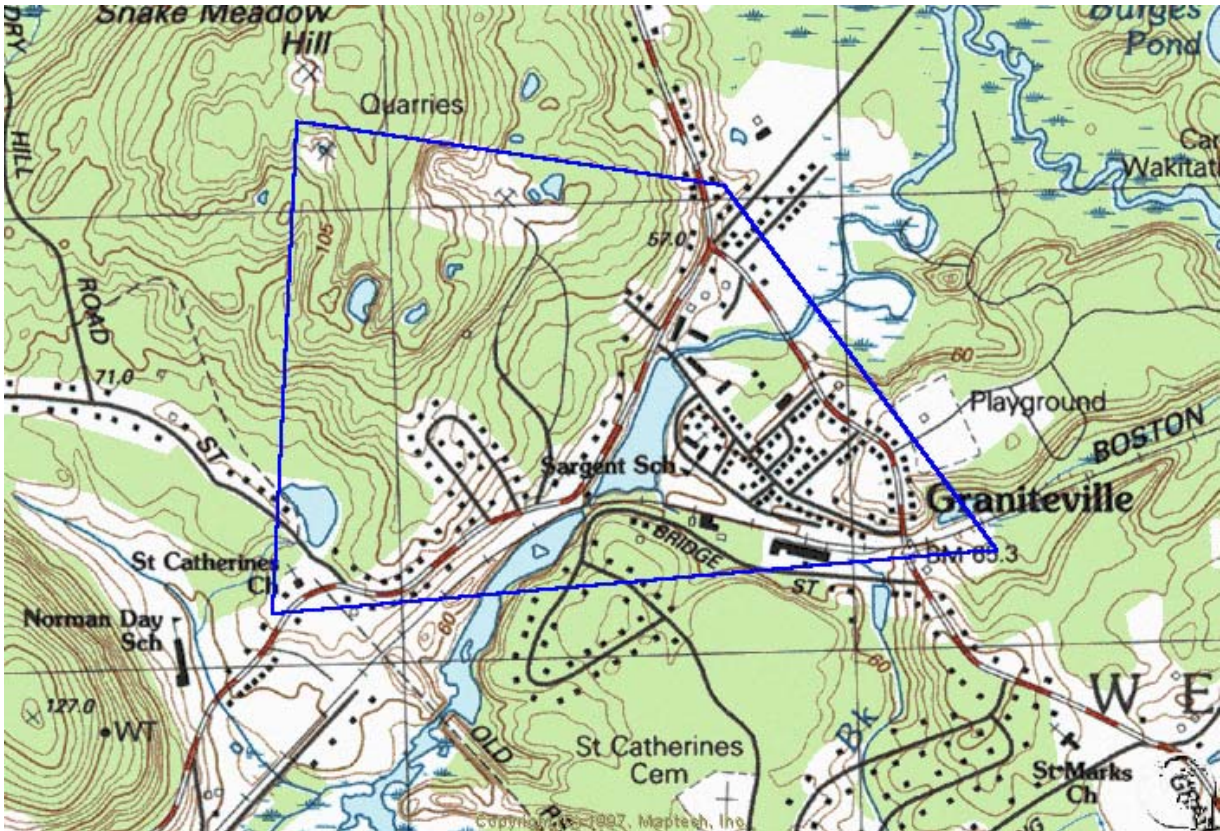
Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The triangular Graniteville Historic District is bounded on the north by the granite quarries on Cowdry and Snake Meadow Hills formerly belonging to William and David Reed, Benjamin Palmer and Samuel Fletcher, all approximately 1/2 mile north of North Main Street. The northeast corner of the district is marked by the multiple family dwelling at 21 Maple Street. The eastern border lies along the east side of River Street to the point where Graniteville Road meets Bridge Street. The southerly border of the district is on the south side of Bridge and North Main Streets to the location of Saint Catherine's Church and rectory.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Graniteville Historic District were selected for their demarcation of the limits of the historic fabric of the village. The former Fletcher Granite Quarry in the northern part of the district has been in operation since the mid-nineteenth century and continues in business today. This and similar quarry operations in the area lend the neighborhood and the district its name. Historic architectural resources are arrayed along the streets at the southern foot of Snake Meadow Hill, the site of the quarry. Beacon and Maple Streets in the northeast corner are the sites of historic mill employee houses. River Street on the eastern boundary is the location of the historic ball fields and many mill workers' homes. Bridge Street in the south of the district is the site of some small former factory workers' homes and the Graniteville Foundry, an important industrial concern. North Main Street is the site of mill employee housing, vitally important industrial buildings, and of mill owners' houses that command dramatic sites overlooking the Mill Pond. Other Streets within these boundaries are First, Second, Third, Fourth, School, Cross and Broadway Streets. All are densely lined with residential construction occupied at one time by mill employees. Streets within the boundaries all contain a high percentage of historic structures, buildings and objects that lend a sense of historical integrity to the Graniteville Historic District.



Go to next section.