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### Narrative History

The Sunderland Center Historic District is significant as a fine example of an 18th century linear street village. Laid out in 1714, many of its original allotments still exist. The Center includes well-preserved Georgian, Federal Greek Revival buildings and includes excellent examples of the Italianate, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival and Craftsman styles.

As an agricultural district it includes a range of outbuildings that date from the mid-1800s through the 1950s including livestock barns, equipment, tobacco and vegetable storage barns. Agriculture-related commercial buildings from the early decades of the 20th century are also represented for an important cross-section of 19th and 20th century buildings. The district includes Sunderland's principal institutional buildings which range from a Federal style bank to a Federal Revival style school, all of high architectural caliber.

Sunderland Center is significant for its historical role in Connecticut River Valley agriculture. Its farms represent the evolution of farming from small-scale, mixed crop agriculture of the 18th century, to the introduction of cash crops, broom corn and tobacco, in the mid-19th century, through the market gardening economy of the 20th century.

The district has local significance.

The narrative that follows summarizes the district's history.

### Contact Period (1500-1620)

Native American presence in Sunderland, and by extension in Sunderland Center, is known from the Contact Period. Native Americans lived in five primary regional cores along the Connecticut River during the Contact Period, and Sunderland was within one of these cores, the Deerfield/Greenfield Core that covered in addition Whately, Deerfield, Montague, Greenfield and Gill. Pocumtucks are thought to have occupied this region, but Norwottucks, a branch of the Nipmucks who were concentrated in the Hadley area, were also known to range north as far as Mt. Sugarloaf, and Sunderland was an area in which the two groups overlapped. Archaeological sites from the period have been located here on the outer edges of the floodplain.

Good soil and falls at Turners Falls and Millers Falls were attractive for the farming and fishing activities and the plentiful wooded upland offered game for hunting. Both native groups were agricultural, raising crops on the floodplains and they lived in more or less permanent encampments along the Connecticut River, making seasonal moves to the uplands for hunting several times a year.

Native Americans during the Contact Period were responsible for important work on the landscape which made the area attractive to the English once contact was made and settlement was begun in the region. Primary, was the development of a system of trails. One of their three north-south trails became Main Street through Sunderland Center. In addition to establishing transportation routes,

native Americans opened fields, and cleared underbrush from the woodlands, which later allowed settlers to graze their livestock there. There was, however, no contact at this point.

#### Plantation Period (1620-1675)

Contact did occur during the Plantation Period as the English arrived in the Connecticut River Valley and established Springfield as the northernmost large settlement. Settlers from the 1630s began trading meat products, furs, and agricultural produce among themselves and, to a smaller extent, among the native Americans. Beginning in the 1650s settlement spread north in the valley from Springfield, and travel by settlers and traders through Sunderland would have taken place from the 1650s on. The first town to be settled was Westfield which was populated mostly by new families who came en masse from Dorchester. Northampton, in contrast, was settled mostly by Springfield residents in 1656; Hadley laid out its plantation in 1659, and Hatfield followed in 1661. Deerfield in the early 1670s was established as a small outpost for trading produce and goods with native Americans; and Northfield was settled in 1672. The first official notice of settlement for Sunderland appeared in 1673 when the General Court granted a request to establish a new plantation north of Hadley. Major John Pynchon from Springfield, Lieutenant William Clarke and Mr. William Holton from Northampton were named to lay out the boundaries for a plantation six miles square. The three surveyors were directed to reserve two hundred and fifty acres for the use of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and the settlers were to have seven years to attract a sufficient number of permanent residents who would build homes and hire a minister. Once surveyed, the plantation was named Swampfield.

It was the practice for the English to make an official, if token, purchase of the land from the native Americans after it was granted by the General Court. To that end, in 1674 John Pynchon arranged for the sale of the plantation between settlers and native Americans who were Norwottuck leaders, the primary native American group at this time in Sunderland. Mattawompe, also known as Nattawassawet, Norwottuck chiefs Wadnummin, Squiskheag and Sunkkamachue signed for native Americans; Robert Boltwood, Jr., John Hubbard, Joseph Kellogg and Thomas Dickinson signed for the settlers. The six square miles were known to the Norwottucks as "Mattampash" and were sold for 80 fathom of wampum. Other deeds were required to cover all the land included in the plantation. One was with Squiskheag and a third was with Mishalisk, the mother of deceased Wallawckinksin.

Within one year settlement had actually begun and extended from the river into the woods six miles east of the river. English and Norwottucks traded furs but also fish, seeds, produce, plants, baskets and game. Most settlers farmed; some lumbered, but they all co-existed with the Norwottucks who would have continued their practices farming corn and squash, fishing and hunting. The settlers followed their example raising squash, corn, beans and even small bits of tobacco. From England they brought a mixed-agriculture tradition adapted in some aspects to new conditions: they grazed their cattle in the woodland and mowed grass on freshly cleared fields.

In 1674 the new settlers, feeling hindered by the large amount of land reserved for the Colony, petitioned the General Court to void the 250 acre set-aside. The General Court, however, resisted giving up land and offered a compromise saying fifty acres had to be allotted to the Colony, but that the settlers could lease it for farming, and the remaining two hundred acres could be reserved in the less-fertile pine plains.

By 1675 Swampfield had been surveyed for allotments, built upon and occupied. The settlers had even managed to construct a long drainage ditch to improve the low-lying wetlands on the flood plain. Who the first settlers were is not known, nor has their allotment plan survived. It is probable that the four grantees Robert Boltwood, Jr., John Hubbard, Joseph Kellogg and Thomas Dickinson were among them, and that an organized plan was drawn up.

## Colonial Period (1675-1775)

### Town Development

The demise of Swampfield began at a great distance from the Connecticut River Valley when King Philip's War began in Rhode Island. Conflict spread to western Massachusetts in 1675 when King Philip and his followers took refuge here. Native American groups including the Pocumtucks and Squakheags joined King Philip's men and became openly hostile to settlers in the valley. At first the Bay Colony sent militias to protect settlers, but when local Nipmucks joined the conflict, an adequate militia protection was impossible, so settlers moved to Hatfield and Hadley which were fortified with palisades. Swampfield, Northfield and Deerfield, the three northernmost settlements, were abandoned.

After the massacre of 1677 in Hatfield and Greenfield, in which houses were burned, people killed, and prisoners taken to Canada, two native American encampment concentrations around Northfield and Greenfield, Deerfield and Montague were destroyed. The fighting then subsided for eleven years. Northfield and Deerfield were gradually resettled between 1682 and 1685, but no one returned to Swampfield. The reason is not entirely clear because fighting during subsequent King William's and Queen Ann's wars 1688-1698, and 1703-1713 was not directed at this region until the massacre of Deerfield took place in 1704. After 1713, however, the conflict was mostly small skirmishes and the region around Swampfield began to seem safer. The number of native Americans in the area had plummeted, as those who were not killed, moved to Canada or further west in Massachusetts.

In 1713 residents of Hadley and Hatfield petitioned the General Court to reestablish Swampfield. The General Court gave the petitioners three years, this time, to have forty families occupying their land, including a minister in residence. One family short, thirty-nine men and their families signed on as Proprietors of the Plantation of Swampfield in 1714. All the family names of the original grantees were represented, although those particular four were not. Agreeing to lay out and manage the land, the Proprietors drew up a plan making Main Street an eight-rod wide road. Then, they laid house lots out at each side to be fourteen rods wide. Those lots on the west extended to the water, and those on the east extended to the wetlands or "swamp" which ran north and south across the flat plain. Land was set aside for a cemetery. Thirty-nine house lots and one minister's lot were assigned over the spring and summer of 1714. This plan, excluding common land, is what constitutes Sunderland Center today.

The Proprietors laid out what has come to be called a linear street village, following the pattern of Springfield, Northfield and Deerfield, Hadley and Hatfield, among others. The most common pattern of settlement in the Connecticut River Valley during the 17th and 18th centuries, it is one in which a long, broad street forms the axis of the settlement; common land in the form of tillage fields, mowing land and wood lots are designated at the peripheries. The plan provided a home lot of about three and a half acres; there were three divisions of plow land distributed, and five to eight acres of Flag Swamp and East Swamp lands allotted to each Proprietor. When they took up their allotments, Proprietors were to fence their home lots, but common land was enclosed by a single fence. The Proprietors then had to go to work draining the wetlands, leveling rises and cutting back woodland to clear land so that they would have the three essential types of land for successful mixed agriculture: tillage, mowing, and woodlots. This varied land use was essential to the town's agricultural success, and Swampfield was well endowed.

Along with the home lots the Proprietors also provided for the Sunderland cemetery (MHC# 800) (Photograph No. 1) which was laid out in 1714 as a strip of land from Main Street to the banks of the Connecticut River. Together with the path of Main Street, School Street and Old Amherst Road, and several original homelots, the cemetery is among the oldest remaining landscape features of the town.

The linear street settlement of 1714 is still in evidence within the Sunderland Center Historic District beginning, as did the original homelot plan, on the south end at the Riverside Cemetery, Cemetery Road, (MHC# 800) and the site of the Benjamin Darling House, 4 South Main Street, ca. 1851 (MHC# 142), and extending north on the west to the site of the Samuel Graves, Sr. House, 187 North Main Street ca. 1804 (MHC# 98) and approximately to the site of 194 North Main Street (no MHC#) on the east. Several of the home lots extending west to the river have remained unchanged. While in most cases, these 14-rod wide lots have been divided into halves, they have nevertheless kept their original depth, and although some of the others have been divided into separate lots, they have remained open, cultivated space and their original appearance has remained. Further, houses are consistently set deeply back from Main Street in respect for the eight-rod width allocated to the axis street which has become a narrower Main Street.

One example of the Center's retention of the homelot depth is the property of the Isaac Graves House, 168 North Main Street, 1759, (MHC# 100) (Photograph No.2) which was Lot No. 3 East, according to the plan of 1714. Part of the explanation for allotments being undivided for so long is the fact that in many cases they were held for generations by the same family. The Graves's house was, for instance, occupied, by seven generations.

Another good example of survival of the original allotment depth is the lot of the Eleazor Warner, Jr. House, 171 North Main Street, (MHC# 99) which was the north half of Lot No. 3 West and still extends to the Connecticut River on the west. The lot was held by the family until 1875 making it the lot longest held in Sunderland Center by its original family. The property of the David Graves House at 143 North Main Street, 1748-1780 (MHC# 105) and that at the Elisha Smith House at 69 South Main Street of 1756 (MHC# 126) both maintain their original depth configuration as Lots No. 6 and 13 West, respectively, extending to the river. The property of the Montague House, 59 South Main Street, (MHC# 128) is a fine example of family continuity and preservation of the town's cultural landscape. Lot 14 West, it remained in the Montague family into the 1960s and although several acres were then sold off between the house and the river, subsequent owners bought them back and reconstituted the original lot.

In addition to Main Street other roads in the Center date from this time. Field roads were laid out in the plan of 1714 to separate the common lands. One of these, Lower Lane, became Old Amherst Road. The lane that was to become School Street was laid out ca. 1720 between Lots 9 and 10 West as a way to the ferry which operated across the Connecticut River from 1719 on the river bank here. South of the ferry land was the minister's allotment, Lot No. 10 West; north of the lane was Lot No. 9 West, Benjamin Barrett's homelot.

By 1716 most of the thirty-nine families had arrived, but the minister had yet to be acquired; and, worse, several candidates had declined. There was no parsonage or meeting house for a new minister, and although the town had voted to construct a parsonage in 1715, it had not yet been started. Possibly in the hopes of increasing the inducement for a minister to settle, the town built a meeting house in 1717, rather than wait to have the minister oversee its construction. This may have done the trick, for in August of 1717 Rev. Mr. Willard was settled and he was given money to construct a parsonage. With his arrival, all of Swampfield's obligations set by the General Court had been met and it was incorporated as the town of Sunderland in 1718.

In the interest of practicality, the town also needed to have a blacksmith and a cordwainer, shoeing both horses and residents. So the Proprietors laid out a lot to settle each of them. Blacksmith, Samuel Billings was given land in 1717 on the site of or near the Samuel Billing/Noah Graves House, at 207 North Main Street ca. 1718 and ca. 1780 (MHC# 96). Two years later cordwainer Samuel Taylor and his wife Miriam Keet were allotted land now occupied by the Williams Farm, 225 Main Street, ca. 1919 (MHC# 95).

Education

As was the case in most Connecticut River Valley towns, education of its young was highly valued, and initially when paying fees was difficult for families, preference was given to boys. Boys's fees, shared by the family and the town, were set according to their level of learning which was roughly defined as being a "writer" or a "reader". A teacher may have been brought to town as early as 1719, but town records confirm one was hired by the town in 1721. When the town took over paying the teacher's fees entirely in 1722, girls were taught as well as boys.

Until 1731 the teacher boarded with families and held classes in different houses for several weeks or months at a time, but that year in the interest of convenience and economy, the town built its first school house in Sunderland Center in the right-of-way of the main road. The building was moved within a few years from Main Street to the corner of Main Street and Bridge Lane (today's School Street), where it burned in 1762, to be replaced and moved once again. The school house doubled as a place for town meetings after 1731 as it was warmer than the 1717 meetinghouse and just as central.

### Agriculture

During the period in which Swampfield had been abandoned, agricultural practices had improved in neighboring Springfield, Hatfield and Hadley. A new crop, rye, was introduced; winter and summer wheat, peas and corn continued to be grown. Cattle herds increased; sheep and pigs were introduced. Swampfield's Proprietors would have been up to date with these practices and it can be assumed that this mixed agriculture was present within the first few seasons. In the contract with its new minister in 1747, the town calculated his salary in produce, naming wheat, rye, Indian corn, and pork.

A measure of the productivity of the town may be found in its agricultural statistics. One of the statistics included on the Massachusetts Provincial Tax Valuation List of 1771 is cider production that represents a higher, more intense use of the land than, say, pasture. In the census, Sunderland is shown to produce the second highest number of barrels of cider among the twelve towns in the county.

### Architecture

Town records describe enough of the first meetinghouse to have a fair idea of its appearance. We know, for instance, that it was thirty feet wide, forty-five feet long and eighteen feet high. It was located near the site of the present church, but as was the practice at the time, it was set in the roadway, rather than at one side or another. Doors were placed at each end of the building. On the interior there was one floor only, the walls were whitewashed, the congregation sat on benches and at first there was no pulpit. The interior was lit by openings of leaded diamond panes in casements. Brick, nails and glass had to be imported from England. It was not uncommon for the finishing of a meeting house to take decades, especially in small settlements where funds and time were scarce. Sunderland's meeting house was no exception and town records show that a gallery across one side was added in 1723 or 1724; the building was sided with clapboard, and window sash was added in 1750; a bell tower added in 1754. Prior to that, meetings were called by raising a flag, blowing a conch shell or by beating a drum.

The parsonage was built in 1717 and a photograph of it before it was demolished shows a five bay, two-and-a-half story, center chimney house, with a gabled portico and an end-gable overhang.

As the first section of town to be established, the Center has Sunderland's concentration of Georgian period houses and several later houses with Georgian sections remaining as ells or wings. The only house in town built by an original Proprietor is the ca. 1714-30 Isaac Graves House, 168 North Main Street (MHC# 100) (Photograph No. 2). Contemporary with the Graves house is the rear ell of the Samuel Billings/Noah Graves House, 207 North Main Street (MHC# 96) that was built as a one-room house extending in the rear in a saltbox profile. Benjamin Graves, the son of original Proprietors, and

his wife built the Graves House at 1 Old Amherst Road in 1753 (MHC# 72). Close in date is the Elisha Smith House, 69 South Main Street, ca. 1756 (MHC# 126) (Photograph No. 3) and the Manoah Bodman House, 38 South Main Street, ca. 1758 (MHC# 135), (Photograph No. 8) now altered to a Greek Revival. Much closer to its original appearance is the David Graves House, 143 North Main Street, ca. 1748 (MHC# 105). Moved from its original location Lot 6 East in 1826, is the Elias Graves House at 18 South Main Street, ca. 1765 (MHC# 139).

## Federal Period (1776-1830)

### Town Development

Although one member of the Billings family was driven out of town for being a Tory supporter, Sunderland, unlike other towns such as Hatfield, Springfield and Hadley, did not have the wealthy and powerful Tories, known as River Gods, among its residents, making its support of the Revolutionary War prompt and unequivocal. As war became a greater possibility, the town geared up, bought gun powder, and agreed to pay Minutemen and to teach them how to shoot a firelock. They began with three days' training, but it was apparently not enough time to master the procedure, so an additional four days' training was to be paid for if the Minutemen "applied themselves to the business". Just in case there was any confusion about its expectations, the town voted that if a Minuteman then refused to serve, he would get no wages at all.

The number and accomplishments of Sunderland Center's soldiers is notable. From the house at 207 Main Street (MHC# 96) Noah and Hannah Fuller Graves sent six sons to the Revolutionary War. Richard Montague who lived in a house on Lot No. 13 west, now the site of 69, 71 and 75 South Main Street, during the 1750s, then moved to North Leverett, was given the rank of Major by General George Washington, served on his staff and took part in the Battle of Bunker Hill. Elisha Smith who built the house at 69 South Main Street (Photograph No. 3) in 1756, served as a private from Sunderland. Lemuel Delano who lived at 38 South Main Street (MHC# 135) after the war, was active helping the town to raise money and volunteers. Benjamin Graves - son of Proprietors - and Thankful Field his wife built and lived with five children in the house at 1 Old Amherst Road in 1753 (MHC# 73) on what was originally the first division of plowing land. On the way home from his war service in 1777 he died in Pittsfield at the age of forty-three. Revolutionary War soldier Elias Graves lived at 18 South Main Street (MHC# 39).

The town sent provisions for its soldiers, provided money for its share of beef for the entire army, as well as paying its own soldiers. Cash was short and its value unreliable, so soldiers were offered beef, Indian corn, sheep's wool and leather for shoe soles to serve in the Continental army for six months. Townspeople were allowed to pay their assessments in grain, but even with this concession the financial toll was high for the town's share of war expenses.

Within a few decades after the war, Sunderland's population began to grow steadily from 409 residents in 1820 to 666 in 1830. The population increase was mainly absorbed in the Center and residents' attention turned back to work, education and religion. Partially for fear of further economic troubles, Sunderland opposed the War of 1812, although six of its men were drafted to serve.

### Agriculture

After the war, the town recovered its equanimity and rebuilt its agricultural economy mainly through the practice of stall-feeding cattle. The heyday of stall-feeding was from 1780-1820 and proved to be profitable into the 1840s for some. Each year in October, farmers bought surplus cattle from upland farmers, then penned them up in barns from November through the winter, and cosseted them on a regime of regular, rich feedings. Then when the summer came the cattle were driven back to the

hilltowns to pasture, while farmers raised surplus grain and fodder on the freed-up pasture land during the summer months. An important by-product of the practice was manure that, when spread on the fields in the spring, boosted crop production even further. Once the cattle were at their optimum weights, they were driven to the Brighton market slaughter houses and sold for a fair cash profit. This was an agricultural practice that with its critical component of cash payments helped the town's farmers move from the 18th century's cooperative bartering to the market-based agriculture of the mid-19th century.

Most farmers by the 1820s did not have the large acreage required to sustain stall-feeding, as farms were gradually divided to accommodate new generations, so many turned to fattening pigs and sheep raising, or adding new crops to their planting plans.

The introduction of broom corn in 1825 offered many farmers the renewed promise of a cash crop. They rearranged their planting plans to include raising broom corn in the summer, and then during the winter manufactured brooms which they sold for cash.

### Commerce and Industry

While the majority of the Center's residents farmed, there were a few other agriculture-related businesses established as well. Samuel Graham, for example, set up a tanning and currying business at 153 North Main Street (MHC# 104) after 1776 when his house was built. Tanning was an off-shoot of cattle-fattening practice of farmers, and the 1771 Provincial Tax Valuation List documents two tanning houses in Sunderland when there were only fifty-six heads of household. The second was in the yard in front of the barn of John R. Smith House, 207 North Main Street (MHC# 96). Water for the tanning vats was brought down to the yards in wooden pipes by the Rowe Spring Society, a company formed in 1796 to provide fresh spring water to town. The precursor of a public utility, the company laid wood pipes from the springs on one of the foothills of Mt. Toby and operated the system for a short period of time.

A second business off-shoot of tanning was the making of leather goods. William Delano, who lived in the parsonage, in 1798 introduced hat and saddle making to town. Hat making was a light industry associated with sheep raising and could be done at home, most often by women, and wool came from local sheep herds. But Delano also manufactured leather goods on Main Street in a building that is now gone, getting materials for his saddles and other goods from the tanning companies so near at hand. When a mail route was established through town in 1815, Delano was appointed the first postmaster and ran the post office in his house.

The growing town and an increase in the number of travelers prompted establishment of several inns. Oliver and Zeruiah Ballard Williams established a tavern (now gone) on the lot south of the house at 225 North Main Street in 1781, and in the 1790s the Billings Inn (now gone) was operating on Main Street near its intersection with Route 116.

The inns took advantage of the increasing river traffic too. By 1796 four ferries were in operation hauling people and goods back and forth across the Connecticut. The first ferry, the one that was in the Center at the foot of School Street was also the most active. But ferries were necessarily limited in capacity and availability and a group of Sunderland residents saw the potential for profit from a toll bridge. They sold shares in a bridge corporation in 1812 and with the capital raised constructed the town's first bridge, with timber from Mount Toby, at the site of the first ferry. They also built the Toll House, 38 School Street, (MHC# 18) in 1812 (Photograph No. 5) to collect tolls and house the toll taker. The bridge, however, was carried off by ice in 1817 and the ferry went back to work. Not to be discouraged, the investors replaced it in 1822 by a second uncovered timber bridge on timber trestle work.

With the first bridge of 1812, Bridge Lane (School Street) became a commercial nexus for the Center. Nathaniel Smith, on the site of the Graves Library, ran a general store in the 1790s and produced

potash from wood ashes he accepted in lieu of cash at his store. He processed the ashes in a series of buildings nicknamed "Potash Island", which may have described the untidy nature of his endeavor. Smith also traded in rum, took lumber and shingles for store goods, stored them on his lot and in the street before sending them down river for sale. As a matter of fact, the lumber business coming in from North Leverett and Erving was so extensive that Sunderland was playfully referred to as a "seaport" town.

Around 1800 Nathaniel Smith took a partner in his store, Erastus Graves, and business prospered to the point that the two founded a bank. Capital was accumulating in Sunderland from a respectable commercial sector and profitable farming; Smith and Graves offered residents the opportunity to invest their cash and savings through a town bank. In 1825 with \$100,000 Erastus Graves, Nathaniel Smith and Roswell Field incorporated the Sunderland Bank, 108 North Main Street, (MHC# 113) (Photograph No. 6). Business was done with the people of Sunderland, but also with those of surrounding towns, and a measure of the bank's success was its move to Amherst in 1831, much to the disapproval of Sunderland's citizens who quipped that Amherst would want the Sunderland bridge next.

### Education and Religion

Town reports indicate a library for public use was in existence as early as 1794. This is an early date for a public library - it was much more common for private collections to exist at the time - and it may be interpreted as an indication of the importance the town placed on its education. In 1801 residents bought a second book collection to increase their holdings and a list of titles held at the time shows a split between historical and religious works. It is unclear where the first collection was housed, but after 1801 it circulated among several homes before being placed in Horatio Graves's store in 1838 on the site of the current library.

School enrollments rose with the population and in 1791 three school districts, each with its own school building, were established. Between 1762 and 1816 a Center school was built on the corner where the library now is located. It was replaced in 1816 by a brick schoolhouse on North Main Street that was demolished in 1995.

Town functions and church functions were still firmly bound together during the Federal Period. This association was made clear when the town built the town house ca. 1825 directly across the street from the meeting house to hold town and church meetings, Sunday school, town schools and classes. It is now at 104 North Main Street (MHC# 114) (Photograph no. 10). A smaller, warmer building than the meetinghouse, the town house was a practical solution that expanded church and town activities and events in the Center. The first parsonage changed from church ownership to private when in 1804 William Delano bought the minister's lot and the parsonage itself. The family continued to own it for several generations.

While the majority of the town's residents were occupied fully with various combinations of work, education and religion, others successfully added political activity to the mix. Horace W. Taft and his wife Mary Montague lived at 23 South Main Street (MHC# 137) from ca. 1817 to 1824. From 1824 they were on Montague Lot no. 14, West, 59 South Main Street (MHC# 128). Taft, a Dartmouth graduate and lawyer and for fifty years town clerk, was elected eight times to the state legislature, and was a county commissioner. Their son Henry, also an active lawyer and local historian, wrote for volume I of the History of Sunderland his recollection of Sunderland Center's houses and their occupants between 1825 and 1830. Another two-generation pair, Deacon John Montague and his son, also Deacon John, lived at 23 South Main Street following the Tafts. Farmers, the elder Montague was town clerk for thirty-two years, selectman, treasurer and assessor as well. One of the founders of the library, he taught Sunday school and town school, and was church deacon for twenty-seven years. John, Jr. was representative to the General Court in 1835 and deacon of the church for forty years.

### Architecture



Even with the relatively sparse historical resources concerning architecture remaining from the Federal period, we can see that this was a very active time in Sunderland Center: with a second generation of houses and outbuildings being constructed on many of the Proprietors' lots, commercial buildings became more diverse; church and town buildings were built, moved and replaced.

As noted above, the Center absorbed most of the town's growing population during the Federal period. This was accomplished in part by dividing the original Proprietors's lots for a second house, or by replacing a single house with a larger one. Two good examples of houses built on newly-divided lots are the Dr. Nathaniel Trow House, 46 South Main Street, ca. 1800 (MHC# 130); the Eleazor Warner, Jr. House, 171 North Main Street, ca. 1825 (MHC# 99). Some of the second-generation replacement houses are the Gideon Warner House, 157 North Main Street, ca. 1780 (MHC# 102), the Samuel Graham-Submit Beaman House, 153 North Main Street, 1776, (MHC# 104); and the Miles Alexander-Horace Taft House, 23 South Main Street, ca. 1800 (MHC# 137). The latter is an especially good example of the increase in size found with the second-generation houses, as it is the town's first two-family house, only converted to single-family use later in the century.

Among the lost Federal buildings, are the schoolhouses of ca. 1791 and 1816, the Graves store of ca. 1800, and the Billings Inn described above. A new meetinghouse was built in 1793 and the meeting house of 1717 was demolished in 1794. The new meetinghouse was, in turn, largely lost to a thorough remodeling.

## Early Industrial Period (1830-1870)

### Town Development

Sunderland's population continued to grow slowly but steadily during the Early Industrial Period from 666 people in 1830, to 832 in 1870 and growth was distributed evenly throughout the town. In the Center, north of the cemetery along Main Street there were 68 buildings in 1858 and in 1871 this number had grown slightly to 73. Statistics alone depict a fairly placid community. Hidden in the slowly changing numbers, however, are population losses in 1831 to typhus, losses of many young men and women to the movement west, balanced by arrival from the 1840s of immigrants, mostly from Ireland. In the Center, Theodore Graves who had farmed the family homestead at 143 North Main Street, ca. 1748-1780, (MHC# 105) left it in the 1830s for New York. Stillman Bodman, 38 South Main Street, ca. 1758 and 1850 (MHC# 135) (Photograph No. 9) lived at home with his parents until he too went to New York in 1831. Another one of the losses to westward pioneering, in this case to Ohio in 1844, was Ashley Graves, 121 North Main Street, ca. 1830, (MHC# 110). Seth Warner, 63 South Main Street (MHC# 127) left for Wisconsin after 1858. Late-leavers Albert Graves left the house at 37 South Main Street (MHC# 136) in 1866 for Chicago, Illinois, and Elihu Smith at 50 South Main Street (MHC# 129) left for Minnesota in 1870.

Over the years of this period, the natural course of development with both gains and losses showed up most clearly at the Center's commercial district at School Street or Bridge Lane as it was then called. Henry W. Taft's recollections of each house and its occupants between 1825 and 1830 sets the stage for these decades. According to Taft, by 1831 there were five buildings on the north side of Bridge Lane. There was first the Graves lumber and general store on the north west corner of Bridge Lane and Main Street, followed by an open shed; then the house of Horatio and Fanny Gunn Graves. Next was the two-story house and shop of Curtis Fairchild, a tailor, followed by the toll house 38 School Street (Photograph No. 5) which was then occupied by Lucius Sanderson. Taft said there was no building on the south side of this lane. It was there that piles of logs, lumber and shingles were stacked.

By 1858 a loop road had been made on the north side of the street down to the river and here a saw and steam mill were operated by J. Flagg, one of the town's early Irish immigrants.. On the south side of the street there were three new houses and a new general store on the south west corner owned by Erastus Graves (now gone). Two of the houses remain: the A. C. Delano House, 11 School Street, ca. 1855 (MHC# 11); the L. Delano House, 15 School Street, ca. 1850 (MHC# 13); and before 1865 the W. D. Chandler house at 9 School Street (MHC# 10) replaced the third house on the street. On the north side of the street there were both losses and additions as well. Horatio and Fanny Graves's store burned down in 1854, and that lot remained open. Although they did not rebuild the store, they built a second Horatio Graves House on the loop road at 28 School Street ca. 1855 (MHC# 15). The sawmill and loop road both were gone by 1871.

In the late 1820s and early 1830s the issue of separation of church and state engrossed the whole town, and its resolution affected the appearance of Sunderland Center. Controversy began in 1771 when the anti-pedo Baptists protested being taxed to support the Congregational parish when, in fact, they were supporting their own church. Eleazer Warner, Jr. at 171 North Main Street, ca. 1825 (MHC # 99) was one of strongest protesters against double taxation, ultimately resigning from the church. Finally in 1831, ahead of the commonwealth as a whole, townspeople voted to separate church and state and the church created its own parish. Property was separated and the church sold the town house in 1834 to a group of investors who thought they would sell it to the town for exclusive use as town hall. Perhaps the building's association with the church prevented voters from accepting it readily as a town hall and it sat vacant until ca. 1849 when it was converted to a dwelling. Meanwhile, a new town house was built on the west side of North Main Street just north of the current library location. That town house was sold and demolished in 1867. Meanwhile, a new church, the third, was constructed in 1836 on the site of the second 91 South Main Street, 1836 (MHC# 116) and in 1849 at the same time the new town house was being erected, the church built its Congregational chapel, 93 South Main Street (MHC#115) to hold church meetings.

Typhus hit town in 1831 and killed Rev. James Taylor, his wife Elizabeth and one of their children, Rev. James Taylor House, 132 North Main Street, ca. 1807 (MHC# 107), just at the moment of turmoil when a separate parish was being formed for the church. Rev. Taylor was a person of considerable intellectual achievements and his interests extended beyond the town limits. He was, for example, a founder of Amherst College and acted as a college trustee during its early years. After the Taylors's death, Enoch Chapin moved into their house on North Main Street and took up some of Rev. Taylor's work as well as his home. Chapin was deeply involved in church affairs, was one of the first to join the new parish in 1835, oversaw construction of the present church which was completed in 1836, and was a church deacon. The first parish house had been sold by the church in 1804, and it did not have another parish house until it bought in 1833 the Luther and Lota Root House, 87 South Main Street, ca. 1817, (MHC# 118). One minister lived in the house, Rev. Holmes, but when he was dismissed in 1835, the house was sold. Subsequent ministers rented houses until the third parish house was constructed at 79 South Main Street, ca. 1847, (MHC# 122).

Between 1816 and 1862 many Massachusetts towns followed school decentralization, giving each school district responsibility for funding and maintaining its own school. The inequities among districts that this system produced grew to such proportions that the state mandated a return to town support for all schools in 1862. While the number of district schools was adequate for elementary pupils, a high school serving all the districts was needed. Until 1867 when there were enough students to warrant a high school, classes were held in the 1849 Main Street town house, but when the new Town Hall was built at 112 North Main Street, in 1867 (MHC# 111) it was provided with three classrooms on the first floor and space for a town library on the second floor. All the district schools except for North Sunderland were closed in 1869 and pupils were transported by horse and wagon to the town hall classrooms; henceforth, high school classes were also held in these classrooms.

In 1861 President Lincoln appointed Horace Lyman postmaster. Lyman was first of three generations to serve as postmaster. The post office was kept in his store until 1879 when he resigned and it was

moved to the general store then owned by Whitney Warner on the southwest corner of School and Main Streets.

Eighty-five Sunderland men served in the Civil War, among whom from the Center was Mason Armstrong, 28 School Street, ca. 1855 (MHC# 15). Armstrong was in the 52nd regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers and returned to be a carpenter. In the same regiment was Israel Childs, Elias Graves House, 18 South Main Street, ca. 1765 (MHC# 139) who volunteered for Sunderland after returning from a trip around Cape Horn to California to prospect for gold. Hiram Davis and Jesse L. Delano, both of whom lived at different times at the Elihu Smith House, 50 South Main Street, 1847 (MHC# 129) also served in the 52nd Regiment. George Francis Abbey, a wheelwright at 154 North Main Street, ca. 1875 (MHC# 103) built his house after returning from service in the 46th Regiment of the Massachusetts Volunteers.

The Early Industrial Period was one in which civic improvements extended beyond a new church or school, a new town hall or library. It was a time in which betterments for public health and beauty were also promoted. The temperance movement, for instance, was vigorously pursued on a door-to-door basis guided by Center resident, William W. Russell, 82 South Main Street, pre-1830, (MHC# 121). Riverside Cemetery was expanded twice with purchases of additional land, and the first hearse was purchased in 1870 for town use. Hollis Graves 28 South Main Street, ca. 1834 (MHC# 138) was noted for planting many of the trees in town. Other residents who were able to contribute financially made specific improvements. In 1865 Lucia Warner Johnson and her husband Alvin Johnson, 140 North Main Street, ca. 1865 (MHC# 106) contributed an organ to the church, helped finance building the Town Hall in 1867 and donated Johnson's publishing company's books to the library.

### Industry and Commerce

A small amount of cottage industry was as close as Center residents came to industry during the period. Although we do not know specifically who was involved in the small manufacture, Center women may have been involved in making palm-leaf hats and it is possible that brooms were made during the winters on several of the Center's farms.

There was scarcely more commerce. A new general store was added by Samuel Dunlap in the former Sunderland Bank building, 108 North Main Street, 1825 (MHC# 113) (Photograph No. 6) when the bank business was moved in 1831 to Amherst. Henry Jarvis Graves, a farmer, also ran a buggy painting business in the 1850s from the Samuel Graves, Sr. house, 187 North Main Street, 1804 (MHC# 98). Commerce was facilitated by Erastus Pomeroy who lived at 168 North Main Street in the Isaac Graves House, ca. 1730 (MHC# 100) (Photograph No. 2) and drove a stage coach between South Hadley and Northfield in the 1830s.

### Agriculture

Sunderland's farmers were alert and progressive. They were aware that their income could be stabilized by a cash crop that would enable them to trade in cash and would also act as a buffer for poor harvest years. Broom corn became their first large-scale, commercial market crop during this period, and as a by-product, the town was for a few years a leader in county broom production. Statistics for 1845 show that of the crops raised, the most valuable was broom corn which was worth \$7,850 for 131,460 lbs. and worth \$2,000 for 9,100 bushels of broom corn seed. Sunderland produced 82,000 brooms, second only to Whately's 160,087 brooms.

About 1850 broom corn demand declined, but as it did tobacco appeared as a replacement cash crop. The introduction of tobacco on 150 acres in 1850 is reflected in the number of brooms produced in Sunderland which fell to 31,400 in 1855. At the same time tobacco was being introduced for commercial production, farmers were also beginning to grow market garden crops. Potatoes, onions, squash and other vegetables were raised in the former broom corn fields. In 1845 hay was still a valuable crop at \$7,600 with Indian corn, wheat, rye, oats, potatoes, and other vegetables following.

Farmers continued to raise livestock. For some reason geese became very popular about this time in Sunderland, and other valley towns as well. Flocks grew to enormous size, slowed traffic, and littered the landscape until annoyed townspeople took the situation in hand and reduced the flocks.

Other livestock was more welcome. The most valuable livestock were 532 neat cattle which were evaluated in 1845 as being worth \$10,640. Dairy farmers concentrated on producing butter (\$3,770) over cheese (\$375) as it has a faster turnover rate, and they sold it in local cities. That year of 1845 they also were recorded as keeping 317 pigs worth \$1,840 and 132 horses worth \$8,000. Between 1837 and 1845 farmers just about doubled the number of sheep they raised with 685 merino sheep in 1845 which produced 1,800 lbs of wool valued at \$600. Raising merino sheep had become very popular in western Massachusetts after the sheep were introduced from Portugal.

There is one highly valuable document on the town's farming practices during this and much of the subsequent period and that is the Franklin H. Williams diary which covers the years between 1852 and 1891 and gives us a detailed account of the life of a hard-working, progressive Sunderland farmer. (See 225 North Main Street, 1919, MHC# 95.) In one of his first entries in 1853 Williams tells of the importance to town life of the Lyceum and of his having heard a lecture from Wendell Phillips on slavery. He attended these versions of "continuing education" classes almost once a week. His diary also lets us know that the interdependent farming economy which traded labor and services largely on a barter basis was still active. When Williams began sugaring in March, 1852 he noted that he traded maple sugar for a coat and several pairs of pants. William's diary also illustrates the variety of farm crops required to farm successfully. A broom corn farmer, Williams in 1854 was also growing carrots and onions, potatoes, corn, turnips, apples, wheat and rye.

There is a suggestion that Williams at the outset of his diary-keeping was not fully committed to life as a farmer and wanted to try a business career. In 1855 he twice went to South Carolina selling maps. But his diary entries of the time remark on the southern crops as much as the map business and on his way home the second time, he bought sweet potato seeds in Washington, D.C. to plant home in Sunderland. With the help of his Irish farm laborer, "Mick", Williams grew the seeds and entered them in the Greenfield fair that fall. Just how diverse farm production was at the time is shown in the other entries Williams made in the fair. Beside his sweet potatoes, he entered competition for the best millet pindars, grass seed, turnips, carrots, and peck potatoes; in the home making department were entered wheat and rye bread, and rag carpet, and in the category of equipment his corn planter, and seed sower.

Williams's work was as diverse as his crops. Daily diary entries show he might cut wood on Mt. Toby, collect sap, sell butter, gather flood wood, draw loads of stone to Whitmore's mills to grind for plaster, collect compost and manure, or work on his mail order business selling Egyptian millet. Each winter, days were invariably spent cutting ice on Munsell's Pond for the ice house, and in the spring the general task of "drawing muck" .shows up as a frequent entry. A knowledgeable farmer, Williams collected compost, wood ashes and manure for his fields, rotated his crops, researched the best seeds available, adding white beans to his crops in 1858; and in 1859 replaced his carrots with tobacco. Tobacco-raising brought about a wholly new series of tasks. Williams grew filters and wrappers, which required starting seedlings, planting, harvesting, hanging, then tying, sorting, crating and shipping. In February he would finish boxing and weighing his tobacco, a short time before starting the process over again. From six acres in 1859 he produced 2,833 fillers and 6,678 binders. It is important for a more complete picture of the work of Sunderland's farmers during this period to keep in mind that Williams was at the same time raising pigs and cows, and cultivating onions, and in 1871 he was still raising broom corn, which by most accounts had virtually ended in the 1850s.

Franklin Williams' diary indirectly points out the importance of on-going education for farmers. Agricultural events like the Greenfield fair were one avenue and the Sunderland Farm Club was another. Founded in 1866 the club counted nearly every farmer in town among its members, and together they studied new techniques, collected and exchanged scientific and technical information

to improve their produce and dairy products. The Massachusetts Agricultural College in Amherst was an important source of education and outreach for the town's farmers as well. Whereas, Franklin Williams was self-educated through travel, agricultural exhibits, study and the Sunderland Farm Club, his son Franklin O. Williams was formally educated at the Massachusetts Agricultural College in Amherst as were others of his generation in Sunderland.

Another model, well-educated farmer was Nathaniel Austin Smith, 47 South Main Street, 1847, (MHC# 131). Born in 1821, Smith studied at Williston Seminary, then taught school and worked as a farm laborer. He was active in harvest clubs, member of the Franklin and Hampshire Agricultural Societies and president of the latter. Interested in growing fruit, Smith saw to the planting of two grape vines at every house in town and by being the first to certify that it had been accomplished, won a money prize for the town from Horace Greeley.

### Engineering and Architecture

The second timber bridge spanning the Connecticut River in Sunderland went up in 1822 and lasted until 1832 when it too was washed out as had been its predecessor. Both bridges had been built on wood trestle work and were open, as distinct from covered, bridges. An improvement was tried in 1832 for the third bridge which was built on stone piers. The stone piers however, did not turn out to be high enough to accommodate the flood levels that the Connecticut River reached, nor could they ever have been high enough to avoid the floating wreckage of the Montague bridge which hit and destroyed it in sections in 1839. Succeeding bridges were only partially destroyed in 1850 and 1857, but even with less damage, they were beyond repair, bringing about the fourth and fifth bridges. The sixth bridge of 1857 introduced yet another form of bridge construction to Sunderland. This wooden bridge was built by Harris and Briggs of Springfield on the Howe truss plan, but in 1869 even it was washed out. Its iron successor had wooden joists and was built in 1870.

Although this was not a period of extraordinarily active construction, the Greek Revival, and Gothic Revival styles are numerically well-represented and there are several examples of the Italianate in the Center. The styles, with few exceptions, were modestly conceived, and are vernacular rather than high-style, as Sunderland continues to show a characteristic, discernible during the Federal period, of adhering to well-established New England house building patterns. Not only were the old patterns followed, but what might be called a Yankee reluctance to make a display of wealth, carried over to architecture. While nearby towns like Greenfield, Northfield and Hatfield were putting up Greek temple-like houses, and following contemporary pattern books which extolled the Gothic Revival, or exploring Italianate villa designs, the residential builders of Sunderland were contented with more conservative forms, accompanied by substantial barns, and outbuildings. For their institutional buildings, however, townspeople eschewed much of their pragmatism for more dignified, and stylistically elaborated designs.

Sunderland Center continued to replace lost buildings and to split its homelots to accommodate new ones. The total effect along Main Street was to fill in some of the large distances between houses giving a more regularized appearance to the streetscape. On North Main Street the Henry O. Williams House, 243 North Main Street, ca. 1853 (MHC# 94); the Eleazer Warner, Jr. House, 171 North Main Street, ca. 1825 (MHC# 99); the Henry F. Sanderson House, 120 North Main Street ca. 1843 (MHC# 109), the Ashley Graves House, 121 North Main Street, ca. 1830 (MHC# 110) were all added. On South Main Street fourteen houses were constructed in addition to the Congregational Chapel. Stylistically distinctive are the Dr. Gustavus Peck House, 90 South Main Street, ca. 1835 (MHC# 117) the Samuel Dorrance House, 86 South Main Street, ca. 1835 (MHC# 119) and the William Russell House, 82 South Main Street, pre-1830 (MHC# 121) (Photograph No. 8). Examples of the more stylistically modest are the Apollos Sanderson House, 7 South Main Street, ca. 1825 (no MHC#) and the Smith-Moline House, 50 South Main Street, ca. 1830 (MHC# 129).

### Barns

The practice of connecting farm buildings began in New England about 1850 when residences were either constructed as attached buildings, or previously separate buildings were connected by means of ells and passages. In Sunderland Center both may be present. Examples of separate barns that may date from this period are those at the Graham-Beaman House, 153 North Main Street, (MHC# 104); the William Russell House, 82 South Main Street (MHC# 121) and at the Catline-Trow House, 46 South Main Street (MHC# 130). Attached barns on houses dating from the period are at 7 South Main Street the Apollos Sanderson House,(MHC# ); at 121 North Main Street the Ashley Graves House, (MHC# 110); and at 199 North Main Street ,the Israel Cooley House (MHC# 97).

## Late Industrial Period (1870-1915)

### Town Development and History

The growth of Sunderland during this period had a more profound effect on town demographics, than any previous era, thanks both to the numbers involved and to their origin. Beginning in the 1880s immigrants from central and eastern Europe began to arrive in New York and to make their way to the Connecticut River Valley, often recruited at the docks by farmers from Massachusetts bent on getting farm labor. The majority of immigrants came from Russia, Lithuania, and Poland; others from Latvia, Czechoslovakia, and Austria. They came with relatives, or followed the paths of friends and families, often meeting up with former neighbors and family in surrounding towns of South Deerfield, Amherst, Greenfield. One particular path for many of Sunderland's young male immigrants was to go first to Pennsylvania where they found ready work in coal mines. After a year or so, records show they then came to Sunderland, drawn by reports from compatriots of the farm work available. One of those who followed this track from Poland to Sunderland via Pennsylvania was John Bartos, 33 School Street, ca. 1910 (MHC# 17). Women came separately as well, but they were hired directly as domestic help, and in fewer numbers. The census of 1900 shows that farms had on average one or two hired men who lived with the farm family, and this practice was a part of Sunderland Center's farms as elsewhere in town.

As new arrivals struck out on their own, or married and began families, new housing was necessary. Intense immigration changed the appearance of Sunderland considerably as density increased, but is remarkably absent in the Center where farms remained in family ownership and there was no available farmland to be further divided. In Sunderland and its neighboring agricultural towns of Hatfield and Hadley, for instance, it was the outskirts of town that absorbed new growth. In the Center, while new construction by immigrants was rare, the first immigrant to buy property and live on Main Street was Roman Skibiski who in 1898 bought the Graham-Beaman House at 153 North Main Street, ca. 1776 (MHC# 104). Mr. Skibiski was to be active in the Center in the following period.

Sunderland kept up with technological change at the turn-of-the century. One of the first improvements took place in 1902 when a gas house to provide domestic lighting was built on the lot of the house at 33 School Street. The gas house burned down in 1910 and was not replaced, so customers turned to the Amherst Gas Company for their supply. Electricity was first made available in 1904 when several entrepreneurs began the Sunderland Electric Light and Power Company.

Harold C. Pomeroy, 168 North Main Street, ca. 1750, (MHC# 100) and William Abbey, 154 North Main Street, ca. 1875, (MHC# 103) set up generating equipment on the falls at Chard Pond on Falls Road. Generating electricity through hydropower was relatively unexplored technology and the company ran into equipment and water supply problems which caused it to shut down after a few years. But their short-term success illuminating North Sunderland buildings demonstrated the value of electricity and created a demand which was subsequently supplied by an Amherst power company.

In 1902 an electric street railway was built through town and the Center on Main Street. The streetcar allowed passengers unprecedented access to neighboring towns and connections throughout the state. It had an important commercial effect as well, as freight could be transported on the flatbed trolley cars to the Massachusetts Central Railroad in Amherst. Farmers's goods could be sent to more markets and businesses could transport material in and out of town from the railroad. One of the first businesses to spring up was the Warner Brothers farm supplies which began about 1903 in a leased streetcar building on Amherst Road that was to move to the Center in the subsequent period.

The larger and religiously more diverse population in Sunderland precipitated other changes in the Center. When church and state were separated in 1831, care of the cemetery remained with the church. In 1875 it was given the name Riverside Cemetery and in 1877, transfer from church to town began when the Sunderland Cemetery Committee Record Book was instituted and the first committee chosen by Town Meeting. It wasn't until 1883, however, that the church voted formally to convey the cemetery to the town, and the transfer was recorded in the Registry of Deeds in 1884. With this change, the privilege of burial at Riverside was extended to all town residents.

### Commerce and Industry

In 1875 the Statistics on Manufactures noted that Sunderland made goods worth \$800. And although they are not itemized, one may be fairly sure that many of the products would have been agriculture-related. For instance, on School Street which continued to be an active commercial area with river traffic, the John and Vine Lawer Shop, 23 School Street, c.1880,( MHC# 14) was built as a blacksmith and wood working shop. They repaired wagons, shod horses, and made farm implements such as onion screens and shove hoes.

Small businesses during this period in the Center included a maternity home at the Ashley Graves House, 121 North Main Street, ca. 1830 (MHC# 110) (Photograph No. 7). Nellie Abbey who lived in the house that she and her husband built ca. 1875 at 154 North Main Street (MHC# 103) ran the home between 1900 and 1910. About 1900 Avery Hubbard who lived at the Clark Rowe House, 34 South Main Street, ca. 1831 (MHC# 133) was active as a fish dealer.

### Agriculture

The Late Industrial Period saw a large and highly important shift in Sunderland's agriculture, one in which farmers introduced vegetable production, potatoes, cucumbers, onions, as cash crops, by reducing tobacco acreage. Vegetable production and dairy with its supporting crops of hay and corn alternated in first and second places for earnings among farmers, while tobacco followed in third place.

Franklin Williams' diary continues to provide a first-hand account into this period, and was kept up by his family after his death in 1891. The farm passed to his son Franklin Oliver, who kept up the diary and described his farming practices which are important for a full understanding of agriculture in the Late Industrial Period. In 1877, for instance, Franklin Williams was growing a wide variety of vegetables, both for his own family's consumption and for sale. His vegetables were onions, potatoes, peas, beets, cabbage, corn, beans, turnips and apples which he took to the Gunn farm on Montague Road for cider pressing. Always looking ahead and making changes, Williams, like his contemporaries, introduced strawberries to the market garden line-up in 1887.

In 1909 Franklin Oliver Williams's narrative recorded a good year for farmers citing high production for hay, onions and tobacco. That year they had raised on the farm ten acres of onions, three acres of tobacco, twelve acres of corn, and had harvested one hundred and twenty five bushels of potatoes. The first thing these figures show is an acreage shift from tobacco to vegetable crops of onions and potatoes, and Williams seemed to be maintaining a balanced income with dairy production which is reflected in his greater corn acreage.

Recognition in the general press of the change towards market garden production may have begun in 1891 when Picturesque Franklin County reported that Sunderland was rather famous for its onion crop, raising 75,000 bushels a year, with single farmers known to raise up to 3,000 bushels.

The first official notice of the change, however, shows up in the 1905 census when the largest income-producing agricultural activity suddenly became cultivation of vegetables which brought in \$121,412. Hay, straw & fodder followed with \$38,869 and dairy products a close third at \$38,674. For comparative purposes, it is interesting to note that Shutesbury in the same year produced \$15,266 worth of dairy products and \$3,595 of vegetables. A good example, among many, of a mixed agriculture farm is found at the Israel Cooley House, 199 North Main Street, ca. 1800 (MHC# 97) that has both a tobacco barn and side-aisle dairy barn.

In 1898 the Sunderland Grange was established. Frank Oliver Williams was temporary chairman at the outset, and his wife was still an active member over fifty years later.

### Architecture

Considerable in-fill construction took place along Main Street and on School Street during this period. The John and Vine Lawer blacksmith shop went up at 23 School Street, ca. 1880 (MHC# 14) followed by the very utilitarian house at 32 School Street, ca. 1900 (MHC# 16) and the house at 33 School Street, ca. 1910 (MHC# 17). North Main Street developed on the east side primarily as farms left family hands and were divided. Typical of this development were the Edward L. Robinson house, 226 North Main Street, ca. 1904 (no MHC#), the Harold Pomeroy House, ca. 178 North Main Street, ca. 1910 (no MHC#), and the George F. Abby House, 154 North Main Street, 1875 (no MHC#). These were no longer farm complexes being built, rather they are house built on lots set off from larger farms and may have had garden space or a few acres for market gardens. But they required a small barn at best as at the George F. Abby House with its attached barn. On South Main Street there were several exceptions to this rule, the Frederick Kidder-Ina Kidder House, 83 South Main Street, 1914 (MHC# 120) has three substantial, connected farm outbuildings and the house at 66 South Main Street, ca. 1880-90 (no MHC#) includes a relatively large barn as does the Louis H. Pomeroy house, 51 South Main Street, 1904 (no MHC#). The Lillian Dill House, 17 South Main Street, ca. 1900 (MHC# 140) is a final example of the infill characteristic of this period, built by a farmer with relatively small acreage.

### Institutional and Commercial

Institutional and commercial buildings appeared singly. The Graves Memorial Library, 109 North Main Street, 1900, (MHC# 112) (Photograph No. 11) was designed by the Allen Brothers architectural firm in Amherst and maintained the high standards for public buildings established in Sunderland. Florence Hubbard, 12 South Main Street, 1919, (MHC# 141) was librarian in the new building for many years.

The small Grace Clark store at 75 South Main Street, ca. 1895 (MHC# 124) was the first strictly commercial building to appear on South Main Street.

### Early Modern Period (1915-1950)

#### Town Development and History

Sunderland Center's appearance changed substantially during the Early Modern Period. The town sustained material losses during this period principally from the flood of 1936 and the hurricane of



1938, however, improvements outweighed losses with several public construction projects, and steady residential infill along Main Street.

One of the influential factors for this change was technology that mechanized farms, enabled fewer farmers to produce more, and freed up those who were no longer occupied on farms to commute to work elsewhere and to live on smaller, non-farming properties. The town started to shift from agricultural community to residential community during this time. Automobile tourism also made its impact as a few more commercial buildings appeared along Main Street and at the intersection with Main Street and the approach to the Sunderland Bridge.

Transportation to school improved in 1917 when a motorized bus was bought by the town. This coincided with an increase in enrollment to 334 students who could no longer fit easily into the classroom space at Town Hall. After several years of debate and planning Center School was built at 12 School Street, in 1922 (MHC# 12) designed by Northampton architect Karl Scott Putnam, a Smith College professor. Lillian Dill, 17 South Main Street, ca. 1900 (MHC# 140) who taught school, mostly in Sunderland, for fifty-two years was principal at the school until 1948.

Another of the period's public improvements was the creation in 1934 of the town's first fire department, which protected residents's property with a water pump mounted on the front of an old Packard. Improvements marched on, and in 1944 a two-bay addition was made to Town Hall, 112 North Main Street, 1867 (MHC# 111) to house a new fire station with a proper fire truck, and a garage for town vehicles.

If World War and Depression were not enough, towns along the Connecticut River were damaged by flood and hurricane in the 1930s. The town was flooded by spring melt and rains in 1936. The Montague bridge taken down by ice jams, floated down the river and wiped out Sunderland's 1877 bridge as well. Livestock had to be moved to higher ground and residents were evacuated. Once the flood receded, tons of silt were left on fields and had to be painstakingly scooped up and trucked away. In January of 1938 another flood threat came when the Connecticut River, blocked by ice floes began to rise above its banks. This time dynamite was used to break it up at the bridge and flooding was avoided. Then in September a hurricane knocked down uncounted trees, forty tobacco barns and caused floods again to cover the farm land and to rise five feet above the cemetery.

A temporary bridge was put up in 1936 and between 1936 and 1938, Sunderland's tenth bridge across the Connecticut River was constructed, this time at a new site, slightly downstream from the older bridge. What is now School Street had been Bridge Street. It was closed off as a dead end and a new Bridge Street was constructed to connect with the new bridge.

The 1930s brought about a series of new organizations for young people, one of them home-grown. Monroe Smith born c.1907 at William Bowman-Monroe Smith House, 55 Falls Road, c.1832, (MHC# 8). founded the youth hosteling movement which spread across the country then came back to Sunderland in 1935. Townspeople, interested in providing hostels, organized and set one up in the Center that operated for several years at the Benjamin Graves House at 1 Old Amherst Road, 1753, (MHC# 73).

### Industry and Commerce

Sunderland Center in the area of the intersection of Main Street and Amherst Road changed appreciably during the decade after World War I. This had been the commercial center of town all during the 19th century with general stores, small manufacturing shops, and an inn. While the individual buildings were gone, the area kept its commercial identity which was reinforced when the Warner Brothers who operated a farm equipment and supply business built the L & M Warner Grain Store at 10 and 10A Amherst Road, 1917, (MHC#19). This two-part building went on to have a long history in selling farm supplies and made Sunderland Center an agricultural equipment resource well into the 1950s. From the building the Warners sold farm machinery, hardware, farm supplies and

seed; they grew, packed, stored, sold and distributed farm produce as well. Luther Warner also constructed the building next door at 18 Amherst Road in 1917, (MHC# 20), as the town's first automobile service garage.

The Warner family was responsible for yet another agriculture-related commercial business in the town center. Theoren Warner in 1923 built the town's first commercial tobacco sorting shop at 110 North Main Street, (MHC# 21) (Photograph No. 12). The shop was bought out by a large commercial tobacco group The Block Brothers Tobacco Company in 1927, and they employed up to one hundred workers into the 1950s when the tobacco market declined.

Two men, both immigrants to the town, brought new commercial activity to the center. Ben Toczydlowski in 1923 founded Ben's Service, Inc. A Polish immigrant, Toczydlowski followed a familiar pattern; he came to South Deerfield as a thirteen-year-old in 1903, started working as a farm hand, did shoe repairs, then moved on to run his own farm. He kept farming but also saved up to begin a service station and an ice cream store on School Street. After Bridge Street was opened in 1938 he moved there to be near traffic with his service station at 11 Bridge Street, c 1939 (MHC# ) and his ice cream store turned into a liquor store 13 Bridge Street, ca. 1940, (MHC# ). Both are still operating.

John McGrath, an Irish immigrant, came to Sunderland in the 1920s and began working as a grocery store clerk, then with his own store first at the store and Post Office, 116 North Main Street, ca. 1912, (no MHC#) (now Dimo's Restaurant) then as co-owner of John & Rudy's red & white super market at 101 North Main Street, 1952. McGrath was the town's chief grocer for thirty eight years.

The farm supply and equipment business began with the Warner family in Sunderland, but Roman A. Skibiski, Samuel Graham-Submit Beaman House, 153 North Main Street, 1776 (MHC# 104) added to the town's prominence in this field when he established his business in 1937 and began selling Allis-Chalmers farm tractors. Skibiski, Inc. started in an old garage on North Main St. grew to become one of the largest farm equipment businesses in the state in the late 1930s and 40s. In 1942 the business moved to the Luther Warner service garage, 18 Amherst Road, 1917, (MHC# 20). In 1946 an addition was built and in 1950 eight acres of land gave the business expansion space. However, the decline in farming accelerated at this time, and Skibiski's business gradually moved from farm equipment to other activities.

In 1926 Theoren and Raymond Warner also diversified and began a construction business. In the 1940s one hundred and eleven men worked in the building behind town hall where they specialized in highway and bridge construction. This business continues at the present.

On a smaller scale, Grace Clark Hobart and her husband continued to run their general store at 75 South Main Street, ca. 1895 (MHC# 124) and opened a second store in her father Darwin Clark's house at 63 South Main Street 1836 (MHC# 127).

## Architecture

While infill continued at a somewhat reduced level during this period, its diversity was greater than in previous periods with commercial agricultural buildings being added to the residential and institutional mix. Residential buildings were distributed evenly on both North and South Main Streets beginning with Colonial Revival houses such as the Fourth Parsonage, 115 North Main Street, 1917 (no MHC#) and the Hepburn-Houle House, 41 South Main Street, 1922 (MHC# 132). They were followed by Neo-colonial houses such as 200 North Main Street, ca. 1926-30 (no MHC#); 180 North Main Street, 1923, (no MHC#) and bungalows at the Clifford Hubbard House, 12 South Main Street, 1919 (MHC# 141) and the houses at 162 North Main Street, 1922 (no MHC#) 123 and 119 North Main Street, ca. 1925 (MHC#s ). To School Street were added both the Center School, 1922 (MHC# 12) and the Frederick E. Walsh House, 6 School Street, 1921 (MHC# 9).

The numerous new commercial agricultural buildings reflect the success of the town and the Center's market gardening farmers. Richard Graves, Sr. built the Millstone Farm Market, 24 South Main Street, 1929, (MHC# 134) as an outlet for farm produce. It is an interesting example of the roadside commercial architecture that went up when automobile travel added a new market for farmers to reach directly. At 32 School Street an onion storage building ca. 1920 (MHC# 16) was built and used for storage and then for bagging vegetables in the 1920s and 30s. Luther and Merrill Warner built the grain store at 10-10A Amherst Road, 1917 (MHC# 19) to sell grain primarily, but they also stored and sold produce here as well.

The Warner's Tobacco Shop, 110 Main Street, 1923 (MHC# 21) (Photograph No. 12), a few doors down from the grain store was the only tobacco shop ever built in the Center. It operated into the 1950s.

### Agriculture

During the first half of the Early Modern Period vegetable market gardening flourished and grew. Onion production, for instance, was at its peak in 1928 with 850 acres harvested. Onion growing continued until 1939 when disease in the onion sets and strong competition from the west set off its gradual decline. Tobacco had a more volatile history with ups and downs from year to year. In 1928 there were 500 acres planted in tobacco but by the end of the period it came to an end with the Cuban embargo. Farming itself had begun to decline about 1920, but slowly, since tobacco, onions and potatoes

continued to be profitable and sustained many farms, and dairy farmers had a ready market in the valley. There were sixty-four dairy farmers operating in 1937.

At the end of the period, farmers began to sell out and within five years over half of the town's farms had been sold. Today, however, through land rental and acquisition, the Center 's farmland continues to be cultivated for vegetables, and tobacco is once more being raised.

Historic preservation efforts in the town have been strong in the past few years. In addition to inventory and National Register work, the Historical Commission obtained an ISTE A Enhancement grant for replacing missing and dying trees on Main Street to maintain the historic tree-lined appearance of the town street. They produced two walking tours of historic buildings in town. They have engaged a University of Massachusetts graduate class in historic landscape architecture to work with them to plan preservation of the Center's historic intersection at the Sunderland bridge, while providing for growth and change to occur. The Commission has been a consistent advocate for preservation, and reuse when necessary, of the town's municipal buildings and have begun working with the Department of Environmental Management's program for burial ground restoration to restore and conserve the Riverside Cemetery's historic landscape and stonework.