

# MASSACHUSETTS

<http://www.berkshirehistory.org/resources.html>

## ADAMS

In 1766, the General Court of Massachusetts confirmed the sale of an area of land in the western part of the state to Nathan Jones, Elisha Jones, and John Murray. The original land purchase amounted to 23 square miles. A small community developed into what was first called Township Number One and later changed to East Hoosac. The land was incorporated into the Town of Adams in 1778, named in honor of patriot Samuel Adams.

Adams history is the familiar New England story of a farm village growing into an industrial small town. Former farmers and sons of farmers tapped the energy of the flowing Hoosic River to turn the belts and pulleys of textile and paper-making machinery. By the end of the 19th century, Adams had become an industrial community, dealing in paper, textiles, and lime products. These early industrialists laid a foundation on which each successive generation built an industrial community.

This community was peopled with immigrants of several countries. Eight ethnic groups came to work in Adams, each one weaving its thread of influence into the fabric that is Adams. The architecture that the industrialists and workers constructed is the environment that we see today- an industrial setting pleasantly surrounded by the lush landscape of the Hoosic River Valley and the Berkshire Hills.



Source: Adams Historical Society

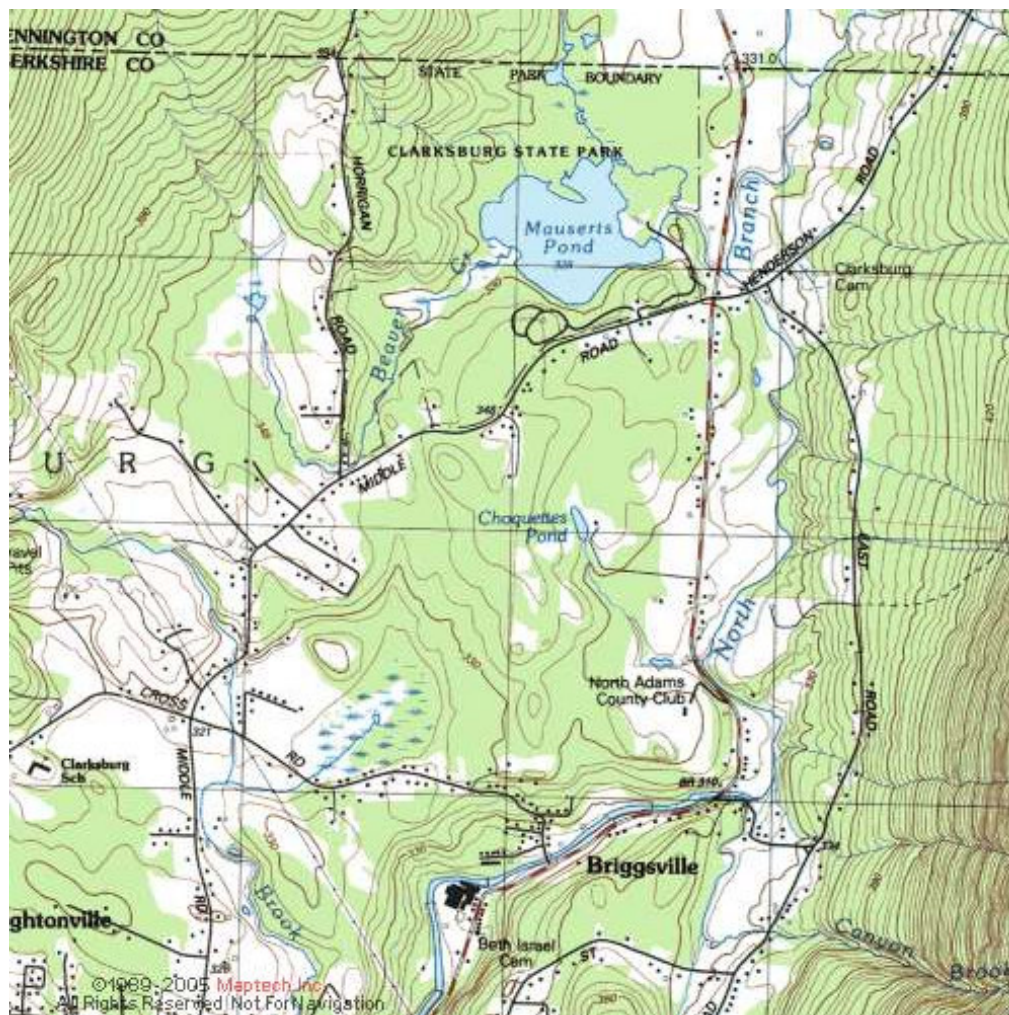
For further information, visit: <http://www.adamshistorical.org/>

## CLARKSBURG

Settlement of Clarksburg began in 1769 with Captain Matthew Ketchum, Colonel William Bullock and Nicholas Clark, the latter for whom the town was named. The agricultural interests of the early settlers dictated their settlement in the relatively level areas to the west of Route 8 and along upper reaches of the North Branch of the Hoosic River.

The settlement of Briggsville began in the early 19th century and included four mills by 1829. Briggsville expanded about 1866 with the construction of Linwood Woolen Company, a brick mill to weave cashmere. In 1885 Linwood employed 140 persons, and the village had two stores, a grist mill, saw mill and a new brick school. The town also had three powder mills which produced \$36,000 worth of black gunpowder between 1861 and 1869. The E. R. Tinker powder mill exploded in May of 1869 ending production of that product.

Source: <http://www.berkshireweb.com/themap/clarksburg/clarksburg.html>



## WILLIAMSTOWN

In 1750 village lots in the newly surveyed West Hoosac plantation were first offered for sale by the General Court of Massachusetts Bay Colony. The Court probably had two motives in establishing the plantation: to settle and fortify the northwest corner of the colony, lying along a heavily used Indian path, and thereby protect towns to the east and south; and to prevent Dutch settlers in New York from inching over their eastern boundary into Massachusetts.

The area was a heavily forested wilderness, and although some of the lots were purchased by speculators, many were acquired by soldiers from Fort Massachusetts, four miles to the east.

In 1760 settlement began to increase. More land was divided and cleared, some roads were cut, and farming became the dominant way of life in the valley. Small saw, grist, and fueling mills appeared, easing the labor of colonial living. Professionals and craftsmen began to arrive as well: a doctor, lawyer, cobblers, carpenters, blacksmiths, and shopkeepers.

In 1765, to comply with terms in the will of Colonel Ephraim Williams, who bequeathed funds for the founding of a local free school only if the hamlet was incorporated and re-named, Fort West Hoosac officially became Williamstown. The school opened in 1791 and became Williams College in 1793.

Until the Industrial Revolution, the town flourished on a combination of dairy farming, sheep herding and wool production, small local mills and general stores. The American Foreign Missionary movement was born here at a prayer meeting in 1806, when a group of Williams College students, taking shelter under a haystack from a sudden thunderstorm, proposed sending the Gospel abroad. And always, the scenic beauty of the surrounding mountains was an important part of life. The Alpine Club, formed in 1863 under the inspiration of Professor Albert Hopkins, sponsored mountain climbing and camping excursions in the local hills, its declared purpose being "to explore the interesting places in the vicinity, to become acquainted...with the natural history of the localities...also to improve the pedestrian powers of the members."

The coming of the railroad and the Industrial Revolution changed the face of Williamstown. Although the amount of water power in Williamstown limited the extent of industrialization it experienced, the town was transformed by the appearance of the Watley Mill and Williamstown Manufacturing Company (Station Mill), both textile mills, and A. Loop and Company (Water Street Mill), which manufactured twine.

Summer tourism grew, and both the elegant Idlewild Hotel in South Williamstown and the Greylock Hotel on the corner of North and Main Streets, were in their heyday. The catchy and descriptive phrase "Williamstown the Village Beautiful" was coined by Henry Tague, manager of the Greylock, who was also successful in pushing for construction of the Taconic Trail. Sand Springs, famous to the earliest Indian tribes for the medicinal properties of its thermal spring, also thrived as a grand resort, and later as a Sanitarium, and bottling plant for spring water. When flavorings were added, Sand Springs Ginger Ale became a renowned soft drink.

Farming continued in Williamstown during this period, and Mount Hope Farm, a major experimental farm that gradually grew to over 1300 acres, was noted for its success in using genetic principles to improve the yield of potatoes and to boost the production of egg-laying poultry and dairy cattle. In addition to being a large local employer, Mount Hope's findings were useful worldwide.

After World War II, Williamstown grew rapidly. Businesses changed. Recent major employers have included Carrd Cable, Steinerfilm, Ivy Guild, Sweet Brook Nursing Home, Williamstown Medical Associates, and the Mount Greylock School District. But with the admission of women in the 1970s and its consequent expansion to over 2000 students, Williams College is the largest employer by far.

Source: The Williamstown House of Local History  
For further information, Visit: [http://www.williamstown.net/house\\_of\\_local\\_history.htm](http://www.williamstown.net/house_of_local_history.htm)

## NORTH ADAMS

The Hoosac Valley was not suited for farming because it was rough, rocky, and covered with both swamps and dense forests. The earliest settlers were attracted by the forests of white pine and the excellent water power resources. The **Hoosac River** that runs through town was much deeper and wider. Flooding was common and that is why many settlers chose to live in what is now Adams instead of North Adams. The first cloth manufacturing was done in 1799, when a fulling mill was added to a grist mill. The first building constructed for carding wool and dressing cloth was built in 1801. The first regular mail and passenger line was established in 1814. The stage ran between Greenfield and Albany. By 1825 the village was still small but beginning to grow. Two factories were built that year. There were also 2 carding and clothing works, 2 grist mills, a saw mill, an oil mill, a machine shop and a tannery. There were 2 churches, 2 hotels, 2 blacksmith shops, 5 stores, 3 shoemakers, 1 milliner, 1 harness maker and 1 tailor shop. The entire village included only Main, Eagle, and Center Streets.

The prosperity of North Adams was due in large part to the water power available. It was also due to its citizens who worked toward improving the means of transportation. Residents were in favor of a railroad line from Boston to the West that would pierce the Hoosac mountain and intersect the town. The Hoosac Tunnel was more difficult and expensive to construct than anyone could have imagined. Work was not completed on it until 1873, 21 years after it started. The first train that came through caused rocks to fall from the ceiling of the tunnel. The tunnel could not be used until a brick arch was completed. Two million bricks were required for the project at a cost of \$14,000,000. In 1876 the tunnel was pronounced reasonably safe for travel. North Adams was now the northern terminus for the Pittsfield and North Adams Railroad and was on the line of the Troy and Greenfield railroad. The town was a railway terminus for 6 important railroad lines.

The last town census before the town was divided was in 1875 showing 15,760 residents. It was decided that the town of Adams (formerly East Hoosac) had become too large and should be divided. In 1878 the town of North Adams was incorporated.

Source: <http://www.geocities.com/northadamshistory/>



## HISTORY OF NORTH ADAMS, MASS. 1749 – 1885

W. F. SPEAR North Adams, Mss.: Hoosac Valley News Printing House 1885

Click Here: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~maberksh/towns/nadams/historyofna.htm#1>

### **COLONIAL PERIOD (late 1700s - mid 1800s)**

Manufacturing began on and around the site before the Revolutionary War, as its location at the confluence of the two branches of the **Hoosic River** was ideal for the diverse, small-scale industries of colonial times. By the late 1700s and early 1800s businesses at or near the site included: wholesale shoe manufacturers; a brick yard; a saw mill; cabinet-makers; hat manufacturers; machine shops for the construction of mill machines; marble works; wagon- and sleigh-makers; and an ironworks, which later forged armor plates for the Civil War ship, the Monitor.

### **ARNOLD PRINT WORKS (1860 - 1942)**

In 1860, the print works O. Arnold and Company established itself on a portion of the site and installed the latest equipment for printing cloth. Large government contracts to supply fabric for the Union Army ensured that the business prospered, and during the next four decades Arnold became the largest employer in North Adams. By the end of the 1890s, 26 of the 27 buildings in the present-day MASS MbCA complex had been constructed, and by 1905, Arnold employed some 3,200 people as one of the leading producers of printed textiles in the world. Despite decades of success, falling cloth prices and the lingering effects of the great Depression forced Arnold Print Works to close its Marshall Street operation in 1942, consolidating to smaller facilities in neighboring Adams, Massachusetts.

Source: Mass MbCA.org

### **NORTH ADAMS RIVER MEMORIES**

Memories of the 1948-49 Flood in North Adams: A Memorable New Year's Eve by Virginia Bastwick

Click Here: <http://abeged.com/ny/vb-flood.html>

From: Manning, Joe. 2003. Bytes from the Bean *February, 03 2003*

THEN AND NOW, PART II : *Morning Conversations* (Donald Surr, North Adams Resident)

"Although North Adams was a bustling and quite fascinating multi-ethnic community during its industrial heyday, it did have some serious environmental problems."

"The local woolen mills mixed powerful dyes in big vats that were emptied straight into the river after use. I can remember shuddering, as a boy very familiar and delighted with every other aspect of woolen cloth manufacture, every time I went through the dye house in Blackinton. The huge bubbling cauldrons reminded me of witches' brew. Ghastly stuff! I always kept at a safe distance."

"They also used potent acid to carbonize, which means to burn out burrs in the wool. That also would have been dumped untreated into the river. I would imagine that the Arnold Print Works (current site of

MASS M&CA) dumped in their share of potent chemicals, as well, since they specialized in applying colored patterns to cotton cloth which had been woven and bleached elsewhere.”

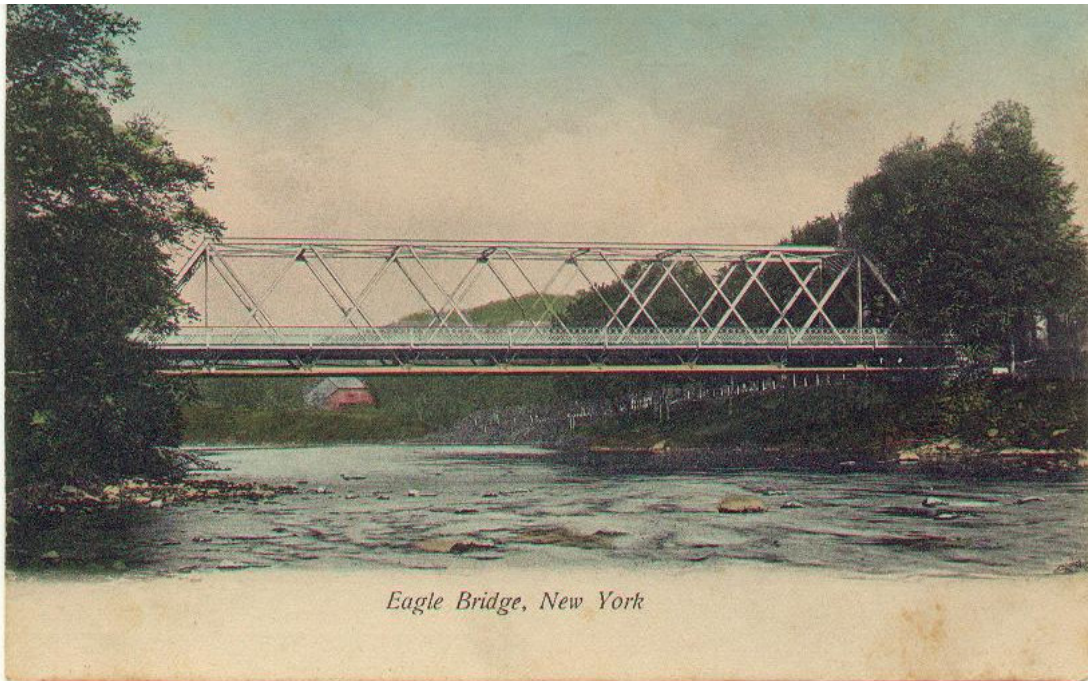
“Other chemicals were used in applying special treatments to the printed cloth. It was not customary, in those days, to cart used industrial chemicals away for special treatment or disposal. That is one reason **why factories located on the edge of rivers.** Everything unwanted went straight in.”

“With due respect to the memory of our industrial leaders, I do not believe that they were aware that they were endangering the environment. In those days there was a theory that rivers somehow cleansed themselves of impurities in the course of their flow, so nobody worried much about pollution. We just more or less took it for granted and assumed that nature would get rid of it somewhere downstream.”

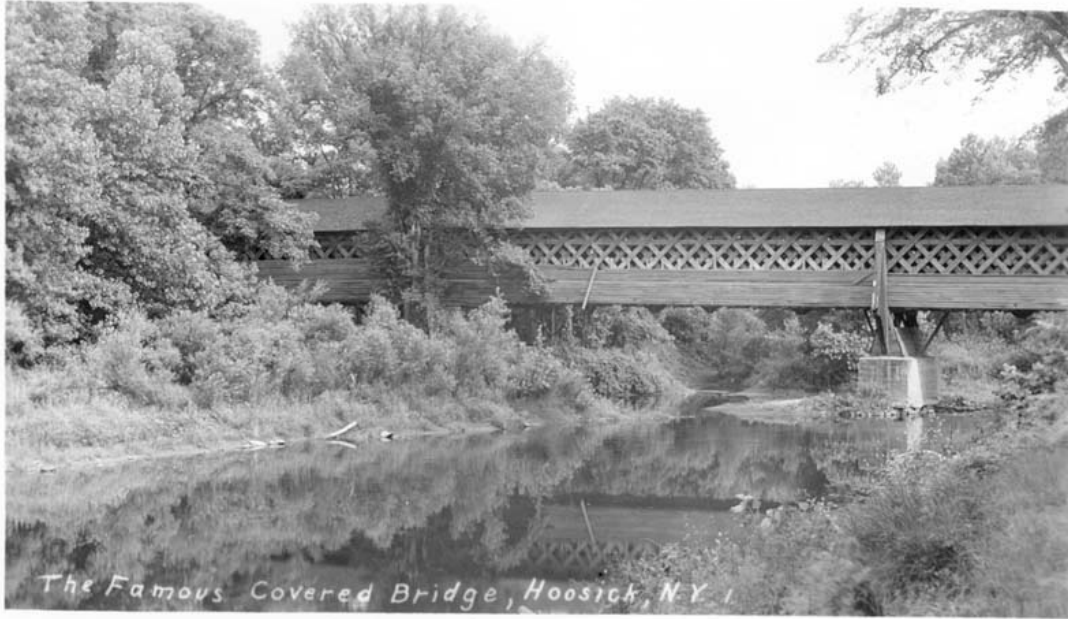
Source: [http://www.iberkshires.com/columnist.php?colm\\_id=4&story\\_id=9474](http://www.iberkshires.com/columnist.php?colm_id=4&story_id=9474)

For further info on the cultural history of North Adams, visit:  
<http://www.geocities.com/northadamshistory/>

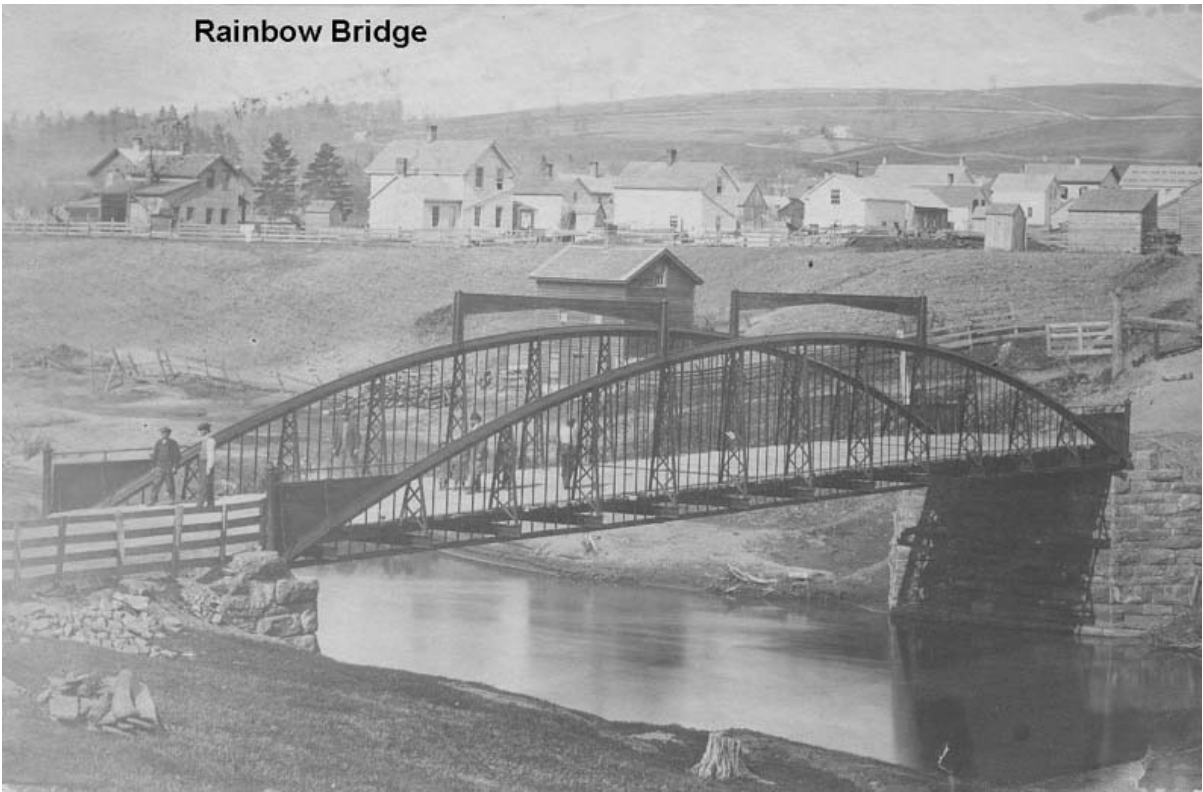
# NEW YORK



Source: <http://www.hoosickhistory.com/>



**Rainbow Bridge**



Source: Hoosick Township Historical Society, P.O. BOX 536 Hoosick Fdls, NY 12090

## HOOSICK FALLS

Excerpts from TIME LINE

TOWN OF HOOSICK 1900 -- 2000

Compiled by Gilbert E. Wright, Town Historian 1995-1999

### 1900 -- 1910

1900 The Hoosick Valley Railway built two water-powered generators for use by their trolley line. The trolley line ran from Hoosick Falls to Bennington. The generators were located near the Bennington Battlefield Park, near the Caretaker's Bridge in Walloomsac.

1902 A new bridge was erected over the Walloomsac River at the Stevens and Thompson Paper mill. It is an iron and steel bridge, 120 feet long.

1906 The suspension bridge that crossed the Hoosick River at the end of River Street, known as the Shanghai or the Rainbow Bridge, was replaced with an iron bridge (truss design).

1907 January 15. Citizens of Hoosick Falls voted to purchase the water supply system, property, rights and privileges of the Hoosick Falls Water Supply Company including renewal and repair of the system at a cost not to exceed \$75,000. The Village took control on February 23, 1907.

1910 The wooden dam that provided water power for the Stevens and Thompson paper mill in North Hoosick was replaced with a concrete dam.

### 1911 -- 1920

1913 The Bradley Electric Company was founded by J. A. Bradley. It is now owned and operated by his sons, Phil and Don Bradley.

1915 The Twin State Electric Company bought the Power Plant that was built by the Hoosick Falls Water and Power Company in 1888. The Twin State Electric Company supplied electricity to customers in Hoosick Falls area and Bennington.

### 1921 -- 1930

1927 Church Street Bridge, known today as The Shop Bridge, was reconstructed.

1927 A devastating flood damaged the village pumping station. Chief Engineer John J. Hughs was rescued from the roof of the building. A record water mark was set.

1930 The iron bridge at River Street was replaced with the present concrete bridge.

1930 Walter Shurewood built a dam on a stream known as White Creek just above the White Creek pool. Mr. Shurewood operated a beater for making paper and experimented with improving the efficiency of beaters.

### 1931 -- 1940

1935 The White House Bridge, known locally as the Long Bridge, and the White House Mills were demolished to allow reconstruction of Route 7. White House Mills produced electric light bulbs and dynamos.

1938 flooding ravaged the area for the third time.

1940 The New York Power and Light Company bought the rights to sell electric power in New York State from the Twin State Electric Company.

#### **1941 -- 1950**

1946 The North Hoosick Community Club was organized for the purpose of raising funds to install water and sanitary facilities in the North Hoosick School.

1949 A flood that broke the 1927 high water record occurred on December 31. It caused damage to the various factories. Water was five feet above the ground on Water and Lyman Streets. As in 1927, John Hughs, Chief Engineer, had to be rescued from the roof of the pumping station.

1950 New York Power and Light Corporation and the Mohawk Power Company consolidated to become the Niagara Mohawk Power Company.

#### **1951 -- 1960**

1953 The Army Corp of Engineers completed the flood control project that was started in 1951. The Corp removed the natural falls and concrete dam that had been built by Walter A. Wood to supply the power for his manufacturing plant. This ended the floods that had plagued the village many times in earlier years. The last and perhaps the most damaging flood occurred in December 1949.

#### **1961 -- 1970**

1970 The village of Hoosick Falls started operation of the sewage treatment plant in January. It is located near Thayer's Pond.

1978 The Covered Bridge in Buskirk was placed on the National Register on March 8.

1980 The former home of the Thompson family of the Stevens and Thompson Paper Company burned December 12. It was owned and occupied by Larry and Judy Peterson at the time.

#### **1981 -- 1990**

1984 One of the cast iron eagles was mysteriously taken from the iron bridge at Eagle Bridge. This was noticed in August. It was replaced on December 18 of the same year as mysteriously as it was taken.

#### **1991-1999**

1998 A tornado touched down at Round Lake in Saratoga County and continued east until it lifted in North Bennington. In the town of Hoosick, a barn owned by the Hoag family and a house owned by Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Patire were destroyed. Many homes were damaged along with many acres of trees.

Source: Hoosick Township Historical Society, P.O. BOX 536 Hoosick Falls, NY 12090

For more info, visit: <http://www.hoosickhistory.com/>

## SCHAGHTICOKE

After the Revolution, many immigrants came to Schaghticoke, especially from England and Ireland. Population centers grew up near streams, where the water powered mills of various kinds. In 1792, William Chase constructed the first bridge over the **Hoosic River** at what would become the Village of Schaghticoke. Most residents were farmers, growing crops used in the local industries.

Though the town of Schaghticoke developed industrially and agriculturally, it never developed a political center. One of its hamlets, Hemstreet Park, faces Mechanicville across the Hudson River; two others, Pleasantdale and Speigletown, were part of Lansingburgh for almost 100 years. Melrose grew up at the junction of the railroad and the road. A substantial number of its homes were built as vacation retreats by the wealthy Trojans. The Village of Schaghticoke was incorporated as **Harts Falls** in 1867. The falls of the Hoosic powered large woolen, flax, and powder mills among others.

For more information, Visit: <http://www.townofschaghticoke.org/history.htm>.

Source: Chris Kelly [historian@townofschaghticoke.org](mailto:historian@townofschaghticoke.org)

# VERMONT

## POW NAL

from Child's *Bennington County Directory*

Child, Hamilton. Child's Bennington County Directory 1880-81.  
Syracuse, NY: Hamilton Child, 1880.

Pownd is located in the southwestern corner of Vermont, adjacent to the States of New York and Massachusetts. It has an area of 23,040 acres and is well watered. The principal streams are the Hoosick and Walloomsac Rivers. The **Hoosick River** rises in Massachusetts, in Cheshire, and flows north through the beautiful Hoosick Valley. The **Walloomsac** rises in the Green Mountains and passes through the town near that range. **Barber Pond** is near the central portion of Pownd on the Walloomsac. **Broad Brook** also flows through the eastern portion, while the central and western parts are watered by the tributaries of the Hoosick.

The whole country is peculiarly rich in scenery. In the eastern section the Green Mountains rise in their grandeur, while in the west, Petersburg or West Mountain presents a fine view of a bold and rugged elevation... There is scarcely a point in the vicinity but one may find a view to charm an artistic eye. One of the finest of pictures is spread out for any one who will stand on Mason's Hill looking east, west or south. Looking down the Hoosick valley from the hills, known as Gregor Rocks, east of the Pownd factories, another charming landscape is before the traveler. It is impossible to particularize, for so rich in scenery is the whole country that from all points the eye is met with beauty. Iron ore in small quantities has been found, while white clay and sulphuret of iron is discovered occasionally. Lime rock crops out in large quantities, and of good quality; while slate, siliceous, marble and quartz is distributed about in unequal quantities.

**NORTH POWNAL**, a post village situated on the Hoosick River, Troy & Boston R.R., and the Boston & Hoosac Tunnel R. R., contains a post office, three stores, one hotel, one church, (Congregational,) two blacksmith shops, one wagon shop, one saloon, grist and saw mill. The population is about 60. It contains a Good Templars' Lodge, which was organized in 1867. This lodge has an average of 50 members, and meets every Saturday in Good Templars' Hall. It is one of the oldest working lodges in the State. The North Pownd Manufacturing Co. has been conducted since 1876 by A. C. Houghton & Co. in the manufacturing of cotton print cloths. They employ about two hundred and thirty operatives, and have some 16,000 spindles. Their annual manufacture of cotton cloth is about 5,000,000 yards, using about 1,000,000 pounds of cotton. The factory is on the Hoosick River. North Pownd Saw Mill is on the Hoosick River and owned by T. V. McCumber. It cuts about 30,000 feet of lumber annually. Mr. McCumber also runs the grist mill which is located at the same place. The mill has two run of stones. The manufactory of tin ware owned by Edmund Lillie is employing from ten to twelve men, and turns out about \$ 1,000 worth of tin ware each month. The business was established in North Pownd in 1863. Pownd Valley Cheese Factory is situated about one mile from the village. It was built by a company composed of T. F. Paddock, David Carpenter, William B. Arnold and S.W. Gardner. The milk from about 200 cows is used, and some 60,000 pounds of cheese are made annually.

**POWNAL**, a post village, is situated on the Hoosick River, in the south part of the town, on the Troy and Boston R. R., and on the Boston, Hoosac Tunnel and Western R. R. It contains two Churches, (Methodist and Baptist,) two hotels and four stores, The Lincoln Carriage Manufactory, three blacksmith shops, one wagon shop and the Hoosic Valley mills, furnishing employment to a large number of workmen. "J.M. Batchelder's "Rural Home Family School for Boys," is located near the village, as is the beautiful cemetery known as "Oak Hill." Population in 1880 was 418.

The Hoosic Valley Mills are located on the **Hoosic River**, at Pownd. They were built in 1863 by Salomon Wright, and run by him as woolen mills until 1876 when he began spinning yarn for hosiery. In 1880 they were manufacturing about 30,000 pounds of yarn and knit goods per month. About forty persons are employed in the mill. Cotton is also used in the manufacturing of the knit goods.

Bushnell and Barber' s Sawmill is situated on Barber' s Pond. It cuts annudly about 100,000 feet of lumber. Montgomery' s Cider Mill is situated about one mile south of the village of Pownl. About five hundred barrels of cider are made each year. Towslee' s Saw Mill, grist Mill and bobbin mill, is in the northeastern part of the town, on Barber Pond Stream. The saw mill has a capacity for cutting 1,000,000 feet of lumber annudly, but usudly turns out about 125,000 feet. The gristmill grinds feed. The bobbin mill has a capacity for turning out 5,000 bobbins per day. These mills are owned and run Othniel Towslee. The first settlement of the town was as far back as 1724, by a small number of Dutch settlers without titles. In later years by the new grant of 1762 strangers came in and took up lands, the history of the place therefore may be said to redly date from that period. And it is the descendants of those settlers who now hold the lands of their forefathers.

Source: Pownl Historical Society, Inc. P.O. Box 313, Pownl, Vermont 05261