

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Gilbertville Historic District
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Generally Main, Church, High, North, Broad and Bridge Streets
city, town Hardwick N/A not for publication
state Massachusetts code MA county Worcester N/A vicinity
code 027 zip code 01037

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>124</u>	<u>20</u> buildings
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>133</u>	<u>20</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 1

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official White B. McConaughy Executive Director, Massachusetts Historic Commission 10/21/91
State Historic Preservation Officer Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Gilbertville Historic District, Hardwick, Massachusetts

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Domestic/Single dwelling; Multiple dwelling;
Secondary Structure; Hotel
Commerce/Department Store; Warehouse
Social/Meeting Hall
Government/Post Office; Courthouse

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Domestic/Single dwelling; Multiple dwelling;
Secondary Structure
Commercial/Department Store; Restaurant;
Warehouse
Social/Meeting Hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (enter categories from instructions)
No Style
Mid-19th Century/Greek Revival; Gothic Revival
Late Victorian/italianate; Second Empire;
Queen Anne; Stick; Shingle;
Late 19th Century Revivals/ Colonial Revival;
Classical Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)
foundation Granite; Brick; Concrete; Stone
walls Wood; Brick; Granite; Aluminum;
Asphalt; Vinyl
roof Asphalt; Slate
other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Gilbertville is an isolated textile mill village located in the town of Hardwick, Worcester County, Massachusetts, constructed largely by the George H. Gilbert Manufacturing Company between 1860 and 1930. The village reflects the Gilbert Company's changing plans for the construction of a single enterprise community, based on a profitable manufacturing company and a convenient and suitable workforce, executed in the village plan, the construction of mills, the selection of housing types and the provisions for spiritual and recreational activities. The large brick mill buildings dominate the landscape, surrounded by the blocks, duplexes and row houses constructed by the company for its workers. The Gilbert family also supplied stores, a post office, schools and meetingplaces, as well as an outstanding Congregational church and library. On the eastern border of the company-owned portion of the village a complementary service community developed, part of which is also included in this nomination. Additional speculative multi-family housing, stores and, of particular importance, the Roman Catholic complex of church, school, rectory and convent were constructed. Single family housing is in the minority throughout the village, but concentrated in this privately held portion. The ornamental vocabulary of the village includes the Greek Revival, Italianate, Stick, Shingle, Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles for the residences; Gothic Revival, Second Empire and Classical Revival styles for the public buildings, while the stores employ the false or "boom town" fronts. The village retains nearly all of the buildings ever constructed there during the Gilbert Manufacturing ownership between 1860 and 1938 and few new structures have been constructed since that time. The nominated portions of the village includes 125 properties with 154 resources, consisting of 125 contributing buildings, four contributing structures, three contributing sites and one contributing object. There are 21 non-contributing buildings.

Topography, Settlement Pattern and Infrastructure

The village of Gilbertville lies in the valley of the Ware River where it takes a nearly right angle turn in its path from a southwest to a south flowing direction. The village takes an inverted L shape along this route and extends about a half mile from east to west on the short upper arm and about a mile from north to south on the long lower arm. The small Danforth Brook enters the village from the north to join the river north of the angle,

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6. Historic Functions (continued)

Education/School; Library
Religion/Religious Structure;
Church School; Church-related residence
Industry/Manufacturing facility;
Waterworks; Energy facility
Transportation/Rail-related;
Road-related

Current Functions (continued)

Government/Post Office; Courthouse
Religion/Religious Structure;
Church School; Church-related
residence
Industry/Communications facility;
Transportation/Rail-related;
Road-related

7. Architectural Classification

Late 19th Century American/Bungalow

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flowing through a deep gulley. At the river the village elevation is approximately 500 feet above sea level, but rises quickly to the adjacent hills on all sides, to about 650 feet in the district, but continuing to rise to Dougal Mountain (1058 feet) to the northwest, to Goat Hill (approximately 950 feet) to the northeast, and an unnamed hill in New Braintree (marked "Chase", 942 feet) and Ware (approximately 950 feet) to the south. These topographic features served to isolate the village from the surrounding agricultural landscape. Although these hills are now covered with second growth forest, during most of the period of significance they were completely bare of trees and were given over primarily to pasture. By contrast the village streets were formerly lined by attractive shade trees that have since been removed during street widenings, hurricanes and disease.

The Gilbert Company's brick textile mills were located in clusters at two points along the Ware River on the falls, first Mills Number One, Two and Three at the angle and later Mill Number Four to the south. There are three falls within the district, two of which were developed for water, steam and hydro-electric power by the Gilbert Manufacturing Company; the third for water-powered wood working, both privately and by the company. The major fall was first dammed in the 18th century and rebuilt by Gilbert early in 1860-1862, but was destroyed in the hurricane of 1938. Its power canal fed Mills Number One, Two and Three with the exposed tail race continuing past the mills before rejoining the river. Mill Number Four was located at the next fall along the river to the south. Its power canal leaves the river just below the angle, forms "the Island", and rejoins the river well below the mills. Two major bridges cross the river in the village. At the angle a new 1947 reinforced concrete bridge replaced the handsome 1871 stone arch bridge damaged in 1938, and allows Main Street to cross the river. The National Register-listed (NR 1986) **Covered Bridge #900**, a Town lattice bridge, was constructed in 1886 connecting **Bridge Street** to the adjacent town of Ware.

The company-owned portion of the village is concentrated along the streets laid out adjacent to the company's mills, on the north side of the river above its turn and below the turn parallel to the river on its east side. The densest neighborhoods of housing are located at the ends of the village and closest to the river, on streets and terraces laid out by the company just off Main Street. In four areas the company constructed housing types that included many units with a small numbers of rooms per unit: on Broad, West and North Streets north of the river and west of Danforth Brook; on East, Brook and East Main Streets north of the river and east of the brook; east of the river on Bridge and Grove Streets, and formerly on the Island, and on South Main, Joselyn and High Streets at the south end of the village. The more ambitious buildings are amply spaced in the center of the village on Main Street, Highland Terrace and New Braintree Road. Included are the larger house types, the single family houses, as well as the important public buildings including the schools, church and store. There are no publicly

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maintained park spaces in the area.

The northeast, privately-owned portion of the village is an eclectic mix of residential, commercial and institutional buildings, dating primarily to the last years of the 19th century. The primary street here is Church Street, running east-west and its intersection with Hardwick Road running north-south is the focal point for this portion of the village. Along Church Street is the commercial "strip" of the village, the location formerly of the Union Hotel, presently the Windsor Hotel, as well as a number of store buildings of one and two stories. Located at its eastern end are the area's most ambitious single family houses and the complex of buildings associated with St. Aloysius Church. Small courts are located to the north and primarily to the south of Church Street, where the area's two family houses and tenements are situated. Outside of the district on the secondary north-south road, Mechanic Street, and on Hardwick Road, are located a number of single and two-family residences.

In the period prior to Gilbert Company development, much of the area was an unincorporated gore, but its small size meant it received the same attention to transportation requirements as any other part of the town. The Church/Main Street and Hardwick/Gilbertville Road corridors were inter-town routes of long standing. The remaining roads were first footpaths and courtyards around company-owned buildings that gradually became roadways, particularly after the advent of common automobile use. The Sanborn insurance map sequence illustrates this transition nicely, adding from year to year more formal roads, particularly off Church Street, as well as West, Brook and East Streets. During this transition, the locations of some roadways shifted from in front of the buildings to behind them, most notably at Highland Terrace and Taylor Street, because of increasing amounts of traffic. Throughout the period of significance the road names changed as well, both as owners and other monuments changed but also because the streets were not public roads and so subject to little regulation. The houses and the units within them are still not numbered in the village or in the town at large, and have been subject to several informal numbering schemes, as evidenced in village directories and on buildings; this has hampered some avenues of research on building occupancy.

Gilbertville's railroad connections came comparatively late. The Ware River Railroad from Palmer to New Hampshire opened to Gilbertville in 1870. The line passed through the village along the east and south side of the river, and its related buildings, **the Ware River Passenger Depot, Freight Station and Warehouse** were located the west side of **South Main Street (#108, #109, #87)**, north of the Congregational Church. They all survive, small and simple brick structures featuring a wide hip roof with overhangs on the depot and corbelled cornices on the small gable block freight station and the larger L-plan warehouse buildings. Even more long-awaited was the construction of the Central Massachusetts Railroad, opening in Gilbertville in 1887. These

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rails followed on the west and north side of the river with its buildings located north of the angle. The surviving **Central Massachusetts Passenger Depot** is on the north side of **Main Street (#49)**, a small frame hip-roofed building with a deep overhang supported by exceptional stick-work brackets, with turned cross members at each corner. Both line continued along the Ware River valley toward Barre. A streetcar link to Ware operated in the early 20th century.

Mill Buildings

Between 1860 and 1864 the George H. Gilbert Manufacturing Company constructed four mills along the Ware River. The mills make use of two of the three falls in this stretch of the river, with Mills Number One, Two and Three located on the eastern fall near the river's turn to the south, and Mill Number Four at the falls to the south of this turn. The mills were originally powered by the Ware River and an imposing dam and granite arch bridge were located upstream to the east until the hurricane of 1938. This power was subsequently substantially augmented by steam and electric power. Oral history suggests that these three mills were each initially operated as a vertically integrated plant, including all processes from accepting the wool through cleaning, combing, spinning, weaving, fulling and dyeing the wool. During the later years of the 19th century major additions were made, one to Mills Number One and Number Two and one to Mill Number Four; early in the 20th century there was a replacement of portions of Mill Number Four and the addition of a Power Plant on the Island. Today the later Power Plant survives with numerous subsequent additions. The textile mills are integral to the village, both as the visual focus of its layout and the functional center of life there.

The core of **Mill Number One (#48 on Main Street)** is the oldest in the complex, a four-story, brick, high gable-roofed block extending eighteen bays in length. Its bays are marked by panels that rise to segmental arches and the 12/12 double-hung sash are set within segmental arch openings. A low extension office and a high tower with an octagonal frame belvedere are located on the east short wall of the mill. The 1883 additions form a wider four story addition to the west and a lower two-story, clerestory monitor-roofed addition to the north. These are distinguished from the earlier portion by their use of a low and wide gable roof and larger openings composed of paired 9/9 double-hung sash. Their ornament retains the use of raised panels marking bays, with a toilet tower added at the junction of the addition on the west wall and a stair tower along the rear addition. The extreme dimensions of the mill plus additions was 130 by 56 feet. Examination of the interior indicates the use of slow-burn construction, large girts to support the floors measure about 18 inches square and floor construction of two inch plank, presently covered with narrow flooring. The girts are attached to the brick exterior walls with rods whose ornamental ends can be seen on the exterior and are supported on the interior by pairs of posts,

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square with chamfered corners in the old portion of the mill and round in the new. The roof on the older portion of the mill is constructed of collared principal rafters and principal purlins, with additional support provided by tied queen posts rising from the tie beams to a location between the purlins. The roof boarding is attached to an additional layer of common rafters. In the newer portions of the mill the roof is nearly flat. By the early 20th century the first and second floors of the main block were used for weaving with mule spinning above and the northern part used as a machine shop and pattern room.

Mill Number Two stood between Mill Number One and Main Street, and its sequence of construction is more difficult to reconstruct. The main block was lower, three stories in height, and measured 125 by 60 feet. Its later date of construction is reflected in its low gabled roof, its wider 8/12 windows and its use of right angles at the pilaster-cornice joins. Mill Number Two housed the various finishing processes of fulling and burling, as well as packing and storage, and a small amount of mule spinning. After the 1938 hurricane damaged this mill it was dismantled and removed. A small hexagonal brick structure adjacent to this site to the west, a former acetylene gas generator, was later used for storage. **Mill Number Three** was the carpenter shop and storage; it was dismantled and removed in 1916.

Mill Number Four (#115 on South Main Street) is located further downstream, on the west side of the river, on the Island formed by the Ware River and the power canal. The main block is a six story, brick, high gable-roofed block extending to thirteen bays on either side of the high central tower. These buildings share the ornament of Mill Number One, but is further elaborated by corbelling in the arches and at the cornice. It is also primarily of slow-burn construction. Many of the main building's functions are reflected in its structure, in the remnant wheel of the power train and in the brick piers that supported large combing machines, both on the first floor. The fourth floor is exceptional for the large open expanse with no interior supporting posts. The roof framing is a wider version of that in Mill Number One, but with no intervening floor level; principal rafters and purlins reinforced by a wide queen post bent, as well as iron supports. Its tower was formerly topped by an open stage with a mansard roof and a clock stage and mansard roof with cresting above. Now the stage is closed and topped by a pyramidal roof but the clock remains in place. Two low wings extend the total length to 230 feet and the structure is 60 feet in width. The southern wing is covered in a low gable and clerestory roof. The first northern wing was a more complex structure, with a mansard-roofed office of unknown height and a lower perpendicular power house. The present dye-house wing, constructed of reinforced concrete with a saw-toothed roof and vat recepticals still visible, replaced these earlier buildings in 1914. Two additional buildings are located near the south end of the mill. A three story, low gable-roofed block with monitor resembles the addition to Mill Number One, suggesting a similar

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1880s date. Nearby is a three-story house, with the tiny openings that characterize the form, slow-burn construction and no interior access between floors. By the early 20th century these buildings were used for the early stages of textile manufacturing, with wool sorting and storage in the southern building, picking in the southern wing, dying in the north wing and in the main building, scouring on the first floor, worsted combing and spinning on the second floor, mule spinning on the third and fourth floors and carding on the fifth.

The **Power Plant (#114 south Main Street)**, constructed in 1912, is dominated by the tall brick stack. Its small brick office and the main block of the plant are located side by side. Both are a single story in height, with monitors on their nearly flat roofs, and windows set in segmental arched openings. Additional single-story structures are located to the east and the south. The plant was located on the site of five examples of four early Gilbert tenements.

Company housing: multi-family

Gilbert quickly turned to constructing housing for his mill workforce, beginning with a crash building campaign in the early 1860s. On his first-purchased parcel north of the river and adjacent to Mill Number One were located the first group of worker tenements. Before the decade was out he had expanded his holdings to the southern, gore portion of the village; and constructed many more tenements there. For these early buildings the company choose an ornamental vocabulary that dominates and unifies the village. Italianate-style decoration employs a wide molded freize along the facade cornice line, supported by paneled pilasters at each corner. In this style the company built tenement blocks, duplexes, and finally rows, to total forty-four buildings. During the next sixty years the company constructed new housing during two periods, the first a campaign of expansion, the second of replacement. A building campaign of the 1880s employed Stick style elements on one large and one small duplex, as well as on a tenement row, and a total of twenty-five new buildings. The final campaign in the 1910s and 1920s employed Colonial Revival elements in large duplexes and rows, and a total of twelve new buildings. Neither historic documents nor village oral history have yielded period names for the various house types, thus those used here were developed during this study and subject to change.

Tall tenement blocks were Gilbert's first choice for housing, and the two variations are easily confused; they are known here as **Tenement Blocks Three and Four**. Each is a large gable block frame on a dressed granite foundation, six bays in width with a double pile plan; the entries are located in the central pair of bays. First Tenement Block Three is believed to be the first of the residential forms built here and is known from four examples. Its name is derived from its form, four units within a building divided both

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horizontally and vertically, and from its number of usable floors. This type is distinguished by the third tier of windows on the facade; a row of horizontal three pane windows which run along the frieze, providing light to the third story. Located below these windows are two tiers of 6/6 windows, the common window type for this period. Unlike the other early types its lateral elevations are similar on the first and second floor, with a centered pair of windows on the third floor. Examples of this type are located on **North Street (#56)**, on **West Street (#60)** and two on **Main Street (#53 and #54)**, where the earliest construction took place. Another example on North Main Street was removed after the period of significance. Tenement Block Four is a larger variation of the block form, with higher posts for the third floor and an additional small attic story, and is known from only four examples. This type is distinguished by the third tier of windows on the facade, but with 3/3s above two tiers of 6/6s. Like the other early types it employs in the lateral walls a narrowing stacking of the windows and two narrow center windows in the center of third floor and, demonstrating its exceptional size, also the fourth floor. Two examples are located on **West Street (#61 and #63, noncontributing)** and one on **East Street (#76)** from the first wave of construction; five are located on **Bridge Street (#89, #90, #91, #92 and #93)** and one on **South Main Street (#128)** from the second. Five additional examples were built on the Island known from map and photo evidence, but were replaced in 1912 with a power plant.

Each of these early types share a similar and distinctive floor plan. Each building is divided vertically in half, with two horizontally arranged units on each half. The entries open onto narrow lobbys, employing partition walls between the hall and stairway like all five early types. The first and second floors of each half are given over to the living areas of each unit, with a narrow stair hall and parlor in the front pile, and a kitchen and generous pantry in the rear pile on each floor. In the rear of the main block two small ells enclose a service stair and woodshed area. The unusual element of this plan is the shared third floor chambers, where in each half four bedrooms were apparently apportioned, one front and one back room for each unit below. Evidence for this included equal and open access to the third floor from both the first and the second floors, and the survival in example #56 on North Street of painted numerals, #33 above two doors and #34 above the two remaining. The shared third story and stair passage marked an important departure from period standards of autonomy and privacy, within and between families. The expansion of this general type, from Block Three to Block Four by raising the post height allowed for additional height and light to the third floor and adds a low garret space under the roof. During the second phase of early construction the company retained Tenement Block Four but Block Three was abandoned.

Unfortunately little is known about the plan of an exceptionally large tenement block built by the Company on Main Street at the base of Mechanic

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Street. Known as the Brown Block, and believed to contain six living units, this building is the largest known in the village, called here Tenement Block Six. Its facade resembled Tenement Block Four, but its side elevation indicates a fenestrated fourth story far larger, and the presence of higher and deeper rear eills. This building was removed after the period of significance.

Possibly to bend to middle-class and housing reformers' conventions of privacy, the Company added the duplex house types to their repertoire during the second phase of construction. The two-family house, vertically divided, became the most common housetype built by the company, totalling thirty-three units by the end of construction. Their first effort, **First Duplex A** is known from fifteen examples all located in the south-east part of the village. Here the six bay facade includes one tier of 3/3 windows over one of 6/6 windows and retains center paired doors. Like the other early types the windows in the gable end are stacked in decreasing width spacing from floor to floor, topped in the gable by two narrow windows often with triangular heads. In each half the first floor contains three rooms and a stair hall, arranged to locate a parlor and stairhall in the front pile and a large kitchen in the center and smaller dining room on the outside wall of the rear. A woodshed eill extends to the rear of each unit with a shared well between. Four rooms are located on the second floor, and two rooms on the third floor. Eleven of these Duplex A types are located on **Main Street** (#78, #79, #80, #82, #83, #84, #85, #86, #116, #118, #119), three on **Highland Terrace** (#96 and #98, #97 noncontributing) and one on **Grove Street** (#95). **First Duplex B** is easily confused with Early Duplex A, and known from two examples located side by side on **South Main Street** (#117 and #120). This type is distinguished by the arrangement and ornament of its side elevation where the windows are stacked with identical spacing from floor to floor; their rear additions are two rather than one story in height. In addition to these housetypes, at least one other two-family house was constructed with this distinctive ornament, on **#73 Brook Street**, but its openings have been altered and its eills removed.

First Tenement Row is the last of the five early residential forms constructed by the Company, a long tenement row. With this final phase of construction just after 1870, the company evidenced its reorientation in their designs for types with four units from the unusual tenement blocks to the more common, and more autonomous, rows. The four unit row building type came to account for the largest number of housing units in the village. This row is known from four examples on **South Main Street** (#121, #122, and #128, #125 noncontributing) constructed just after 1870. This type includes four adjacent residential units and is not as deep as the other types. The facade consists of twelve bays with paired entries at bays three and four and bays nine and ten. It employs in the gable two narrow triangle-headed windows and adds dormers to light the garret. The design of this type included a smaller

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first floor plan but nearly as many chambers as the duplexes. Two rooms are located on the first floor, a front parlor and a large rear kitchen and pantry; three small bedrooms are located on the second floor, and a single large room in the garret. These are chiefly distinguished from their predecessors, the blocks, in the additional space provided for chambers and the autonomy of each unit.

The Gilbert Company retained many of the formal features of these rows in the next group of housing added by the company as it began its second major building campaign in the 1880s. **Second Tenement Rows** are known from seven examples and all are located within a small area in the north part of the village, including two on **North Street (#58 and #59)**, four on **Broad Street (#65 and #67, #64 and #66 noncontributing)**, and one on **Prospect Street (#72)**; another on Prospect Street has been demolished. A related example on **North Street (#58)** is a First Tenement Row in form, with Second Tenement Row ornament, altered to resemble this group. The long rectangle has a symmetrical facade, marked by a wide central clipped-gable wall dormer and shed roofs over the paired entries. The facade rhythm is 2-2-1-2-1-2-2 and stickwork divides the grouped bays and marks the window sills and heads. The floor plan also employs a side stair hall, front parlor, rear kitchen and pantry, and two floors of chambers.

The Company soon returned to the durable duplex form, adding both small and large types at this time. The **Late Duplex**, built in 1883, is even larger than the Company's first duplexes and only two are known. The examples are located on **New Braintree Road (#105)** and on **Highland Terrace (#99)**. The long rectangle has a symmetrical facade, with a rhythm of 1-3-3-1, marked by a wide shed-roofed entry porch over bays two through seven, and two wide gable dormers. The design of these tenements is derived primarily from their massing, with the addition of horizontal boards marking the sills and heads of the windows. Each half had a generous side entry hall with a kitchen behind it, with paired parlor and dining room flanking them. Three large rooms are located on the second story and two additional on the third garret story. The example on Highland Terrace, known as the Marsh House, was expanded in the 1910s allegedly to accommodate Mrs. Marsh's Sunday School efforts. Both the living and the dining room were expanded to the south, and the hall was redecorated with Colonial Revival interior details at the same time. On the second floor a sleeping porch was added in the front, a room expansion was made in the same direction in the rear; on the third story this additional lateral space is unused, accessible only through a crawl space. These large duplexes, like the small number of single-family residences built by the company, were the rare examples of housing in the village that met middle-class ideals for domestic living.

In 1885 the Company added a new small duplex form with the construction of the **Bungalow Duplex**. One of the most common types built in Gilbertville,

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thirteen examples are known to survive; at least one other has been demolished. Examples are located in the southern part of the village, on **South Main Street (#130)**, two on **Joselyn Road (#139 and #140)**, three on **High Street (#132, #133 and #135)**; and in the northern portion, including two on **East Main Street (#51 and #52)** and a noncontributing example on **East Street (#75)**. Outside of the district boundaries there are two on **Prospect Street**, one on **New Braintree Road** and one on **Mindel Street**. These small two-family houses are nearly square and derive their ornament from the use of varied wall covering and shed roof extensions of the roof to shield their openings. The first level to the sills of the second story windows were clapboarded, the two tiers above covered in shingles. These houses were small in size compared to the other duplexes, with first floor plans more like the **First Tenement Rows**. A side entry led into a hall with a parlor in the front pile and a kitchen and large party in the rear; three small bedrooms were located on the second floor, but there was no additional garret space. In these numerous housetypes the Company chose a small number of rooms, approximated only by the **Tenement Blocks**. It illustrates the Company's continued commitment to the duplex form as well as their preference for a large proportion of units in small sizes.

The company conducted a final extended construction campaign early in the early 20th century, including a large duplex and two new row forms. The **Last Duplex** is the largest duplex built in Gilbertville, dating to between 1898 and 1911, and only two examples are known. They are located on **South Main Street (#106)** and **New Braintree Road (#102)**. The nearly square main block of the building has a symmetrical facade with a deep roof overhang. The paired entries are marked by a wide shed-roofed porch but its central gable masks the two-family function. The plan of these units is among the largest built in the village, with a front parlor opening to a dining room, a side stair hall in the main block and generous kitchen, pantry and woodshed space in the rear ell. The size, plan and finish of these duplexes, together with their siting near other large forms of duplexes, and, most significantly, near the small number of single family dwellings, sets them apart from the other forms of housing in the village.

The Company continued to favor four-unit, small-plan row housing. A single large **Tenement Row** was constructed on **Prospect Street**, just outside the district at the same time, a unique instance of the type. The large hip block is U-shaped and includes four units. Its facade is eight bays in length, with entries at bays two and three and at bays six and seven. More examples were constructed of the **Third Tenement Row**, constructed between 1911 and 1917 and known from seven examples. Examples are located on **East Main Street (#55)** and **Grove Street (#94)**, where they replaced existing buildings, and two on **High Street (#134 and #136)**, and three on **South Main Street (#123, #124 and #126)**. Several were probably constructed to accommodate the residents of the Island, where **Tenement Blocks** were replaced with the **Power Plant** in 1912.

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These examples are ornamentally different for their predecessors, but depart from earlier patterns of form only in the separation rather than pairing of unit entries. The long gabled blocks have a narrow gabled jog at each end with pyramidal entry porches before them and with entries to the internal units at bays 3 and 8; this separation of entries represents a departure from the earlier tenements. Three gable-roofed dormers are centered in the roof, at bays two and three, five and six and eight and nine. The rhythm of the facade openings is 2-1-2-2-1-2. The design of this type are the largest among the tenement rows, including three rather than two primary rooms on the first floor, plus stairhall and bath and three chambers on each of the two stories above. In addition, the plans for all units within a building are not the same. The end units site their parlor and kitchen front to back in the inside half of the unit, their hall on the outside wall and stair on the interior, locating the dining room behind the entry. In the center plans the parlor and dining room are in the inside half, the entry is in the interior, stair on the outside wall, with the kitchen behind the stair.

The **Last Tenement Row** was the last mill housing to be built in the village and only two examples are known. The examples are located side by side on **High Street (#137 and #138)**. The long rectangle has a symmetrical facade, marked by a wide shed-roofed wall dormer over bays two through seven, and four gable-roofed entry porches. This type also separates rather than pairs its entries. Both surviving examples have been sided, but their overall massing, openings and porch detailing remain. Like their predecessors they each house four units. In these the plan resembles that of the earliest rows, with front parlor and rear kitchen, front stairhall and rear pantry, with three bedrooms and bath above the entry on the second floor.

Other Multi-family Housing

The Gilbert Manufacturing Company was not the only builder of rental housing for the operative and village population. Gilbert's son-in-law Charles Dexter took advantage of his connection to the company to construct investment properties to rent to company workers. His first efforts, here known as the **Dexter Tenements**, were constructed in the area adjacent to the Gilbert Manufacturing Company "town" between 1870 and 1885. All examples are now covered in synthetic siding. Two are located facing one another on **Mindel Street (#184 and #185)** and two on **DuHamel Court (#188 and #189)**. They are approached from the rear with their facades looking to the west and faced the schoolhouse that was replaced by a Gilbert Late Tenement Row. These plain buildings are two and a half story gable blocks with a six bay facade arrangement with a rythm of 1-1-2-1-1, and several have had enclosed porches added to these facades. Next to the Mindel Street examples (**#147 on Church Street**) is a similar block with an additional cross gable entry bay and first floor enclosed porches; here the block is divided along the ridge line so that the units are arranged back-to-back. Dexter's next effort was the six-unit

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Dexter Block #129 on South Main Street between 1885 and 1898. The two and a half story gable block extends to twelve bays, with entries at bays two and three, six and seven and ten and eleven. The alternating first floor bays are treated with bay windows, angled at each end and rectangular in the central areas. The interiors employ double pile plans, with side stair and entry hall, paired parlors and rear kitchen. At the southern end of the village on Joselyn Road another tenement block (#153), dating to the early 20th century, rises two and a half stories above a fieldstone foundation, another four unit gable block.

Along what was originally known as the Barre Road but came to be known as Church Street several individuals constructed variations of the two and a half story gable block duplex, usually to reside in half and to rent half. Probably the first was the Harvey-Crawford House (#149), part of which may have been used as a store. The six bay, double pile house is treated with the familiar wide cornice board, pilasters and entablature entry. Simpler, nearly unornamented examples, whose developers are currently unknown, can be found across the street. Also of six bays (#148), and in a slight variation, with a single entry in a five bay facade (#145), pairs for these examples can be found in other parts of the village not included in the district. Outside the district two four-unit tenement blocks were constructed by the Gendreau family, while smaller one and a half story duplexes were built on Hardwick Road and to the east on Church Street.

Single Family Housing

The vast majority of the housing stock in Gilbertville is multi-family, and it is those buildings that distinguish the village from its surrounding landscape. But a small number of dwellings here are of the single-family type, built before the Gilbert acquisition of the area or constructed in small numbers for special, high-status employees, seldom Gilbert family members, but closely allied with them. During the 1860 to 1870 decade when Gilbert assembled the village parcels, a number of houses are listed among the company assessments. Although all cannot be certainly identified, some reliable designations of key properties can be made. The Cobb family houses stood at the corner of Hardwick Road and Main Street, and were later replaced by the Winsor Hotel and stores across the street. Further along Main Street stood the farm owned by J. Hervey. On South Main Street, the Barlow House (#107) illustrates a modest home of the second quarter of the 19th century, one and a half stories with small windows under the eaves and an asymmetrical facade arrangement. An even simpler house, lacking the lights for the upper story, is #74 on Brook Street. Later in date and believed to have been built by the Company are two one and a half story upright and wing houses, located on West (#62) and North (#57) Streets, each employing the three bay side entry form in the main block, with a lateral ell extending to the side. The North Street example retains its Greek Revival trim, using pilasters and wide

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cornice board similar but not identical to that used on the early company housing. Of particular interest is the **Sawyers House (#266)**, located at the end of Old Mill Road, adjacent to the lowest of the falls of the river. This house was constructed during the second wave of building in the 1860s for the operator of the mill of that group of buildings. The two and a half story, five-bay, double pile house has a center stair hall in the front pile between the front rooms, and two unequally sized rooms in the rear. There are also four rooms on the second floor and two on the third. It is probably the largest single family dwelling built by the Company during the first building campaign.

But it was the houses constructed for Gilbert's daughter and her husband Charles Dexter, and the houses of other high ranking workers and family friends, that were the most unusual in the village. On the top of the hill on Summit Road, the Dexters built a large Italianate gable block house of two and a half stories, with a wide three bay facade and one story porch; it burned in the mid-20th century. Along **New Braintree Road** below this house, three houses were built for Mrs. Adams, the Ward family and the Richardson family. The **Mrs. Adams House (#100 on Summit Avenue)** is formally similar to the Dexter House, but with additional Stick style elements including projecting bays on the lateral walls, a partial front porch with ornamental brackets and vergeboards at the apex of the gable ends. The carriage house associated with this property has been converted to a residence and thus does not retain integrity. The **Richardson House (#103)** adds these ornamental elements to a more complex house form, an T-plan cross gable, with a three-bay side-entry facade. The **Ward House (#101)** is a hip-roofed version of the type, with projecting frontispiece, and ornamental supports at the first floor facade porch. Further south on the rise behind the church and chapel is the similarly ambitious Stick style **Parsonage (#112 on Highland Avenue)**. This residence is also cruciform, with a high primary gable block crossed by gabled eaves and projecting bays. Its ornament includes the use of porches, canted corners, overhanging second story, coved cornice, stickwork at the corners and marking the floors and quite intricately filling the tympanum in the gable end. It formerly had a related carriage house in the rear.

Elaborate houses like these were also built on **Church Street**, especially in the area next to and opposite the St. Aloysius Church complex. There and on Hardwick Road outside the district lived many of the business and professional men of the community. The earliest is **#155**, a two and a half story gable block, with a three-bay, center-entry facade, entry porch and oculus-lit facade gable, all echoing Italianate design elements. The **Gendreau House (#154)**, next door, is a pyramidal block two and a half story house with hip-roofed dormers, a full front porch with a two-story central portion and three-sided projecting bays, combining Queen Anne and Colonial Revival elements in an elaborate version of the four-square house type. Across the street, the **W.H. Phelps House (#150)** a cross-gable, L-plan house, includes

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such Queen Anne elements as a corner tower with high hip roof and bands of ornamental shingles marking the floors; the front porches have been enclosed. Next door the **St. Aloysius Rectory (#150a)** is a two and a half story gablefront house with overhanging third floor gables, entry porch and projecting gabled bays, again combining Queen Anne with Colonial Revival elements including three part and two part windows with blind half-round fans, and classically derived porch treatments. Its carriage house, a gable block with central facade gable and cupola, survives in the rear.

Public Buildings

With the exception of the mills, the largest and most elaborate buildings in the village are those meeting places constructed by the company and the town. Gilbert Manufacturing early recognized the need for public buildings to serve the growing community and the town soon followed their lead. Paternalistic attitudes among manufacturers led to the construction of buildings to enclose sanctioned activities that the Company hoped would "uplift" the workers. **Gilbertville Hall (#50 on Main Street)** was built by the company in 1863, a three story mansard roofed structure with a store below and a hall above. The storefront was of the three bay, center entry type, with an adjacent entry on the east side providing access to the upper floors. Its paneled pilasters and cornice are of the same type used on the earliest company housing, and its mansard story was lit with paired windows in shallow, hip-roofed dormers. Now the VFW hall, the building has had its third story removed, and has been substantially altered. The building performed a number of functions, many of which would be later removed to separate buildings as the village became more elaborate. Recreational structures were built in the village as well. The Gilbertville Union Hall Association was formed in 1883 and constructed a skating rink, formerly located at the site of the modern post office and removed by 1911. The wide gable block had its entry located in the southeast corner tower, and the whole building was treated in a restrained Stick style. An octagonal bandstand, with turned posts and stickwork rail and screen, formerly stood nearby where the Company-sponsored Coronet band would perform. Outside the district beyond Prospect Street a baseball field was the site of popular weekend semi-professional games.

The need for schooling in the new community was readily obvious and meant the Company and the town would have to work together. The town of Hardwick still employed the district school system but it is not known whether the company or the town was the impetus for the construction of schools in the village. **Schoolhouse No. 2 (#13)** was built at the corner of the present **High and Highland Streets** by 1870. Now a residence, its original appearance from village views suggests a two and a half story, four bay deep, four bay long building with entry into the far right end. It had been demolished by 1898 and replaced across High Street with a two and a half story T-plan structure, suggesting that multiple classrooms were located within and that grading had

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been adopted. By 1911 that school too had been removed. Also by 1898 a long, low building with a projecting lobby entry had been constructed on the south side of Main Street below the intersection with Hardwick/Gilbertville Roads. That building had been removed by 1917. The surviving schoolhouses were added in 1903 and 1910, located near one another on the east side of **South Main Street**. The **George H. Gilbert Elementary School (#81)** was built first in frame, a two and a half story hip block with Classical Revival detailing at its paired entries. The new **Hardwick High School (#113)**, relocated here from Hardwick Center, is a brick parapeted structure with similar detailing and recessed entry. Both of these schools were designed by E.C. and G.C. Gardner of Springfield.

The **St. Aloysius Roman Catholic Church Complex on Church Street (#151)** is an important cluster of institutional buildings in the village, attesting to the strength of the immigrant Catholic population here. The complex is located within the privately-owned portion of the village, where services not provided by the Gilbert Manufacturing Company were located; Gilbert provided only Congregational religious services. After meeting informally in residences and meetinghalls since 1867 the Rev. Gagnier raised funds to build the church in 1872. Constructed from his own Gothic and stickwork design, it related closely to Mount Carmel in Ware of the same period and author but is no longer extant. The centerpiece church is a brick gablefront nave-plan form with an unfenestrated clerestory and a small central vestibule. All the openings are round headed, the vergeboards are constructed as a cutwork screen with diamonds and quatrefoils, and ornamental shallow buttresses are sited between the openings on all sides. The church interior was renovated during the 1880s, the 1920s and after the second Vatican Council during the late 1960s. The school, a large two-story frame hip block, with horizontal board bands marking the tops and bottoms of the windows, dates to 1889 and was expanded at a later date. The main floor has four classrooms arranged off a T-shaped hall and an auditorium occupies the second floor, with another classroom in the addition beyond. The convent was constructed after 1917, but was recently removed to a lot off the Lower Road; it is a large two and a half story Classical Revival structure.

The **Trinitarian Congregational Church (#111)** is the most architecturally ambitious group in the village, an exceptional late 19th century high-style building constructed with funds provided by the Gilbert family. The centerpiece church, an outstanding Monson granite Gothic design attributed to Elbridge Boydon was constructed between 1872 and 1874. Its basic shape is cruciform oriented to face west, a gableblock nave with a center entry, a side tower with stone spire on the north, a turret and secondary entry on the south and in the rear a semicircular apse and transepts. All its openings are in Gothic shapes, lancet or tudor, and marked by pale contrasting stone. The contrast of dark and light stone corresponds to the choice of structural polychromy that is the primary decorative mode in the High Victorian Gothic

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style. Ten years after the dedication of the church, a chapel and parsonage were added. The former is attached to the north rear of the church by small cloister, a small granite gable-on-hip block with somewhat later Tudor design elements including banks of three-part casement windows. The final important Gilbert family gift provided for the construction of the **Gilbertville Public Library (#1100 on South Main Street)** in 1912. Col. Edward H. Gilbert's funding led to the construction of a single-story, hip-roofed stone structure that employs Classical Revival elements, including an entablature entry and half-round window heads.

Isolated as the area was and in keeping with the well-known company store policy, Gilbert choose to provide stores for his workers as well. The village's first public building, Gilbert Hall, had a store on its first floor. In 1867 a store run by the Hitchcocks, with a boardinghouse above, was built on South Main Street; it has been replaced. It was a two and a half story gablefront block with the common Italianate cornice and brackets. Its storefronts, located on either side of the central entrance to the upper story, each had a center entry and flanking large pane 2/2 sash. On the lot now occupied by the post office was formerly a small stove store. The 1880s building campaign produced the exuberant Stick style design for the store and post office that stood on the site of the present library, a long gable block with facade gables and elaborate stickwork dividing the stories and stores. The building burned and was removed by 1911. The **Court/Post Office Building** that replaced it was located near the river south of Mills One, Two and Three (**#77 on South Main Street**) and also combined several functions including post office, courtroom and store. Constructed in the new Classical Revival style the seven-bay, two and a half story hip-roofed building has an entablature-treated primary entry and two pediment-treated secondary entries.

The growing population of the village and the growing importance of the transportation routes brought a variety of hotels and stores to the area along Church Street. The **Windsor Hotel (#140)**, located at the corner of **Hardwick Road and Church Street**, was constructed in 1882. Its design takes advantage of its corner location, employing a projecting pavillion at the intersection of the building's two wings. The hotel rises to three stories with a low hip roof. A single story porch wraps around both facades and rises to two levels on the west side. An entry is located on each elevation, in the third of four bays on the west and third of five on the south elevation. The eclectic trim at the cornice and the porch supports and rails corresponds to the Stick and Victorian eclectic styles. A livery stable was formerly located to the east of the hotel, replaced by Dorman's Garage built with cinderblock. The companion Union Hotel was formerly located at the corner of Mechanic Street and Hardwick Road. Alcohol and the associated gaming and relaxation were available only here outside of the Gilbert Company property.

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These hotels formed the gate between the company-owned portion of the village and the more commercial privately-owned parts. Five stores are located in the area, all near the primary intersection, all constructed with a parapet across the gable end to form a "boom town" or false front style. At #141 on Church Street is the area's largest store building where the former Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company Store shared the first floor with a soda fountain. This two-part commercial block is of frame construction with a stucco cover on the facade. Each store in this building has a recessed central entry with large plate glass windows making up the entire walls on either side. The false front of this example is a three-stepped pediment with a central two-part window in the gable. Along the west wall is a turned-support porch over the entry bay to the stair. A smaller but related version, with a single store front and a flat parapet is located at #143 Church Street. Between these at #142 Church Street is a small one-part commercial block with a flat parapet and a side entry with a single pane picture window. The two-part commercial block at #144 Church Street is outstanding because of the Ancient Order of Hibernians Hall located in the second floor. The windows were closed during the alterations of the first floor, but the recessed entry remains. Entry and stair are located on the east end and the parapet is also stepped. The Gendreau's Store was formerly located next door and included the meetinghall of the Artisans, a French Canadian group. Finally, a smaller two story one-part store has been converted to residential use, (#146, the E. Long House) but retains a parapet with central gable and west wall porches.

Construction and Alterations after the period of significance

Like many New England towns Hardwick entered a hiatus of new construction during the depression and war years of the 1930s and 1940s, and like many New England textile-based communities, Gilbertville suffered from southern competition and entered its slow-down even earlier, during the 1920s. Central Massachusetts suffered under an additional threat, as the watersheds of the Swift and Ware River were chosen as locations for new reservoirs serving the expanding populations of Worcester and Boston. Takings of water from the Ware River led to a suit by the company against the Metropolitan District Commission, only one of many in these river valleys, charging an interruption of flow as well as a decline in water purity. In Gilbertville a final factor of change came with the death of the last Gilbert family head for the company and the subsequent leadership's unwillingness, or inability, to reorganize a profitable operation. In 1932 the family heirs and remaining stockholders sold the company to a group of Boston investors. The new Gilbert Company greatly limited their employees and hours of operation during the 1930s and declared bankruptcy after the hurricane of 1938 did serious damage to the dams and mills. The remaining Mills Number One and Number Four were returned to partial use during this time - defense storage in the latter and storage and sewing under Carter and Whitin at the former. Although the liquidation of the village made residential properties available at low costs, few took advantage

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of these opportunities until after World War II. Thus much of the village stood empty for two decades. In spite of this, few buildings were demolished, or fell into such disrepair that demolition was subsequently required. The village of Gilbertville remained a remarkably intact mill village constructed primarily between 1860 and 1930.

Repair, alterations and new construction came with post-war prosperity. Under ten buildings dating to the period of significance were subsequently demolished, the Union Hotel at the corner of Hardwick Road and Mechanic Street, the Tenement Block Six on Main Street, a Tenement Block Three on North Street, a Second Tenement Row on Prospect Street, a Bungalow Duplex on Prospect Street and the Gendreau Store on Church Street. The most common loss is of the sheds and privies that stood behind all of the company housing, though one may remain on South Main Street behind Bungalow Duplex #130. Only a dozen primary buildings have been added to the area defined as the historic district, many of these on the sites of the above demolished buildings, while the remainder of the noncontributing buildings consist of new garages. The most common alteration to the buildings has been the application of synthetic siding to the majority. In the process of this alteration occasional alterations were made to the ornamental treatment of the buildings (removing trim, eliminating variations in wall cover) or to the openings (removing or altering the shape of windows and doors). In a very few instances changes in the massing of the building have been made through the addition or removal of eels, porches and/or bays. Where clusters of these buildings are located, the boundaries of the district have been drawn to exclude them. Individual examples have been designated as noncontributing in five instances within the district.

Archaeology

The archaeological potential of this district is of moderate importance. Most of the buildings remain, and on small original parcels, but damage to many of the power-related sites, and the late date for the development of the area suggest that depositions were modest and that few survive. Still, the comparative rarity of archaeological data on small-scale mill villages such as this one would greatly increase the value of any sites or features recovered. Of particular interest might be evidence of early uses of the three falls for milling, furnace and manufacturing activities, of non-residential use of company or speculative housing, and of contrasting materials and deposition patterns at company-owned, speculator-owned and privately-owned housing. No village sites are known from the prehistoric or contact periods, but information from adjacent towns confirms transient travel and resource gathering potential for the area.

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Archaeological Description

While no prehistoric sites are currently recorded in the district, it is possible that sites are present. One site is recorded in the general area (within one mile). The physical characteristics of the district, well-drained riverine terraces bordering Danforth Brook, two unnamed streams and the Ware River, which flows through the entire district, indicate favorable locational criteria for native settlement and subsistence activities. Three fall lines are also present along the Ware River within the district which may have been attractive fishing locations for Native Americans. Given the above information, the size of the district (75 acres), and known site concentrations elsewhere on the Ware River floodplain, it is probable that sites are present. Despite this potential, the probability of recovering significant prehistoric survivals is low to moderate because of extensive 19th century historic period development which also focused on riverine areas.

There is a high potential for significant historic archaeological remains within the district. Further documentary research accompanied by archaeological survey and testing may locate several 18th century structures which no longer survive in the district. These structures, all of which were standing in 1772 and whose locations are unknown, included a bridge, corn mill, saw mill, forge, coal house and at least one dwelling house. Structural survivals may exist for each of these structures as well as occupational-related features including trash areas, privies and wells. Waterpower-related survivals may also exist for the mills. Mill-related remains from ca. 1860 to the early 20th century comprise the most important potential archaeological resources in the district. Of the four Gilbert Manufacturing Company mills, Mill Numbers One and Four survive largely intact with several major late 19th century additions. Mill Numbers Two and Three no longer survive, the former dismantled and removed in 1938, the latter in 1916. Structural survivals may exist for these mills as well as trash or refuse areas associated with specific mill activities. Waterpower-related features associated with these mills may also survive. Each mill was originally powered by the Ware River with a dam located upstream from the mills. The dam was destroyed by the hurricane of 1938. Structural survivals of the mills may exist as well as the remains of headraces, tailraces and features that actually harnessed water power (wheel remains, etc). Structural remains of late 19th century workers housing may also survive including the Brown Block on Main Street at the base of Mechanic Street. The remains of a late 19th century meetinghall/store combination which burned in the 1910s may exist next to the Congregational Church on Main Street. Other potential late 19th century structural remains within the district include a livery stable east of the Windsor Hotel at the corner of Hardwick Road and Church Street and Gandreau's store formerly located next to 144 Church Street. In all, much of the mill village remains remarkably intact as built. One additional historic survival which may exist is dump areas possibly associated with the three

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neighborhoods which make up the village. These remains may be rather large reflecting the size of the collecting area.

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8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Community Planning and Development
Economics
Engineering
Ethnic Heritage: European
Industry
Social History
Transportation

Period of Significance

1860-1938

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Boydon, Elbridge; F.P. Sheldon and Son;
E.C. and G.C. Gardner

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Gilbertville is a small, single enterprise, woolen manufacturing village in the town of Hardwick, Massachusetts. The settlement lies along the route of the Ware River on land purchased by industrialist George Gilbert in the early 1860s. In this largely undeveloped area he built not only the mills he needed to expand his Ware woolen manufacturing business, but a nearly complete community with housing, meeting places and stores for the workers he would require. The successful George H. Gilbert Manufacturing Company manufactured flannels and worsteds here and remained prosperous until the early 1920s. The company-owned portion of the village demonstrates well the efforts of one family-based manufacturing company to adapt it to their changing needs. During each of three distinct building campaigns in the village the company made selections of building types and choices for their location that gradually, but most definitely, altered the village landscape. The initially homogeneous appearance of the village gave way to a clustering of buildings by size and function in a segregated and hierarchical configuration historically associated with company towns. The village retains nearly all of the buildings ever constructed during the Gilbert Manufacturing ownership between 1860 and 1938 and few new structures have been constructed since that time. By the end of Gilbert family ownership the village included nearly 100 buildings on company-owned land and at its peak the company employed 1500 workers. East of the company-owned area there grew up an auxiliary community, offering additional services and alternative housing, and including the commercial node of the village. Gilbertville is an exceptional survival of the isolated mill village within a rural, agricultural landscape. The village retains integrity of location, setting, feeling, association, design and workmanship, and meets National Register Criteria A and C and Exception A at the local level.

The George H. Gilbert Manufacturing Company

The town of Hardwick was a largely agricultural community when George H. Gilbert chose the falls along the Ware River to expand his woolen manufactory. This portion of Worcester County had been purchased from

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displaced Native Americans by investors from Roxbury in 1686, a large parcel measuring 8 by 12 miles. Settlement was postponed until the 1720s, as a smaller plantation named Lambstown, and the town was incorporated in 1739 and renamed Hardwick. The town pursued an economy of mixed grain and husbandry, and used the Ware River, the Muddy Brook and the East Branch of the Swift River as water power sources to process the fruits of their agricultural labors. By 1772 these falls included a bridge, corn mill, saw mill, forge, coal house and at least one dwelling house. As early as 1763 Isaac Thomas and Capt. Daniel Warner planned a saw mill and forge for the area, a privilege that subsequently changed hands several times. A furnace was added by 1815 under the management of Col. Thomas Wheeler (1767-1851) and Lemuel Harrington (1764-1853), giving the area the designation New Furnace after the Old Furnace established on Muddy Brook. A paper mill was built in 1832 by Joseph S. and Moses Smith, who leased the factory in halves to a series of paper manufacturing concerns; it burned in the 1840s. In addition to these water privilege owners, the area land owners included Samuel Beals (1746-1827), several generations of the Barlow family, including Wyatt (1742-1827), John (1778-1850), and Wyatt (1819-1856) and William Bonney (1787-1852). Miles Cobb (1798-1882) was a latecomer to the village, but his grandchild Elmer Marsh worked for the Gilbert Company and his sister Lucretia married Alfred Richardson. Gilbertville includes the Hardwick Gore, a formerly unincorporated area which extended south along the river between Ware and New Braintree, annexed by the town in 1833.

The founder of the village and manufactory was George H. Gilbert, born in Brooklyn, Connecticut in 1806. He grew up in Pomfret, Connecticut, worked as a carpenter and machinist, and, with the firm Barnes, Gilbert and Furber, built woolen manufacturing machinery in North Andover between 1832 and 1847. In 1841 he moved to Ware and in partnership with Charles A. Stevens purchased the former Hampshire Manufacturing Company plant. They manufactured first broadcloths, and later flannels, and constructed an additional stone mill in 1846. When the partnership was dissolved in 1851, Gilbert took the stone mill and specialized in white flannels; he later added opera flannels to this line. The firm's success soon meant demand surpassed supply, and as no Ware privilege was available, Gilbert looked to neighboring Hardwick and eventually purchased over 300 acres along the Ware River. Gilbert began construction immediately on his property, four brick textile mills were built between 1860 and 1867, numerous tenements provided housing for his mill workers as well as stores and meeting places in the isolated location. Although the company retained their Ware property, Gilbertville was the location of the largest of the manufactories. Gilbert served in both the Massachusetts House of Representatives and the Senate. George Gilbert served as president until his death in 1869.

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The firm was run essentially by family members, during Gilbert's life and well into the 20th century. In 1851 Gilbert's nephew, Lewis N. Gilbert (1836-1919), joined him in Ware, and in 1857 was made a full partner in George H. Gilbert & Co. Ten years later the firm incorporated with an authorized capital of \$250,000 and became George H. Gilbert Manufacturing Company. At the death of George, Lewis became the company's president, and served in that position for the rest of his life. George's sons were stockholders and officeholders, Charles D., J.H. Grenville and Col. Edward H., but did not achieve the involvement of their uncle Lewis. Lewis Gilbert presided over the expansion and reorganization of the village and exceeded his uncle in public services. He served on the Massachusetts board for the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia and was a dedicated Republican, serving for many years as moderator of the Town Meeting and as State Senator. He was a director of the Ware Savings Bank, the Ware National Bank and the Worcester Mutual Fire Insurance Company and served on the Board of Trustees of the State Primary School in Monson. Within his chosen Trinitarian Congregational denomination he was active, not only in the church his family gave to the village, but in service to their national and international councils, and as an officer of both the Massachusetts Home Missionary Society and Bible Society. All of these male family members remained in residence in Ware. A small number of other investors held stock and key supervisory positions. William Ward made a critical loan during the early years of the company, and his sons Albert B. and Frederick, and his grandson Charles Albert, acted as superintendants and lived in the village. Other investor/officers included purchasing agent Charles Wetherby and agent and general manager John Neff.

Gilbert's first purchases in the area were made in 1860, the acreage on the north side of the Ware River including the upper falls, owned by Moses Smith and the Cobb family. In 1862 he expanded his holdings through the purchase of the Barlow property, and in 1865 with the Bonney property, both to the south on the lower falls. Gilbert also accumulated a large number of woodlots in town, to fuel his mills and build his village. Construction on Mill Number One began in 1860 and it was producing cloth by 1862, manufacturing balmoral skirts. The company began here with six "sets" of wool machinery, indicating the number of carding machines and multiples of spinning machines, looms, etc., needed to serve them. Oral history contends that Civil War contracts for broadcloths were instrumental in assuring the success of the expanding company, and military contracts would continue to play an important role in company history. Mill Number Two was constructed adjacent to Mill Number One in 1863, Mill Number Three across the street in 1864 and by the next year eleven sets of machinery were in use. The company produced up to 1000 skirts per day and still could not meet the demand for them. When their popularity waned the company shifted their production to flannels. Mill Number Four was constructed to the south in 1867 and put into operation the next year with six sets of machinery. In about 1880 the company began to add steam power to their water capacity. Their first two steam boilers were purchased in that

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year from Kendall and Roberts for the lower mill, and in each subsequent year they added more, another from them in 1881, two from William Allen and Son in 1882, four from R.F. Hawkins and one from Corliss Engine in 1883 for Mill Number One, and one each of the next two years from R.F. Hawkins. A major expansion of the plant and its production dates to 1883. An addition was made to Mill Number One when the number of sets was increased to twenty. Mill Number Four also had twenty sets of machinery and its function had already been specialized to the preparation of raw materials. The entire company, including the small plant in Ware, included a total of forty-seven sets of machinery, 30,240 spindles, using 4,500,000 pounds of wool annually, producing 20,000 yards of fabric daily, employing 1250, and with a weekly payroll of \$8,500. The company's capitalization was increased to \$600,000 in 1883 and to \$1,000,000 three years later. The company made occasional additions of new machinery and improvements to the plant, including the construction of a rail spur to Mill Number Four, during the 1890s. Twenty years later the company had added worsteds to its production of woollens, and at Ware and Gilbertville the company had 28 sets of woolen machinery, 12 worsted combs and 450 broad looms. They employed 1400 and the annual value of cloth produced was \$2,800,000. A new and separate power plant was constructed in 1912. At Mill Number Four a major rebuilding took place in 1914 when the powerhouse on the north side of this plant was removed and a new reinforced concrete dye house was constructed in its place. The architects of this addition were F.P. Sheldon & Son, well known Fall River builders of textile mills. The company remained profitable particularly during World War One. At the end of the company's prosperous period the total of primary machines had reached 28 woolen and 13 worsted cards and 476 looms.

The overall form the mills take, large buildings of brick, was the one popularized by the Boston Associates in Massachusetts and New England and combining the requirements imposed by the power train and the machinery to be placed in them. Longer and taller than any other buildings of the period, the form included added front stair towers, and rear toilet towers, rising even higher and equipped with clocks and high pointed roofs. During each construction phase the company made conservative technological choices. In the early years the slow-burn construction of brick walls and frame floors and supports was the mainstream choice within the industry. The additions reflect subsequent improvements to this construction method, chiefly in the substitution of lower pitched roofs and larger window areas. So too the shift to steam power and the addition of electricity came when many others were making it. The early 20th century addition in reinforced concrete came within ten years of the first application of that technology to factory buildings. The size and appearance the Gilbert Company mills were given assured that their powerful physical presence equalled their economic power in the community.

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Hardwick, MassachusettsBuilding a Textile Community: Housing and Landscape

Mill villages are notorious for the clarity with which their physical form betrays the social hierarchies within them. Gilbertville is no exception. Though dominated by the large mills economically and metaphorically, the village takes its predominant character from the surviving housing and public buildings constructed for mill operatives primarily by the company; the forms the company chose and the positioning of those forms within the village. Besides the mills, the company-owned buildings in the village number about one hundred, and dwellings are by far the most numerous building type among them. These houses are concentrated along streets laid out adjacent to these mills, in the portion of the village to the west of Mechanic Street and parallel to the river along Main Street, and clustered within the village by house type. The company built more than one example of eleven different types of multiple-unit, as well as a handful of unique tenement houses, totalling probably eighty structures, including nearly 200 tenements. Although the initial building of housing in the village included only a small number of types, over time the company altered the size of the individual living units, their configuration into multiple-unit buildings and their choice for their location. The company also constructed a number of public buildings to serve the village, including halls, a church, stores, while the town added schools and the railroad companies added depots, stations and warehouses. Initially these public buildings were scattered across the village within the clusters of housing and mills. But as time went by the company began to relocate them, as rebuilding was necessary, into a central area which became the institutional focus and elite neighborhood of the village. In each of these choices the company demonstrated that they perceived differential needs for different groups within the village, and thus created different environments for those groups. Along Main Street they located the exceptional Trinitarian Congregational Church Complex, the Gilbertville Public Library and the village schools, a meetinghall and former post-office, surrounded by much of the single-family housing as well as the large duplexes. In the areas nearer to the river, by contrast, the company more and more often chose to site buildings close to one another and to build housetypes with many small units. Coinciding with these decisions by the company were the aggregate decisions of landowners and builders nearby to create a complementary service community along Church Street. By the time the village was entering the 20th century it was segregated into a series of physically and socially distinct neighborhoods.

About half of the surviving residential architecture dates to the first decade of the village. These residences are distinguished by their related Italianate ornament, employing wide cornice boards with distinctive paired brackets and triangle-headed windows in the gable ends. Within this ornamental repertoire the company constructed five different housetypes, including two types of tenement block, two types of duplex and one tenement row. Although exact sources for copies of these houses and this type of

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ornament are not known, similar buildings were used by other textile manufacturers, and Gilbert or his builders were probably aware of them. He did however make good use of that most common variation of the Greek Revival, the paneled pilaster, wide molded cornice and entablature door surround, found among fashion conscious builders of private homes as well as speculative housing. Earlier mill village use of this ornament on moderate sized two-family residents can be found in Gilbert's own town of Ware, constructed by the Otis Company, as well as in Northbridge at Whitinsville.

The first housing was constructed to the north of the Ware River adjacent to the turn in the river on the streets now known as West, North and Main Streets. These units were set into informal clusters, in part set along existing roadways, in part off the roads in small courts. Unlike mill-owners with more concern for their workers amenities, these tenements were arrayed to face one another and the mills rather than more picturesque views toward the surrounding hills or the river. Here the company chose as its first housing a high tenement block in two variations. One rises to three stories and has four dwelling units within, Tenement Block Three (#53, #54, #56, #60). A closely related second variation adds a small garret to make four living floors also divided into four units, Tenement Block Four (#61, #63, #76). In general form and appearance they resemble large boardinghouses, in their height, depth and six bay facade. The use of this form by the Boston Associates made their exterior form well known and Gilbert may have adopted only that portion of their model. The ideal of a wholesome workforce of rural New England young women living in well-regulated boarding houses had long been abandoned by the time Gilbert set to building. There is no current evidence that these were designed for large groups of single workers, but rather for families that might occasionally add boarders. Their unusual plans, with both the first and the second floors sharing the upper story, suggests that Gilbert was ignoring middle-class conventions of autonomy and privacy in his building schemes.

Unfortunately, little is known about the enormous tenement block that formerly stood at the corner of Main Street and the bottom of Mechanic Street. Believed to include six units, the building was higher and deeper than the tenement blocks nearby. In addition to these large blocks, a small number of single family houses were constructed in this same area, including single examples on West (#62), North (#57) and Brook (#74) Streets, and a small two-family example on Brook Street (#73). Information on the early history of these buildings is sketchy, but high status use, perhaps by supervisors, cannot be overlooked. However, the dominance of these tenement blocks, quite similar in appearance, and their close proximity to single family housing, suggests that Gilbert was not yet distinguishing skill and status gradations of his workforce in variations in their housing or its location. Gilbert Manufacturing soon added public buildings to serve the growing community. The first of these, Gilbertville Hall, was built on Main Street (#50) by the

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company in 1863, a three story structure with a store below and a hall above. This first public space allowed for a store in the village, as well as space for gatherings, most notably the meeting of religious groups. Here the Trinitarian Congregational Church first meet and formed a religious society, the community's first.

A second wave of building focused on the area of the village extending in a linear north-south configuration parallel to the river. Gilbert purchased the land to the south of the river in 1864, including farmland and a saw mill privilege, bringing his total assessment to nearly 300 acres. The purchase of the additional privilege allowed the construction of not just Mill Number Four, but also the operation of a sawmill to serve the community, and of a sawyer's house nearby. That single-family dwelling was constructed with matching ornament to the others in the village. Here Gilbert Manufacturing constructed more varieties of housing for its workforce. The company continued to build the large Tenement Block Four type, abandoning the Tenement Block Three type for this larger, more spacious version again arranged in a court on Bridge Street (#s 89-93) and on the Island. But the largest number of units were constructed in a new form, the duplex, with not only more space per unit but with more privacy between the physically separated units. These two duplex types represented Gilbert's first use of the duplex, arranging units with a vertical rather than a horizontal division. The most common of these is designated First Duplex A, consisting of two living units side-by-side and small rear ells behind. Two examples were constructed of a close variation, differing in their higher rear ells and side-wall elevation, First Duplex B. All of these are located in rows along Main Street (#78, #79, #80, #83, #84, #85, #s 116-120) and Highland Terrace (#s 96-98), widely spaced along the primary roads rather than in clusters. The two-family house was among the most common types chosen by manufacturers in small villages outside of the corporate tradition best known from the Boston Associates and their imitators. This housetype was also preferred by housing reformers for its provision for yards for each unit and its combination of domestic scale and economical construction costs. The Gilbert examples were exceptionally spacious, allowing two public rooms, large kitchen and a service and wood shed on the first floor, and a total of six bedrooms above. This amount of space and the large number of rooms correspond to housing provided to the prosperous members of the town at large. A larger store run by the Hitchcocks with a boarding house above was built in 1870 in this new area on South Main Street.

In addition to offering greater retail options for the village, it also provided independent housing for single men in the village. Schoolhouse #2, believed to be the first in the village area, was built at the corner of the present High and Highland Streets (#131) at the same time.

In the last years of this extended campaign, two important changes occurred to alter the economy and the appearance of Gilbertville. Hope for rail

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connections to the village became increasingly important as time went on, as the company needed reliable transportation to bring wool and other raw materials into the village and to take cloth out of the village for distribution to customers. Attempts to build a Ware River Railroad from Palmer to New Hampshire dated as early as 1851 but had as yet been unsuccessful. Gilbert was one of the area lobbyists for the reorganization and construction of the line sixteen years later. Towns along the line were allowed to subscribe to stock and the Town of Hardwick, seeing the advantage of rail connections to farmer and manufacturer alike, took \$30,000 worth. The line opened to Gilbertville in 1870 and through to Barre two years later, but proved unprofitable, was reorganized, and the town lost its investment. The passenger depot, freight station and an adjacent warehouse all survive on South Main Street (#87, #108, #109), and added important infrastructure support to the village. At about the same time the company built the last buildings of this campaign, their First Tenement Rows, four small units arranged in adjacent rows. They represent a partial departure for the company, which rejected the great height and size of the tenement blocks, but was unwilling to abandon the four tenement, and they became the most common type in the village. These units were smaller than most of the house types the company had already built but their height was more in keeping with the remainder of the village and town buildings. The company was unsympathetic to housing reformer's and other manufacture's preference for the duplex, and choose instead a model that combined some of the desirable features of that type, but still economical in cost and land. These were located at the extreme south of the village near Mill Number Four on the south portion of Main Street known at the time as Richmond Terrace (#121, #121, #125, #127).

By the early years of the 1870s the main form of the village was in place, and the additions made by the company during the next sixty years confirmed the patterns set during these early days. The long L-shaped village was divided into three general neighborhoods, one north of Mills Number One, Two and Three and the river, one east of the river between the two mill complexes and one east of the river and Mill Number Four. One public building or complex served each neighborhood, Gilbert Hall for the north, the store and railroad buildings in the center, the school in the south. More distinctive was the choice of housing types the company made for each area. In the early north area and the center near to the river were the tenement block types. Duplexes were located only in the center along Main Street. When the rows were belatedly added, they were located together in the south, where the only lone tenement block had been sited. At this early date the company had determined that the village would be densest at each end, through the use of many-unit housing types in close clusters. The center of the village by contrast would include fewer units more generously spaced, providing more individuation and privacy for residents there.

The exceptional character of the central portion of the village was further

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accentuated and probably guaranteed with the construction of the first village church. The Trinitarian Congregational Church (#111 on South Main Street) was added at a cost of \$50,000 met by a bequest of George Gilbert and a donation by the company in 1874. The will stipulated a gift of \$20,000, matched by an equal sum, a lot of land and the construction of the foundation, from the company. From Mrs. Gilbert came the organ, from his children the furnishings, as well as a memorial window to their deceased sister. The imposing structure is the first example known in which the Gilberts choose an architect, not surprising in itself, but with their allocation of funding and the choice of material, combined to make the monument to the patriarch exceptional. They choose the prominent Worcester architect Elbridge Boyden (1810-1889). Boyden trained with designer Elias Carter, whose family had lived in Hardwick. He is best known for his 1855 design for Mechanics Hall in Worcester. This exceptional stone Gothic church was sited on the rise of central Main Street, overlooking the remainder of the village. It is the source for the name given to this neighborhood within the village, "Christian Hill".

The additional buildings constructed by the company at the end of the 19th and early in the 20th century served to confirm and solidify the separations in place. The company continued to put small units with small units, increasing the differences among areas within the village. A second phase of expansion was particularly important to this development. Construction during the first five years of the 1880s nearly equalled that of the 1860s. This growth is related to the return of prosperity generally and the large addition to Gilbert's mills, as the company's capitalization reached \$1,000,000. This growth was possible because of a new wave of immigration into New England, first from rural French Canada, later from Lithuania and Poland providing an inexpensive labor pool. This may also explain the nature of the change, as native New Englanders of the period remained prejudiced against Roman Catholics and Eastern Europeans. Again during this campaign the company made choices for house types that reflect knowledge of the views of prominent reformers, but an unwillingness to follow their tenets in toto. The Gilbert Company showed less willingness to treat their workers to such fine benefits while structuring their own version of a controlled and efficient community.

The first new housing added was modest in number, two duplexes built in 1883, both located in the central area of the village. The duplexes were designed to include large living units, with a hall and three other rooms per floor, two full floors of bedrooms above, and ornamented in the Stick style. The use of this style relates the buildings to the well-respected efforts of the Ludlow Associates to the west near Springfield. The Ludlow company housing was two-family in form, as the Associates used suitable housing to attract and keep workers. Their form and style was celebrated by the chief of the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor, Carroll Wright, and were selected for illustration in his Report on the Factory System of the United States which was bound with the federal census of 1880. By 1885 the company had added

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seven Second Tenement Rows of four units, also using a Stick style ornament. The Gilbert builders demonstrated once again their willingness to follow reformer exhortations only when it met their own needs, and met them economically. These were located, again consistent with company policy, in the expanding north area (North Street #58 and #59, Broad Street #s 64-48, and Prospect Street #72), where Tenement Blocks had already been constructed. The company next built thirteen small Bungalow Duplexes, located primarily in the southern (#130, #132, #133, #135, #139, #275) and northern (#51, #52, #75) parts of the village. The form of these duplexes resembles closely the houses constructed in Hopedale in 1896, now located on Union Street. The Draper duplexes were components in the community that repeatedly won medals in workers housing competitions. The Gilbert examples actually improve upon that design through the addition of shed dormers on the facade, allowing more light and ventilation to the second story. Had the company been converted to the reformers' duplexes? Apparently not. The only duplexes the company ever built after this date are large, central Main Street buildings.

During the early years of the 20th century, building by the company slowed but continued to confirm these established patterns. The company's final building campaign focused on tenement rows. Seven examples of the Late Tenement Row were added between 1911 and 1917, two replacing individual buildings and the remainder probably constructed to house the worker families displaced by the demolition of Tenement Rows on the Island to make way for the Power Plant. The construction of these buildings added only a total of six units to the village, for one replaced a school, one replaced an early duplex and the remainder made a one to one replacement for the Island. When locating these buildings, the company did what it had done before: all are located either near the river in the center of the village (#55, #94) or at the south end near other tenement rows (#132, #124, #126, #134, #136). The last residences added by the company, Last Tenement Row between 1917 and 1931, were both (#137 and #138) located on High Street in the south of the village. The only improvement to the design of the tenement row was the expansion of the plan in the Late Tenement Row, and the separation of the entries in each of these last types, to provide more privacy.

Along Main Street the institutional focus provided by the ambitious church was expanded and elaborated as well. The Congregational Church added a chapel and parsonage in 1884. Additional amenities were provided in 1882 with the construction of a bandstand and, after the formation of the Gilbertville Union Hall Association in 1883, the construction of their hall and skating rink, both located within the operative neighborhoods in the northern part of the village. The final completion of the Central Massachusetts Railroad in 1887 brought a second transportation cluster, these located on the north side of the river (#49 on Main Street) past Mills Number One, Two and Three. This long-awaited east-west link improved the communication and transportation abilities of the company and the community greatly, and it was supported by a

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town investment of \$20,000. The route was initially planned to cross the western portion of the town moving to the northwest from through Southworth's Mills, and the construction completed before this route was abandoned can still be seen. In the center next to the church the company added another meetinghall/store combination, a long and elaborately detailed Stick style building. This building burned in the 1910s. Its replacement was located further north but within the same general area. The newly rebuilt building that combined several functions including post office, courtroom and store was located near the river across from Mills Number One, Two and Three, constructed in the new Classical Revival style (#77 on South Main Street).

New schoolhouses were added in 1903 and 1910, located in this emerging area rather than in their former locations closer to the housing clusters. The elementary school was built first in frame followed by the new town High School, relocated here from Hardwick Center. Both of these schools were designed by E. C. and G. C. Gardner, of Springfield. The senior member of this firm, Eugene C. Gardner (1836-1915) was born in Ashfield and began his practice in Northampton. He moved to Springfield after the Civil War and made a name for himself publishing books of house design and decorating advice, often in letter form. Titles of these works include Homes and How to Make Them (1874), Illustrated Homes... (1875), Home Interiors (1878) and The House That Jill Built, after Jack's Had Proved a Failure (1882). The houses illustrated in these volumes are Stick style in type, and include wall and opening treatments similar to houses found in Gilbertville, but with open plans far larger than any seen here in any numbers. In 1889 he expanded his firm with the addition of George Clarence Gardner (1865-1935), his son, and George Pyne. The firm changed its name to E.C. & G. C. Gardner in about 1900. These Gilbertville works date to well after Eugene Gardner's productive period and rather represent the Beaux Arts ideals of the subsequent generation. Finally another important Gilbert family gift provided for the construction of the Gilbertville Public Library in 1912. The architect of this building is not currently known. The construction of these important and symbolic buildings can be seen to reflect and also to bring about the new elite character of this portion of the village.

Some workers lived in the adjacent neighborhood in housing not subject to the strict rules and regulations of the Gilbert Manufacturing Company. There, too, was located the Roman Catholic Church, St. Aloysius, the village hotels and restaurants, on "Upstreet" or perjoratively "Rum Hill". The privately-owned portion of the village of Gilbertville is an eclectic mix of residential, commercial and institutional buildings, dating primarily to the last years of the 19th century. The primary streets in the district are Church Street, running east-west and Hardwick Road running north-south, and their intersection is the focal point of this portion of the village. This portion of the village of Gilbertville is significant as a service community that developed adjacent and complementary to the company-town constructed by

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Gilbert Manufacturing. Here are clustered the businesses, institutions and residences that offered alternatives to the vision articulated by Gilbert. Businesses not accommodated there, hotels and additional stores, located here as the village developed as a local commercial and transportation center. Along Church Street is the commercial "strip" of the village, the location formerly of the Union Hotel and presently the Windsor Hotel, as well as a number of store buildings of one and two stories. Social organizations like the Hibernians, Artesians and Orangemen had halls and meetingplaces here. The village Roman Catholic Church, as well as a school and convent, were constructed here as well. The St. Aloysius Church complex is significant for its association with the growing immigrant Roman Catholic population of the mill village of Gilbertville, since their religious services were not provided by the Gilbert Manufacturing Company. Among the residences, ambitious speculators could build tenements here, and their tenants could avoid the rules and paternalism of the Gilberts, and workers who desired, and could afford a home of their own, could build here. At the eastern end are located the area's most ambitious single-family houses. Outside of the district, on Mechanic Street and on Hardwick Road are located a number of single and two-family residences catering to the working and middle-class. The proximity of this community to the Gilbert-built village makes an interesting contrast for further study of the village.

Village Residents: The Structure of Village Life

The segregation established by the arrangement of buildings in the landscape was paralleled by separation of employees of the company by occupation and by ethnic group. The distinction within mill village architecture and landscape between buildings and spaces occupied by a mill's owner or agent and those of their employees has been the mainstay in analysis of these buildings. Distinctions of material life based on finer gradations of employment, ethnicity or chronology within the industrial period have yet to be made. In Gilbertville the hierarchical arrangement of space took decades to achieve. During that time, distinctions within the employee population became more differentiated and segregated at the same time that the environment was changing in similar ways. Within this physical setting, company employees resided in a social hierarchy determined by occupation, while occupations were determined by ethnicity and skills. While many of these distinctions were of long duration by the time the village was under construction, clear evidence of them within the life and landscape here was some time in developing.

The differential status of tasks within the textile industry is familiar with machine operators most numerous and their supervisors situated above them in a narrowing pyramid. Each mill had a superintendant, each room within it a boss, each boss a second hand. Four general work areas can be identified: the highest status those white collar jobs in the office; the operatives and bosses in each room engaged in the actual manufacturing; the engineers in

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charge of the power train, and the maintenance "yard" and carpentry crews maintaining the mills and housing. The operatives were the largest group, with hierarchies within their tasks as well. Changing technology of textile machinery in general, and woolen manufacturing specifically, were accompanied by changes in the skills required to do the work, as machinery became more automated. Still some jobs retained high status throughout the period, including wool sorting, where raw materials were graded for various fabric requirements; repair jobs like loom and jack fixers, where skilled weavers and spinners could improve their earnings; and fabric designers and drawers-in, who set the patterns for the textiles. Many jobs in the mill could benefit from the assistance of less skilled workers, allowing adults to hire and train children to the work, as doffers and bobbin loaders. Although nearly all the residents of the village relied heavily on the company for their livelihood not all were directly employed by the company. A number of service occupations were required to make a functioning community, and these workers lived within the company-owned as well as the neighboring private community. The store keepers were most obvious in this respect, but so too did seamstresses, blacksmiths, carpenters, bakers and barbers, all relying on the company-employee clientele.

The Federal Census of 1870 provides some insight into the workforce Gilbert gathered together into his new village. Approximately 143 families, with a total of about 850 individuals were located on 58 pages where the majority of occupations are listed as "works in woolen mill". Other names can clearly be identified with stores, shops or farms in the village. The enumerators listed 53 buildings occupied by wool mill workers, counting the buildings rather than the living units or tenements within them, and no streets or other locations are indicated. This number corresponds quite closely to the known number of Gilbert family tenements and existing single family residences in the village. Adding known data about the number of tenements within the buildings, and estimating others, an average of about seven individuals per tenement can be made. Gilbert employed several members of each family at the mill, including adolescents as young as ten years old, but more commonly over twelve years old. In some families, however, the father was employed "at the farm" and in many instances the mother was "keeping house". A large portion of the households who reported mill occupations were families with adults born outside Massachusetts, and indeed outside the United States. Four countries were the sources for these immigrants, Ireland, Canada, England and Scotland.

Oral history about the village founding contends that Gilbert recruited for skilled workers in the British Isles, and this is, at least in part, born out for the workers who occupied supervisory positions and thus remained longer in the town so that more data on their origins and their occupations are available. Using the birthplace and parental birthplace information supplied by the later censuses, the origins of the mill workers employed during the early 20th century also suggests the origins of the larger regional

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wool-textile worker population. Both English and Scottish workers are found in the village. Far more numerous were Irish and Canadian new-comers, who are again known from later censuses to have come from both "English" and "Irish" Eire, and from both English and French Canada. In 1865 and 1875 the majority of the town's foreign-born population was resident in Gilbertville and at about 500 individuals, constituted about twenty five percent of the town total. Forty percent were born in Ireland, another forty percent in Canada, with the remainder from England and Scotland. Review of the decennial population schedules for this village confirms research on mill worker populations elsewhere, with a high degree of turnover when measured at ten year intervals. While workers moved often, many used relocation to improve their position and wage within the mills.

It is not currently known how housing was organized in the early years of the village, but by the 1870s and 1880s, as noted above, distinctive neighborhoods had developed as the company located building types to create distinctive housing areas. With information supplied by the village directory of 1892 and its advertisements, it is possible to reconstruct key factors of the village and the neighborhoods' population. The state's population census of 1895 provides population information for town villages and Gilbertville included 291 families and 1544 individuals. The directory's Gilbertville section lists over 500 residents of the village, believed to represent the adult population of the village, including both men and women. The men far outnumbered the women, 73% and 27% respectively. This is presumably because women were only counted when they worked outside the home or professionally within it, that is, it does not include homemakers within nuclear families. The list adds addresses for each household head and their place of boarding for others. Just one hundred of the listed individuals are listed as residing with same-surname individuals, presumably close kin, siblings or parents and children. Another hundred and twenty are resident with individuals of different surname, boarders within sixty probably unrelated families. In some instances these boarders were living in the traditional relationship within their employers' households, as servants, as farm hands, as store employees. But most were apparently single and independent mill workers. Half of these were single individuals within the household, the remainder with two or often more boarders within the same house. The largest number were in the household of Carrie E. Greene, operator of the boardinghouse above the Hitchcock Store, where twenty-one men resided. Not surprisingly these household heads were female, usually widowed. Although households with boarders were located throughout the village, the largest concentration can be found on South Main Street between the two mills. Here the company had constructed the large duplexes but, located near the mills and the tenement blocks, the area had not attained the status of the neighbors across the road.

Some occupational segregation can be identified through analysis of this directory as well. Farmers, not surprisingly, were all located on the village

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outskirts on the primary town roads. The most obvious occupational clustering was in the area around the Congregational Church on Christian Hill, where the company bosses' homes were located. The area on Highland Terrace and Main Street between the mills and closest to the church was becoming an increasingly high-status area. The early company duplexes located here were more often occupied by supervisory personnel and their families. Although the earliest locations of residents is difficult to reconstruct, such evidence as is available confirms the oral history of this as a high status area. Later the small number of ambitious Stick and Queen Anne style houses in the village were located here, on land leased to the highest status employees of the company and near to the home of George Gilbert's daughter Ann and her husband Charles Dexter, formerly located on Summit Avenue. There Dexter could be close to both the family business and his own investments in rental properties in the village, as well as his nearby agricultural and horse-raising operations. In addition to members of the Gilbert family, supervisory positions within the company remained in several families, including the Ward, Richardson, Marsh and Angell families. In several instances these families intensified the continuity with inter-connectedness through marriage. Located here were the houses of the store-keeper and widow Mrs. Adams, followed by wool sorter James A. Shepherd, paymaster Alfred Richardson's house and superintendant A.B. Ward's house. As the company added new housing in the area they chose only the largest of the types. Only two examples were built of the large Late Duplexes also exhibiting a Stick style ornamentation, and of the large Last Duplexes with Colonial Revival detailing. In the adjacent company-built duplexes lived the company engineer, and the supervisors of the individual rooms within the mills. On New Braintree Road were engineer Charles F. Angell, warp dresser Joshua Miller and loom fixer Frederick W. Ward II. On Highland Avenue were warp dresser Clarence C. Warner, jack fixer Samuel J. Ramsden, second hand in the card room Charles B. Bragg, overseer in the spinning room Patrick Fanning, and in the dressing room, James Buckley, paymaster Elmer M. Marsh and second hand in the card room, Harry H. Ward. In addition on South Main Street, an additional nine men with supervisory positions, overseer, boss or second hand, had their households.

The factory operatives on the other hand were increasingly located in three sub-areas, characterized by small living units arranged in high densities of blocks or rows, at the southern end of Main Street, on Bridge and Grove Streets, and on Broad and East Streets. It is more difficult to identify occupational differences in the locations of residents within this larger group. Too few spinners are listed here to account for the number the mill would have required. The number of household head weavers seems too small as well, though the occupation is common among boarders, probably indicating the job was most common among younger workers. Household heads were more likely to report occupations like "finishing room", "picker tender", "dye house" and other more specialized tasks. They were also occasionally employed elsewhere than in the mills, as general laborers or for the railroad.

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What can be more clearly seen as a pattern of segregation in these areas was the clustering of ethnic groups, particularly the newest arrivals, together in sub-neighborhoods. In 1892, the French Canadians were the most segregated group. Although individuals are listed singly in all neighborhoods, by far the largest numbers are clustered together on Bridge Street and Water Street and the road on the Island, where tenement blocks were located. Every one of the twenty household heads listed for Water Street has a French surname, Allard, Bebeau, Bourdeau, Brunelle, Champigni, Dubia, etc. through Roy and St. Onge. On Bridge and Grove Streets just over half of the surnames were French. By contrast Eastern Avenue, the period name for Prospect Street in the north, was dominated by British names, Baker, Brown, Buchanan, Collins, etc. The same pattern can be seen in the other streets nearby in the north. Richmond Terrace and School Street, as part of South Main Street and High Street were known at the time, were slightly more ethnically integrated. Later population schedules of the federal census, where street names and birthplace information is more abundant, show how durable these patterns could remain. In 1910, all of the Polish/Austrians and Russian/Lithuanians were residing on the Island, then called Canal Street, or in smaller numbers on Bridge Street. Their household structure varies greatly from their neighbors in the presence of large numbers of apparently unrelated boarders, mostly single men and women, but also including married men without their wives, bringing household size up to ten or fifteen. French Canadians were resident on Bridge Street, Richmond Terrace and North Street. British and English Canadian residents were located throughout the remainder of the village, with English and New England stock on Highland and Riverview Terrace. These neighborhood homes of the immigrant operative population of the village seem to confirm the oral history about neighborhood character and names that persist in the village. Protestant and Roman Catholic Irish alike lived in the Broad Street area known as "North of Ireland". In "the Patch" on Bridge Street and the Island lived more recent arrivals, first the French Canadians and later the Poles and Lithuanians that came to work here. The name for the south part of the village reflected the large immigrant component, "Castle Garden" being the name of the Ellis Island predecessors.

Whether the company or the individuals were responsible for the segregation is not yet known. Ethnic groups did however use voluntary associations to gather together. Of greatest importance was the establishment of the Roman Catholic Saint Aloysius Church, followed in later years by a school of resident teaching sisters. The presence of the Trinitarian Congregational Church provided by the Gilberts may have satisfied the native New Englanders in the village, and perhaps some of the English, Scots and Irish as well. And village oral history suggests that loyal attendance and service to that church was rewarded by the Gilberts in white collar office work. But as the proportion of Catholics grew, as it did quickly in the 1860s, services began in the home of Patrick Shugrue, and efforts to build a church here bore fruit. The first census of the Catholic population here counted 81 Irish

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families and 68 French Canadian families. In keeping with this linguistic and cultural distribution, most of the priests sent to the parish were French and increasingly Irish. The growth of the Catholic population in the village was accompanied in 1889 by permission to organize and build a bi-lingual school for the education of the children of elementary school age. The first teaching Sisters of Saint Anne commuted to the school from Ware until a house was rented for them, reportedly #147 on Church Street opposite the church. By 1892 the parish had grown impressively to include 619 Irish, 535 French and 100 Poles. The village was made an independent parish in 1894 and a rectory constructed to house the priest and his curate assistant. The curates reported for 20th century service frequently bore Polish and Lithuanian surnames, reflecting the growing importance of the eastern European population in the village. Individual services in English, French and Polish for the vernacular are believed to have been said regularly. In 1908 the school was transferred to the Faithful Companions of Jesus and a modern convent for their use was constructed about 1920. In 1952 the school was taken over by the Sisters of Mercy before closing twenty years later.

Paralleling these religious divisions, village residents formed voluntary associations along religious and ethnic lines. The Ancient Order of Hibernians organized in 1883, the L.O.L. Diamond True Blues in 1890 and organizations of Orangemen and Forestiers are said to have been active. In about 1919 the growing Polish community constructed their meeting hall on Joselyn Street. The company itself provided a reading room before the library was constructed. More purely recreational were the skating rink of the Union Hall Association, the bandstand and its coronet band, and particularly popular, village baseball teams were fielded and competed against neighboring village and town teams in semi-professional games on Saturdays and Sundays. But time for any of these activities was scarce, for when the mills were operating at peak capacity, workers worked six to six, six days per week, all returning home at the noon hour for their dinner.

Little is recorded about harmony and discord between workers and management at the mill and the only reported strikes were limited to individual rooms within the mill. Slow-downs in the woolen trade were accompanied by reduced hours and occasionally good times brought higher wages and round-the-clock operation. But early in the 20th century the wool industry began to remove from New England to the South and companies that remained began to suffer from the competition. Although the company continued to build and make improvements to its housing stock it did not make technological improvements to its woolen and worsted production. The mill operated less than full time and Mill Number Three was torn down in 1916. After Lewis Gilbert died in 1919 the business was managed by John Neff and later Charles Wetherby and locally by Walter Holt, long standing supervisory personnel, but its fortunes turned. Oral history contends that the new management brought in employees without textile experience and were unable to maintain profitable operations in the

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new circumstances of the 1920s. The work week was reduced to 48 hours at this time, hurting company sales as well as worker incomes. By 1930 the Gilbert Company was failing. The Ware plant was closed that year and its machinery moved to Gilbertville.

Manufacturing concerns in central Massachusetts were further threatened by plans to divert their water privileges to provide reservoirs for eastern Massachusetts. As early as 1895, when the State Board of Health selected Boylston and West Boylston on the south branch of the Nashua River for the Wachusett Reservoir for metropolitan Boston, the western valleys of the Ware and Swift Rivers were sited as alternative water sources. Just over twenty years later, Worcester and Boston were again in search of a water supply and in 1922 a report of the joint board of the Health Department and the Metropolitan Water and Sewage Board recommended that these rivers be diverted to answer those needs. The Ware River would be diverted to supply the Wachusett, and a tunnel would be constructed from Coldbrook, a village on the river in Barre, to the reservoir. In the Swift River valley a large new reservoir would be constructed and the towns of Dana, Enfield, Greenwich and Prescott lost and flooded in the process. The extent of this huge project, and the effects of these relocations on the surrounding communities, are difficult now to understand, but stand in stark testimony to the political weakness of rural and western communities in Massachusetts. For manufacturers these plans meant great uncertainty about their water supply for power and process uses. The Gilbert Company was involved in a notorious suit for damages against the Metropolitan District Commission arising from the taking of flood waters of the Ware River in the Hampshire Superior Court.

In 1932 the company was sold to a Boston group of investors who paid \$10,000 to Walter E. O'Hara, Fall River manufacturer, their competitor. The sale was from the estates of J.H. Grenville Gilbert, E.H. Gilbert and John H. Neff, all deceased stockholders. The purchasers were William J. MacDonald and Max Schoolman, Boston realtors, and Bernard Goldfine, wool merchant, with interest also held by Leonard B. Campbell of Ware and Walter W. Holt of Gilbertville. Although period newspapers report rejoicing at the sale, oral history contends that the new owners did not attempt to manufacture cloth here or to resurrect the company at all, only hoping to profit from the large damage award. Before the decision was rendered the entire company and its assets were sold to a group of primarily Boston-based outside investors for only \$159,000. Shortly thereafter in 1934 the company was awarded twice that amount and scandalized the public when the news was revealed in the newspapers. They may have operated at a very low level of production prior to the severe damage to the plant by the hurricane of 1938. After the hurricane the Sugarman Company of Coatesville, Pennsylvania was retained to liquidate the company holdings, a process that continued well into the 1940s. The population of the village dropped dramatically; in 1940 only 500 individuals in the entire town were

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employed in manufacturing. The Mill Number Two was dismantled and sold for salvage and the others were largely vacated. Although the individual residential properties were not expensive few initially purchased their homes.

After World War Two this hiatus was reversed. Scarce housing generally, some employment locally, and low prices of the village properties made them more popular for purchase. The high proportion of multi-family housetypes meant that rental units were more numerous here than anywhere else in the town, a key factor of the village continuity as a working class community. Maintenance on village properties ranges from moderate to excellent. The range in the type of alterations is much wider. Some owners show a remarkable interest in the original finish of the mill housing, and the best preserved examples are those where owners have elected to retain and maintain them. Some owners sought to achieve a simpler, more modern look for the houses in their maintenance and renovation work, removing the elaborate wall covers and spindle trim and substituting the more unified look achieved with the application of plain synthetic siding.

Like other remnant mill villages, interest and respect for the community as a historic resource varies greatly. In contrast to earlier villages and towns, residents in these 19th and 20th century mill village often doubt the importance of their experience, or that of their ancestors and predecessors. It was not uncommon in Gilbertville for residents to flatly deny that the village held any historic importance. History "from the bottom up" has not yet "trickled down" to the popular history of local communities. Fortunately a small number of village residents and institutions recognize the importance of Gilbertville and have worked to preserve evidence and interest in its history. The Hardwick Historical Society works hard to assure representation in its collection of all villages in the town, and includes a collection of fine historic photographs, as well as occasional pamphlets and broadsides associated with village activities and institutions. Long-time residents, particularly those with several generations before them here, were exceptional sources of personal reminiscences. Outstanding in this regard is Charlie Angell, who has not only assembled his own exceptional collection of documents and photographs of Gilbertville, but has conducted his own research into the village's early history, and is the acknowledged village repository and historian. The present pastor of Saint Aloysius Church, Rev. Chester Misiewicz, has a strong interest in village and parish history, and has gathered together objects and documents for use in his classes for parish children. Architectural research and preservation efforts date to the revival of the Hardwick Historical Commission in the late 1980s. The Commission successfully received from the town meeting a budget of \$10,000 to complete a comprehensive inventory with the help of a professional social and architectural historian and this work was completed in 1989 by the author. Additional research on the village was financed by the Ware Community Development Department, which administers the housing re-development work for

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the town. The participation of the Hardwick and Massachusetts Historical Commission in this work, under a memorandum of agreement with the Advisory Council, assured that renovation would proceed with respect for the historic fabric of the village. With the financial assistance of the Ware Community Development Department and the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the Historical Commission was able to proceed with the next step in preservation planning with the selection of villages for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The town's response to these efforts has been positive and the profile of the Commission raised.

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Archaeological Significance

The archaeological significance of any sites or features located in the district would be great because the town is largely unstudied and any excavation would add comparative material to that mounting on the northwest portion of Worcester County. Any sites associated with Native American and prehistoric occupation of the area would be of great significance due to their rarity. Sites associated with the historic occupation of the village during the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries would fall into two broad categories. The features related to former structures in the village, providing structural remains or evidence of construction methods or form, would add to scholarly understanding of the areas' vernacular and popular architecture. Evidence of structures related to the mills on the falls would be of interest, particularly at the upper and lower most where use was early and of low intensity. Damage by the floods associated with the hurricane of 1938 are expected to have destroyed much of this evidence however. Features related to the daily functioning of the village are especially important (so-called occupational features like privies, trash pits and sheet refuse). Knowledge about daily life in the mill village would likely result from the examination of such features, and analysis of floral, faunal and artifact remains could tell much about diet, health and ethnic and class distinctions in material life. Comparison of sites within different neighborhoods, and contrasts between company-owned and private properties will be of particular importance, allowing insight into the degree of control actually achieved by the Gilbert Company.

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Archaeological Significance

Since patterns of prehistoric occupation in Hardwick are poorly understood, any surviving sites would be significant. Sites in this area can provide valuable insights into settlement and subsistence models for interior/headwater Connecticut River drainages as well as potential information on trade within that area and possibly socio-political boundaries. Three fall lines along the Ware River and potential associated Native American sites in that area may also provide important information on fisheries related resource exploitation.

Historic remains described above have the potential for providing detailed information on an isolated rural village, which changed from an agricultural economy of mixed grain and husbandry to a small single-enterprise woolen manufacturing village. Gilbertville retains nearly all of the buildings ever constructed during Gilbert Manufacturing ownership between 1860 and 1938; however, no standing structures survive for this pre-1860 period. Structural survivals and occupational-related features for this early period may offer our only knowledge of this early settlement which laid the groundwork for later industrial development. During the period of Gilbert Manufacturing Company operation, structural survivals of Mill Numbers Two and Three can provide valuable data on mill layout and construction. This information can be particularly important for Mill Number Two whose sequence of construction is difficult to construct from written records. Other important structural survivals in the district include the remains of the Brown Block, for which little is known about the building plan. Waterpower-related sites within the district can also be important by providing data on how water-power was initially harnessed and allocated among the four mills. Occupational-related features including dump areas can be especially important by providing information about the daily lives of residents in the village. This data can further be important by providing information on social and geographical hierarchies that existed in the village. Data may be present that reinforces differences and/or similarity between particular ethnic groups, occupational classes, neighborhood groups and company owned versus privately owned areas. The comparative rarity of any archaeological data on small-scale mill villages such as Gilbertville would greatly increase the value of any sites or features recovered.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register Covered Bridge -
- previously determined eligible by the National Register 5/8/1986
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings
Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Massachusetts Historical Commission
Hardwick Historical Society

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 75 acres

UTM References

A	1,8	7,3,0,6,0,0	4,6,8,8,1,0,0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	1,8	7,3,0,1,6,0	4,6,8,7,9,2,0

B	1,8	7,3,0,6,0,0	4,6,8,7,9,2,0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	1,8	7,3,0,2,0,0	4,6,8,7,8,0,0

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

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MHC Cultural Resource Inventories of Hopedale, Northbridge, and Ludlow, MA.

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