

AN ACCOUNT OF THE PAST:
HISTORIC SETTLEMENTS IN SUFFIELD

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Introduction

Located along the west bank of the Connecticut River, Suffield was one of the unique river valley towns. Unlike so much of New England with its rocky soils, the Connecticut valley was blessed with rich and fertile lands. The river, as well, was one of the major waterways of New England and could provide a much needed communication and trade route for what was otherwise landlocked land. These factors made it some of the most sought after land in New England and by the 1630's Windsor, Wethersfield, and Hartford had been established. And by the 1670's Suffield was settled. Among the New England towns, these river settlements were thought to be unique. They appeared to closely resemble the conventional model of New England villages because of their especially compact nucleated villages which were established at the initial colonization and maintained through time. However, these river settlements varied from other towns in that they were more linear in form, following the intervals and uplands that ran parallel to the river. The streets generally ran along the ridges, and narrow lots were set perpendicular to the river's edge to provide access to both river and upland (Woods 1978: 102). We have proposed a study of the development of and variation within these New England settlements by using a model of the initial colonization of these towns as either nucleated, dispersed, or some intermediate mode. The study of the process of this settlement, growth, and change meant selecting different types of towns that would allow us to understand variations among the settlements of New England towns. Suffield was selected as being representative of a Connecticut River Valley town.

The choice of Suffield for a regional historic preservation survey and study of settlement patterns proved to be an excellent one. Not only was there a wealth of documentary resources available for study, the town was, among all the river valley towns in Connecticut, the most accessible for archaeological research. Although the town is currently undergoing rapid development, there are still a large number of historic structures in town and a significant amount of undeveloped or agricultural land with some of the oldest settlements. All the other valley towns have become so urbanized that any significant archaeological research would be difficult, if not impossible. For these reasons, Suffield was a natural choice from the perspectives of both our research and the potential development of any management plan for the preservation of these resources.

The research on settlement patterns in Suffield was begun with the knowledge that the settlement form did not conform with our model for the Connecticut River Valley towns. The model that has formed the basis of our research was developed from the conventional wisdom, or cultural belief, that New Englanders established nuclear settlements with a cluster of dwellings surrounding a church, with common fields encompassing the village. Villages were believed to be compact, and any dispersion of homes into the countryside came later on with the disappearance of the common fields. Only then were farmsteads found on individually held lands. This persistent myth, that New England towns were nucleated and any dispersion of homes came as a second phase in the development of a town, has in recent years come under the close scrutiny of scholars.

A number of detailed studies have explored this historical problem, some from the viewpoint of English settlement patterns and others focusing specifically on New England society. One of the most recent is by Joseph Woods. By using local histories and maps from a large number of towns in New England, he has been able to demonstrate rather conclusively that, for the most part, New England towns were not nucleated. To a certain extent some were, but a clear pattern of dispersed settlement from the initial years is present in New England rural towns (Woods 1978, 1980).

Only where topography favored nucleation, as along the terraces of the Connecticut River Valley, or where conservative elements persisted, at Sudbury and along the Long Island Sound, could nucleated settlements be found, usually linear and resembling English antecedents and with some regional variation in shape and density of houses (Woods 1980: 6).

It was only with the social and economic revolution in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries that central villages, which are today often taken to be a survival of the nucleated villages, were formed. In the dispersed settlements, or in those that actually had an earlier nucleated settlement, commercial interests came to dominate the agricultural villages, forming the central villages visible today in so many New England towns.

Although recent research has demonstrated that nucleated villages never existed in their idealized form except in isolated instances in rural New England and that variation in settlement form was indeed the norm, this model has proven to be inadequate in its recognition of the cultural and socioeconomic processes through which the landscape evolved through time. Change is explained, for the most part, by a factual, cause and effect thinking process, where change in the physical form of settlement occurs because of population pressure on the land, commercialization of agriculture, and industrialization. However it was impossible to adequately

explain with this model the variability in the landscape between towns either at any one point in time or through time. It has little to say concerning the thought process of how sites were selected, what the criteria may have been, nor how this may have changed through time. As a result, we could not predict the locations of historic sites, either at the initial settlement, nor how it changed through time. Our problem came to be, then, to refine our predictive model so that it would not deny variability present in New England towns, focus on processual problems to make it more capable of understanding the changing landscape, and predict the location of historic sites for our archaeological survey.

Initially Suffield had been relatively compact with narrow six to eight acre houselots running perpendicular to the main street. However a number of families did not have houselots on the main street. Instead they lived, dispersed, on their homelots in other parts of town. We needed to understand this variation from the ideal set out by historians and geographers and we needed to know how to apply it archaeologically in historic preservation surveys. Thus, our research problem came to focus on the development of a strategy using historic archaeological resources that would point out our assumptions and expectations concerning the culture, region, and settlement patterns, as well as refine our model to become more cognizant of the process of settlement and better able to predict the location of historic sites.

Archaeological surveys have often assumed for their models a validity far beyond their original intent: to include the entire cultural or geographic region of which they are a part or even to extend the model to other regions (King 1977). Characteristically, the models have not taken into consideration the variation that exists within any cultural pattern and they have not provided a means to understand this variability. A common means of evaluating these regional models has been to focus on the accuracy with which they can predict the locations and densities of sites. Or, assuming the model can accurately predict sites in its own region, to assess the model's cross regional validity. The procedure for these evaluations tends to be archaeologically focused, with the aim of verification by archaeological testing. For these surveys, the location of sites is seen to either verify or negate the predictive model.

Consequently, archaeologists have been faced with the problem of either believing or disbelieving their predictive model. However archaeologists do not have to place themselves in this position. A model should be perceived only as a working hypothesis that reflects our own conscious or unconscious beliefs about how things should be, as well as the current state of knowledge. They do not represent facts but are merely interpretations of certain pieces of information. If this intrinsic nature of predictive modeling can be understood and the research goals aimed at refining or rejecting it with additional research, then they can be a useful tool.

If a model is to have any predictive validity at all, it should not focus exclusively on whether or not the model works in one town and not in another, or in one region and not in another. Rather, it should be an interpretive device that attempts to understand the landscape by focusing on processual questions about how and why sites are located where they are. The research strategy should focus on how the models were formulated, what data was drawn upon, what basic assumptions were made about the culture, region and location of sites, and how that model can best be used in a predictive survey. Research conducted with this purpose in mind can better look at the process of settlement and the various geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic factors involved in how and why that settlement developed to take the form that it did. And finally, if one develops a firmer grasp of the dynamic process of settlement, the reasoning that went on in site selection, and those variables deemed to be important by the settlers, one should be much better able to understand the changing landscape, locate sites, and address problems cur-

rently of interest to anthropologists and historians.

Research Methods: Field and Archival

The model developed by historians and geographers, while an effort to explain the development of settlement patterns of New England villages, does little other than to provide a general notion of the total form of a community. There is little that enables the archaeologist to locate historic sites. To understand the process of land settlement in Suffield, an approach that could focus on how site locations were selected and how the location and use of them changed through time was developed. Through the summer's field work and on into the fall we have been able to refine an approach which provides a more dynamic framework for understanding the process of settlement.

We wanted to study not only the physical changes on the landscape, but ultimately those changes as they had been affected by kinship, land inheritance patterns, and socioeconomic factors. Land ownership is intimately intertwined with families, their kin relationships, and inheritance patterns. As land was passed with an extended kin network, down through succeeding generations, any change in kin relationships should be reflected in inheritance patterns. These changes, in turn, should influence settlement patterns (see Grevin 1970, Lockridge 1968, Bowen 1975, Henretta 1973, Pendery 1975). To understand these shifts in kin relationships, land inheritance, and their effect on the landscape, it was necessary to focus research on families and to follow the inheritance of land through the generations. Families which had been some of the original proprietors and others that had settled at a later time were selected for study.

Our research to refine the important variables in settlement patterns drew on a number of resources. The use of primary documents provided the central focus of our research, but secondary resources, previous archaeological and architectural research on site locations, aerial photographs, and U.S.G.S. topographic maps all made important contributions towards the development of our research strategy. Town meeting and land records, early maps, tax lists, wills, genealogical sources, as well as local histories and research done by Delphina Hammer Clark on land ownership in Suffield, provided the knowledge needed to delineate preliminary notions about the early settlement, understand the development and changes in the town's road system, and select potentially important locations in town for study. A general knowledge of the criteria used by settlers for site location came from advice books on house construction, the locations of surviving early structures in New England, and the work of archaeologists, geographers, and architects on site locations. From aerial photographs, U.S.G.S. topographic maps, and noting the locations of the older houses in Suffield, various topographic features common among the early sites of Suffield became evident. Dell Upton, an architectural historian, studied a large number of the older houses and associated outbuildings in the part of town selected for the study in order to help us determine the length of occupation on sites of the older houses. Each of these studies has helped to refine the model of nucleated versus dispersed settlements in a way that can provide the processual information needed to locate sites as well as to understand the patterns of families, kin relationships, and land inheritance.

In designing a field strategy for the archaeological survey work to be done in Suffield, archival research was begun during the fall of 1978 with the aim of focusing our field work in only certain portions of town. Because time limitations prevented covering large sections of the town, limited areas which could provide both significant historical and archaeological information had to be selected.

These areas were selected on the basis of how much information they could provide on the development and changes in the landscape. At the very least, we reasoned, it would be necessary to focus on part of the oldest settlement. Given time, portions of the town that were not developed until the eighteenth century could be included. A portion of the oldest settlement which still had farmlands that could be archaeologically surveyed was selected. Families who had initially settled in this part of town were chosen and research was begun to determine what other parts of town they had settled. Using this information, some of these areas of town were included as part of the archaeological survey.

However, the realities of doing fieldwork in this rapidly developing town, where most of the land is privately owned and much of it is being developed, ultimately ruled where we could pursue our research interests. To eliminate significant portions of town that had been developed or were undergoing construction, it became necessary to systematically drive along every road in town and note the locations of new developments and twentieth century homes, the farmlands, and older homes onto a U.S.G.S. topographic map. The amount of twentieth century construction was extensive enough that land with any archaeological potential was narrowed to only a few parts of town. At this point, documentary research shifted to areas with the best potential.

These realities became only too painfully clear as we learned that, ultimately, what parts of town could be surveyed rested on which landowners would, or would not, allow survey work on their land. A procedure that would have prevented a lot of unnecessary work would have been to locate the lands with the best archaeological potential first before doing any significant amount of archival research. Knowing which areas had any potential would have made it easier to select potential target areas before any intensive archival work was begun. Once certain parts of town had been selected for this particular project, however, the process of obtaining permission from landowners was begun. Approximately 200 households were contacted first by a letter introducing the project and then by telephone. It was a time consuming task. In some areas up to 85% of the landowners gave permission, but even with such a high percentage of positive responses the denial by a few landowners whose property had what we thought were crucial sites prevented any work from being done. In subsequent surveys it would be better to mesh the permission process more closely with the archival work so that areas where access to any important piece of property had been denied could be readily eliminated. We, unfortunately, did not contact landowners until after a tremendous investment of time and effort had been made. Although access to some areas in town had been denied, almost complete access to lands important to some of the most critical part of our research was obtained. This area was along of the oldest streets in town where land is still being farmed. In this area are still a fair number of nineteenth century dwellings, relatively few modern developments, and the archaeological potential was high.

The methods used for the archival research in Suffield differed from those used in Goshen in that the survival of archival records and individuals with specific knowledge of local history and sites varies with each given town. While there were similar records kept in the different New England colonies, each town is unique in what it has to offer. The preservation of documents is highly variable; what may survive in one town may not in another. The presence of a local historian or historically oriented town clerk may insure the preservation of much that would otherwise be lost. It is, therefore, difficult to provide a set of procedures which could be effectively used in historic preservation surveys. The use of these documents for a survey project requires the researcher to have at least a general working knowledge of what is generally available and to know underlying assumptions in how and why they were made and how they can be used. From there, the individual

must rely on the creative, analytical use of what is available. Thus, the specific method of extracting information from them had to be tailored for each town. We can, however, provide a general outline of what resources are available and how they can be used.

Maps:

On the surface, maps provide some of the most useful information on settlement patterns. Although maps with any specific information on structures and their inhabitants from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are extremely rare, by the nineteenth century several rather detailed maps were made. In the mid nineteenth century, E. Woodruff and R. Clark produced maps and F. W. Beers produced another series in the latter part of the century.¹ On these maps, roads, structures, and the names of the inhabitants or businesses provide a wealth of information. Previous research by the AIAI has shown them to be reliable informants for the location of sites (Handsman and Hoepfner 1978:15-19). However, as with any informant, they are an interpretation of what the cartographer sees and an attempt to portray certain aspects of the countryside in plan form. Thus, the map does not reflect reality, but rather the map maker's choice of features to portray according to the function of the finished map (Aston 1974: 56). As an interpretation of reality with a specific purpose in mind, maps can never be complete or provide all information needed for other purposes.

Maps are, by nature, a portrayal of the landscape at one point in time. As such, they provide no time depth except when used in conjunction with maps made at other points in time. This fact about maps makes their use difficult, particularly if they are the only resource used in an archaeological survey, because they say nothing about the colonization or development of a settlement. Despite this shortcoming, they are extremely useful. They give detailed information about things that are of vital interest to the archaeologist. When combined with other resources, their information on houses, roads, and inhabitants can help pinpoint site locations more accurately than any other source.

An example of the use of roads as depicted on maps can help to demonstrate some of the problems in their use in archaeological surveys. The use of roads, as depicted on maps, to locate sites is fraught with difficulties. Research done on the early roads of Suffield showed that they frequently followed the topography, but through the years were "straightened," altered, abandoned, or extended. In Suffield this process of altering the roads seems to have occurred from the outset, but from the late eighteenth century on there was a definite increase in road changes. One cannot assume that the road we see today, even though it may look very similar to those drawn on the early maps, has not been altered. It may well have undergone subtle, or not so subtle, changes through the years. Roads, therefore, are not stable, unchanging markers that we can use to identify sites. They are much like sites in that they are subject to all the vagaries of the humans who built them. If one had a knowledge of the development of the town's road system, one could make use of this information to locate sites. Without this knowledge, one is simply working from one unknown to locate another.

The initial intention in Suffield was to make the information on the historic maps an important part of the research. When the part of the town that was to be surveyed had been selected, the locations of historic structures were taken from the nineteenth century maps and transferred to the U.S.G.S. maps. However, as research continued with the land records and Delphina Clark's notes and maps, we began to discover just how inadequate a source the historic maps were if they were

to be used alone. It became more than evident that structures had come and gone with such rapidity, even from the late seventeenth century, that the maps were only a poor reflection of the actual number of structures that had once stood. In the end, the information from the historic maps was used only to verify structures at the time the map was made. The use of them requires a critical analysis of exactly what they represent, what the map maker was attempting to portray, and what he consistently included and excluded from the map.

Land Records:

Land records provide the depth in time that maps cannot. They also provide clues to the dynamics of landscape changes. Land deeds describe the property boundaries, often with useful details, and sometimes references to buildings located on the piece of property. From these records, one can get an idea of ownership, and occasionally when structures first appeared on the property. The use of these deeds, however, is extremely time consuming and difficult. Not only are they often frustratingly vague, the record is incomplete. Some changes of ownership were never recorded in the town hall and others were undoubtedly lost. Making sense of the descriptions can also be extremely difficult. Most frequently a piece of property would be described as being bounded on the north, south, east, and west by either geographical features or landowners. Because those who owned any given piece of property were constantly changing, the only way to understand any one deed is to study it in relation to those surrounding it.

Even when property descriptions are studied in relation to contiguous pieces of property, the vagueness with which some areas are described and the incompleteness of the record can still leave them incomprehensible. Sometimes information from wills and tax lists can help lessen the confusion, but it is an incredibly painstaking task to collect data from all these sources, especially when large tracts of land are involved.² Delphina Hammer Clark, a resident of Suffield, has spent years studying these records, combining information from land records, wills, vital records, church records, and tax lists to study changes in land ownership and identify early buildings. To locate these sites, she walked much of the land. To study changes in land ownership it was necessary to understand the families involved. Consequently, her volumes are filled with genealogical data. And because of her interest in early architecture, there is a special emphasis on the location of sites. We are deeply indebted to her for her efforts. An eleven volume manuscript of this work has been left with the Kent Memorial Library.

These volumes were used, along with primary sources, to determine which portion of the town would be studied, the location of sites, and any other information on the sites and their occupants. By combining her research with primary documents and closely following her assumptions and interpretations as both archival and field work were conducted, the accuracy, attention to detail, and ability to pinpoint the location of sites to certain pieces of property became apparent.

Information compiled and put into map form by Delphina Clark was used constantly, but the use of these maps required caution and much critical analysis. Much of her locating of sites had involved the interpretive analysis of vague deed and will descriptions where she would draw from any number of sources and conclude that a structure had once stood in a particular area. To make a judgement as to where these sites may have been, she walked the area over a period of many years. But often there was nothing to actually tell her where that site had been. In her

work she has had to make a number of assumptions as to where they would be. One of these was to consistently place the site on the road. Our research has shown that this is not necessarily true.

Architectural Survey:

A limited survey by an architectural historian was integrated into our research on the belief that standing structures are as much a site as those where the standing structures have been destroyed. Architectural and archaeological surveys are only too often seen as separate entities, each with separate but similar goals (King 1977: 11-41). The goals are similar in that each seeks to record and preserve cultural resources and separate in that each has until recently paid little attention to what one could tell the other.

The architectural survey was needed as part of the archaeological survey for a number of reasons. First, the majority of architectural surveys have focused on historic houses in the centers of New England villages, leaving out the outer, relatively unknown parts. Suffield, except for one small part of the outer portion of town, is no exception. Secondly, to ignore standing historic structures would be to ignore an important sequence in the occupation of a site. Sites were often occupied over a long period of time and, during that time, structures could be built, added on to, or torn down.

A close inspection of architectural features can sometimes give clues. A knowledge of outbuildings associated with the house structures can also provide vital information. For example, a mid-eighteenth century house converted into a barn and a barn at least 100 years older than a standing mid-nineteenth century house was on or near an earlier foundation. We then focused our survey to a more intensive search of the property and located the earlier foundation in the front lawn.

Archaeological Survey:

In many ways the landscape in Suffield today is subtly deceptive. When compared with the landscape of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as seen on historic maps, there are many similarities. In the center of the town are clusters of homes and businesses, and along the town roads, homes and farms are situated almost directly on the roads. Despite a few walls that have disappeared and others that have appeared, they seem much the same.

One startling difference, however, is in the use of the waterways. From the seventeenth century on through the nineteenth century, Stony Brook was the site of intensive industrial activity. Today, most of the structures associated with that activity are either gone or have been put to alternate uses. For the most part, the stream has been abandoned, and its banks allowed to become overgrown.

The approach to the archaeological survey was to assess whether or not the contemporary landscape was any reflection of the historic landscape and, if not, to assess how it had changed through time. Thus, the archaeological survey took on two phases. The first was to assess the development and change of residential and farm sites, to note the consistency with which sites had been occupied through time and whether or not site locations had changed, and then to assess the archaeological integrity of these sites. The second phase was to assess industrial sites, their development, demise, archaeological integrity, and research potential.

In assessing the development and changes in site locations in Suffield, a number of disciplines were drawn on to provide a more coherent, more complete picture of the development and change within an historic landscape. Among these disciplines are geology, archaeology, social and economic history, architectural history, and pedology, which, when combined, can contribute data concerning variations in soil types, water drainage, geological features, local topography for site locations, specific architectural information on surviving historic houses and out-buildings, and from history the very framework from which sense can be made of the data. In an interdisciplinary approach to the study of historic settlement patterns each separate discipline studies the same subject, but from somewhat different perspectives and drawing on very different resources. When an archaeologist combines data from these varied fields, this synthesis can produce information no single discipline could discover on its own.

Archival records provide such a richness of data that many historic archaeologists are beginning to wrestle with the question of whether or not the time, money, and effort required to conduct archaeological research is justifiable. The question then focuses on what is it that archaeology can tell you that is worth knowing. Historical sources are indispensable for each of these disciplines in that they contain facts vital in understanding their subject. Maps from the nineteenth century provide good data for locating later sites but are rare for the very early periods. Land records descriptions, too, do not give enough specific information to be useful in locating sites. From these resources and Delphina Clark's notes came some basic information on roads and standing structures for the early periods. However in understanding where and how sites were located, these records have not been adequate. The earlier periods have remained elusive.

Although archaeological field work tends to be exceptionally time consuming and expensive, it can provide information no other means can provide. If it is impossible to locate sites using all the other resources available to us, the answer of whether or not to dig seems obvious. There is no other way to confirm notions derived from other resources. There is no other way to assess the predictive capabilities of our models.

The actual location of sites had to come from the research on the important variables in site locations and road development as well as the architectural and archaeological survey. The field strategy was to follow the criteria defined on how sites would be chosen and the area to be surveyed was narrowed down to only an area of approximately 250 acres along one of the early roads that ran parallel to the river. The original homelots of 5 early settlers were located in this area. We knew not to expect early sites to be on the road and that they could just as easily be oriented to the topography, located on the higher elevations and on well drained soils with an adequate water supply. The topography in Suffield is such that other than the ridge where the road had been located, there were few obvious places settlers would have chosen for a site. In this area were gently rolling hills, subtly textured, as well as extensive lowlands west of the ridge. The archaeological survey selectively sought out two types of locations. One was relatively high areas where some of the oldest sites might have been located off the road in a different settlement mode from the present one. The other was to test areas along the ridge, close to the road and around as many historic homes as possible to determine the length of occupation along the road and on known historic sites.

But, the combination of several factors prevented the successful completion of these goals. There was simply not enough time and manpower to survey the entire area. The problem of gaining permission from all landowners in this area also prevented the testing of some critical areas which may have contained some of the original sites. We were left, then, with little data that could adequately assess either the predictive capabilities of the historical model or our refinements of that model. Thus, we neither tested the model, nor the entire area. In a town such as Suffield, no matter how consistent one wanted to be, it would be impossible. There are too many landowners, and too many modern homes even in areas with relatively little development. In this situation, ideal testing schemes would never work because one would either fail to obtain permission to test everywhere or fail to obtain permission in specific areas needed to test the model. Thus our model can never be predictive in any sense. It remains interpretive, and merely a more carefully defined means to understand settlement patterns.

The second phase of the archaeological survey was to assess the potential of industrial sites for archaeological research. The one area of Suffield that is not being actively developed today is the area along the streams. Currently, there are no operative mills along Stony Brook, only overgrown banks and a few mill related structures now privately owned and for the most part private residences. Because these streams were used so intensively for water power from the initial settlement in the 1670's until the late nineteenth century and today are mostly abandoned, it seemed that the potential for the preservation of industrial sites could be very high. Thus, a portion of Stony Brook running from the Connecticut River west to Schwartz's Pond was selected and documentary research using maps, photographs, and Delphina Clark's manuscript was undertaken to determine what mills were present and where they were located along the stream. A week was spent in the field walking to locate the most likely locations for these mills, then to map and photograph any visible remains. The details of our findings have not been included in this report but are on file at the American Indian Archaeological Institute for those who want more information. In the next section on Results and Interpretations, a description of our findings has been included to briefly assess the integrity of some of these sites and their potential importance to the town.

Results and Interpretations

Historical Settlement Survey:

From its initial settlement in 1670, Suffield took on a form that is somewhat like the accepted nucleated model for the Connecticut River Valley towns. Two roads ran along two ridges, parallel to the river. Along the west road, High Street, the main settlement formed and lands were set aside for the ministry, Meeting House, school, and training place, and individuals built their homes along either road. But, unlike the model that says individuals lived on small houselots in a compact village, Suffield from the outset did not form a tight nucleated settlement. Rather, a loosely knit village was formed, where settlers built homes on their relatively large lots of 40 to 80 acres. Not only was the village composed of homes spread out along the two main roads, but it is also clear that a number did not settle along these two streets and dispersed on their lots in the west of town, referred to by a committee meeting in 1672 as "the Lots in the Westward Division" (Sheldon 1889:60-61).

The initial intent in the settlement form in Suffield, unfortunately, is somewhat obscured by the fact that the initial settlement was interrupted by King Philip's war in 1675, when the town was abandoned. The records are silent on these events, and do not begin again until Suffield was resettled in 1676. The few records made on the resettlement do, however, record some of the problems and indicate what could be read as a rather major shift in settlement form. During the first years, the intent was to form a loosely knit community, but after the war their fear of the Indian threat was expressed in an effort to form a more compact settlement. In 1677 the Committee declared:

Agreed . . . the settling of Persons in as compact a way as may be, as well as for ye comeliness of the Towne, as for ye security, and safety of People, by dwelling pretty neare together; and therefore doe intend to settle persons in ye Doble Street in High Street

They asked that "all Persons that had former Grants; now in their new settling would come neerer together, and leave those out Places they were building on before ye war; especially that Westward toward Northampton Road . . . To Build here and settle together" (Sheldon 1889: 69). Arrangements were made for at least ten men to move their homes in from the west part of town, and they were given six or eight acre lots along High Street as part of their allotment. Some shuffling of lands created places for others.

No doubt some moved in to the safety of the village. These requests can lead one to believe they actually did form a compact settlement, but it is doubtful that all did. In fact, the small lots that were to be set out for those living on Feather Street were never formed. For those who were to have moved to High Street, there was nothing to keep them, or their progeny, from settling away from High Street on their other property. There is ample evidence that many settled away from the compact settlement. Thus, although Suffield did develop a relatively compact center, it was probably never compact in the classic sense and settlers lived dispersed in many parts of town from the time of initial settlement.

If one were to observe the settlement form in Suffield today, one would find a striking similarity with the settlement form just described. Along the main street is a relatively compact center with homes, churches, a school, library, and businesses clustered along the road. In other parts of town (except where very new developments have been built) homes, schools, and businesses are more widely spaced along the roads, in a manner much as we think of as being dispersed. If one compares the town with maps made in the nineteenth century, and even the late eighteenth century, there is not that much of a difference. The roads are, for the most part, much the same except for a few that have disappeared and some that have since been built. There is also a clear relationship between the roads and houses; very few are set back from the road. The one clear shift is in the location of industry. Today it is concentrated in the southern end of town on what used to be farmlands. In earlier times, the industries were located along the streams. Today the streams have, for the most part, been abandoned and the structures put to a different use.

In outward appearances, the Suffield landscape presents a continuity that leaves much of its past elusive. When one observes the architecture in town, one sees a large number of historic structures. However if one looks closely, a large number of nineteenth century houses and a relatively small number that date to the second half of the eighteenth century are noted. There are only a handful that date before that time. With so few visible remains of that period, it is difficult to extend our notion of settlement patterns in Suffield back into time.

As we can be deceived by allowing our casual observations to confirm our preconceptions about what we should see, so can research in historical documents. One thing that has become painfully clear is that these documents that should reveal any change in the landscape do not. Except for a few early resources and a handful of surviving seventeenth century structures, they all show a clear relationship between structures and town roads. Homes are, almost without exception, located very close to the road. These perceptions, when reinforced by substantial documentation, can become impervious to further questioning. There becomes no reason to question that it might ever have been any different, that the early colonists might have consciously selected a site location where proximity to town roads was not necessarily a high priority.

However, sufficient evidence exists from maps and surviving historic structures from other towns that we can say with some confidence that the landscape during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was somewhat different from the later periods. The difference is most visible in the fact that early homes were not necessarily placed directly on the roads. The reasons for this difference and why homes were not invariably placed along a road lie in the settler's notions about what was most important in site locations, and a knowledge of how the road system developed in these rural towns. Early maps of other communities, advice books on how to build homes, and standing seventeenth and early eighteenth century structures all point to the conclusion that homes were not necessarily built along a road. Rather, the selection of a site involved the consideration of a number of factors, each of which would be weighed in the mind of the settler. Convenience to town roads was not the deciding factor in choosing a site. Rather, all these factors played a part in the final selection.

To understand the change in landscape, it was necessary to approach it from the process of settlement development of how sites were selected; what were the main criteria used and how did this process change over time? By noting the various criteria settlers used to choose sites for their homes, studying the few early detailed maps, noting features of known early sites and structures, and then studying town records for road development within the context of the town being studied, it becomes possible to understand the process of settlement development.

A study of the factors considered in choosing a site, combined with a study of the development of roads and their relationship to houses, however, can provide a much better understanding of the evolution of settlement patterns from the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries. Advice books on the building of farms mention at least some of the factors considered important; among these are the availability of a reliable water source, soils, adequate drainage, and protection from the weather elements (see Aston 1974: 92-93). No doubt a combination of these determined which site would be chosen. Specifically, the close proximity to roads was not mentioned. In studying early maps and the location of surviving houses in New England, it becomes clear that these criteria were carefully considered. Very often, structures were set back from the road and situated near a water source. Sometimes the terrain seems to have been somewhat elevated, other times situated on lower grounds. Woods mentions of the settlement in Concord, Massachusetts:

Their buildings are conveniently placed chiefly in one
straite steame under a sunny bank in a low levell
(Woods 1978: 75).

Later he mentions that:

. . . in the absence of intervale settlers planted their small enclosed farms on high ground. Higher ground had less brush and thicket, was more easily cleared, and often had better drainage, if not the most fertile soil (Woods 1978: 86).

Soils and drainage seem to have been critical factors.

Probably another important criteria was to have access to one's fields and the commons. In his study of settlement archaeology at the Mott Farm site in Portsmouth, Rhode Island, Steven Pendery pointed out that access to one's fields was one of several factors involved in selecting a site. On this seventeenth century farm, the house was located away from the road, on higher, well-drained land, and conveniently situated midst farmlands (Pendery 1975). Access to common lands may also have been important. The fact that these early houses did not always coincide with roads and that many of the early communities did have a commons may well mean that the farmhouses were, in part, located on a site that provided relatively easy access to the commons as well as to their fields.

These lands, of which all town proprietors possessed a portion, were part of an open field system where crops were grown and livestock grazed. However the system, which required the cooperation of all involved, broke down and by the end of the seventeenth century was rarely found in new towns and disappearing from the older ones (McManis 1975: 59, Greven 1970: 40-71). This disappearance of the commons, which signaled rather significant changes in husbandry practices, with its accompanying social and economic organization, may also have had some influence on the changing locations of sites. When the commons became individually held that need would have disappeared. This process occurred in New England towns at about the same time that we begin to see houses built directly on the road, sometime during the first part of the eighteenth century.

Surviving examples of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century architecture do much to confirm the common notion that houses were built along a road. Frequently, they are found close to the road, but that does not necessarily mean that this was always so. Roads are like historic structures in that they were built, extended, abandoned, or changed in any number of ways. The road, just as easily, could have been built alongside the house.

It is very clear that the early houses were not necessarily placed alongside the town highways. Two eighteenth century maps of the Island of Rhode Island show this relationship. In 1777 Charles Blaskowitz made an exceptionally detailed topographic map of the region. On it field lines, hills, streams, roads, and structures are clearly delineated. Many structures were not located on the road. Rather, they are situated far off the roads, with many on what seems to be elevated terrain. The other map was made by Rochambeau's cartographer's, L. A. and C. L. Berthier, in 1780.³ These maps, too, located a number of structures off the road. A reference in the early Suffield records shows that at least some homes were not directly on the highway. In 1698, "There was granted to Goodman Towseley, a way of three rods wide out of the school Lot, from the street up as farr as his house where it now stands" (Sheldon 1889: 133). This was located on the east side of the main street in town, High Street. To what extent this is true in early Suffield is unclear.

By studying the process of road development and combining this with the knowledge of how early sites were selected, the relationship between roads and houses becomes

more apparent. While researching land records, family genealogies, and D. H. Clark's notes for information on historic sites and roads, it became clear that in the early years of settlement town highways were often built after the construction of homes. A reading of highway descriptions showed that, in fact, roads tended to follow the homes and often ways, or private access roads for these homes, were incorporated into new roads or widened to form town highways. One road description from 1712 should illustrate:

At the same Time was laid out a Highway or Passage for the Inhabitants below Stony Brook of one Rod and half wide we turn^d out of the Highway that lies along on the East End or Front of the west Range of Lotts on the South Side of Stony Brook Going Aslant Across the Front of James Haywards lott, Marking Severall Trees on the South Side of the way, Till it comes to the Top of the Hill against the Iron works, and slanting down the Hill to the Turn of the River for Stony Brook Where it turns off the Hill across a little Hollow onto the fair Intervale land in said Haywards Lot and over a little Brook Where the path used to pass over it and so along between the Hill and Stony Brook Where it is best for the way Till comes to James Haywards House and then turning up the Hill on the back Side of said Haywards House through said Haywards Land and the rest of the Allotm^t till it comes to and passes over Stony Brook a little below the Cornmill from thence through the lotts to the Highway or Passage to the Old Mill entering into it a little West of the wet land on the west and of the long Hill said way is laid out for the most part of the Way Where the path now Goes (Sheldon 1889: 174-175).

Only by appearances, then, is there such a close relationship between early historic sites and roads. Without the specific knowledge of a town's road history, it would be impossible to understand precisely how the landscape developed and changed through time.

Interpretation of Research:

In Suffield, the topography is such that the initial settlement was oriented in a north-south direction and followed the intervalles and terraces of the Connecticut River Valley. Two roads, High Street and Feather Street, were laid out along the two ridges, and the homelots were laid out in narrow strips to give the settlers access to both the lowlands and higher lands of the terraces. Our research focused on a section of Feather Street and the homelots of some of the original proprietors, where it would be possible to study the initial period of settlement and any subsequent changes in the landscape. This area included lands to the west of Feather Street, which ran just to the north of Thrall Avenue and south of Bridge Street.

The archaeological and architectural surveys conducted along Feather Street this summer have tentatively shown a continuity in settlement patterns from the initial years on through to the present. Neither the archaeological nor architectural work conducted this summer found anything that would indicate any change in settlement patterns. This study, however, was far too brief and the evidence much too sketchy to be able to make any conclusions. It is only an initial effort that has helped to refine questions and research methods. All historic structures and all archaeological sites were found directly on the roads, but no archaeological remains from the seventeenth century were discovered. Only through inference can a case for the locations of seventeenth century sites be made. On the other hand, this research should provide a better means to understand the processual problems of

settlement patterns. An attempt will be made to interpret the results of our research in light of the history of the roads in the area and the important criteria in choosing sites. Ultimately, the verification of these ideas rests on a strengthened field strategy and the location of early sites.

When all the archaeological, architectural, and archival data are considered in light of the road history and process of site selection, it would seem reasonable to suggest that sites from the seventeenth century should be located either directly on the roads or not far away. Over the entire area surveyed there are not many areas as well suited for sites as along the roads.

Feather Street, now East Street, was laid out in 1671 near the river, "though some distance from the Great River, there being some land left there for a Common" (Sheldon 1889: 58). This road was built along the terrace nearest the river, but apparently it took so much of the higher, better drained terrace lands that the lots to the west of the road were left short. Two years later, in 1673, the town moved the road several rods east, giving them better land (Sheldon 1889: 64). The other roads involved in the survey were Bridge Street and Thrall Avenue. Thrall Avenue is a very early road, being the highway to Feather Street that was laid out in 1673 (Sheldon 1889: 63). Bridge Street was not put in until the early nineteenth century. As one walks west away from East Street, one encounters some high ground, but much lowland that is overgrown with brush and thicket. There are a few somewhat elevated areas, one that is not directly on the road but is very close and some along Bridge Street and Thrall Avenue. On observing the locations of the older houses along these roads, it becomes obvious that they are, without exception, situated either on or very near the higher elevations. The topography of this area is actually very subtle and the differences in elevation range only from 100 and 110 to 150 feet above sea level. Yet, despite the subtle topography, the choice of site locations is strikingly clear. The choice, within the topography of the home-lot or property, was for the higher ground.

The location of the commons, which was east of Feather Street to the river, reinforces the notion that the early sites were not far from the road. This commons was established expressly for the inhabitants of Feather Street in 1673:

Whereas! Such Inhabitants as shall have Lots and live in Feather Street, have not the like passage into the woods as others, and are like to be straitened for Commonage and turning out of Cattle; it is therefore agreed, and determined, and ordered, that all the Land before Feather Street on the East of it to the Great River; Shall forever lye common for the benefit of the Inhabitants there . . .
(Sheldon 1889: 64).

With one's farm close to the road, the commons would have been within a convenient distance.

The verification of these ideas required the location of historic sites through a combined archaeological and architectural survey. Both were conducted simultaneously so that the knowledge gained from the architectural work would help to guide the archaeological survey. The goal of the architectural survey was to first assess the age of the standing structures and secondly to determine the length of occupation, by noting any part of the house, or any associated outbuilding that was not contemporaneous with the construction of the house. Dell Upton, an architectural historian, examined many of the houses and associated outbuildings and determined

that with one exception, the houses all probably dated to the nineteenth century. The outbuildings, with two exceptions, were either contemporary with or post-dated the main building. This work helped to clarify date discrepancies in our minds and pin down the locations of some sites. It established that, other than modern buildings interspersed among them, the nineteenth century landscape was more or less intact. Of the historic buildings examined, only two contained eighteenth century components. One was a house that dated to the second half of the eighteenth century and another was a mid-nineteenth century house, with the old mid-eighteenth century house and early-eighteenth century barn located nearby.

One of the motivations for doing the survey was to understand the length of occupation on historic sites with standing structures. To locate multicomponents within these sites would provide valuable data to guide an archaeological survey. It did not prove as productive for as many sites as expected, however. Of those five sites examined, all buildings were either contemporary with or post-dated the main structure. In only two instances did barns predate the house structure. One site, where an early twentieth century house now stands, a barn now only partially standing predates the standing house. An informant recalled an old Cape Cod structure that had stood on the site but had been torn down some years ago. Thus, some length of occupation is indicated, but any further data would require extensive archaeological testing. The other site proved to be far more productive. Associated with a mid-nineteenth century house was an early-eighteenth century barn as well as a mid-eighteenth century house converted into a barn. The foundation for the earlier house was located near the nineteenth century house. This site proved to be so productive that an extended discussion of our findings and what can be learned from them has been included at the end of this section.

Of the five sites looked at, only two had barns that predated the main building. The fact that any evidence of an earlier occupation within the sites was not located should not seem too surprising. The fact that all structures on a site were contemporary with one another or more recent does not mean that there are not older components within the site. Simply, the above ground structures may have been destroyed years ago. Also, barns went through rugged use. They were built with a specific use in mind and, through time, these uses changed. Alterations helped keep them functional, but changing uses also meant that many were torn down. The survival of these structures is often the exception rather than the rule. Thus, it should not be too surprising to find many homes with barns that were built sometime after the house. To find barns that are contemporary with very old houses is rare.

The survey of historic houses, however, produced some interesting observations. One thing that has become clear during this past year's research is that the determination of length of occupation archaeologically is neither quick nor easy. An architectural historian can quickly point out whether or not there are any discrepancies in the dates of structures on the sites, but any archaeological work is extremely time consuming and the results are, by nature, tentative. Over a week of intensive testing on one site where there were obvious discrepancies in the dates of the buildings failed to turn up what we were looking for. Thus, it is quite possible to use architectural information to determine the length of occupation of a site in a manner that, when combined with an archaeological survey, can produce significant results.

Archaeologically, our goals were to test along the road and other areas thought to be likely site locations. This meant testing around historic sites, fields abutting the road, and higher elevations. The field season, unfortunately, was too short to complete such a task. Because of the brief time, testing was focused on two historic houses, fields along the road whenever possible, and the ridge located just west off East Street. As much of the area along East Street as we could gain access to was tested. Except for the area around two modern houses and one historic house whose owner had not given permission, almost the entire expanse was tested.

Where possible, fields were surface collected and, when needed, transects of five- and ten-meters were laid out and STP's were dug. Along this portion of the road Delphina Clark had located a number of seventeenth and eighteenth century sites. However the survey located only one earlier site and absolutely no indication of any other sites were found. Around the two historic houses STP's were dug. The lawn of an early nineteenth century house which Delphina Clark thought might have been the site of two earlier homes was tested. Although the integrity of the site was extremely low, with a swimming pool, landscaping, and other modern conveniences disturbing the archaeological deposits, nothing that would indicate the presence of an earlier structure was uncovered. All artifacts dated from the nineteenth century. The site of the second historic home was tested extensively, and produced good indications of a much earlier occupation. This will be discussed at the end of the section. Thus, the search for historic sites along the road fell far short of our expectations.

Away from East Street the survey focused on some of the higher elevations. A ridge just west of East Street runs in a north-south direction. Thrall Avenue bisects it and Bridge Street cuts across the southern end. Situated on this hill today are a number of houses, both modern and historic. Almost all of the historic buildings in this area are, in fact, on the ridge or slightly on the downslope. There was not enough time to test around the houses, but as much of the ridge as could be was tested.

The wooded and field area south of Thrall and to just south of Bridge was tested with STP's and surface collections but nothing from either the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries were located. According to D. Clark's study, this area contained the original homelots of Walter Holladay, Samuel Kent, Sr., and Major John Pyncheon and there were probably at least two homes there during the seventeenth century. One site was discovered but land records showed it to have been built in 1801 by Eusebius Archer and, according to D. Clark, burned in 1873. All artifacts dated within this time period and there was ample evidence of an intense fire.

The only portions of the ridge that could not be tested were the properties on which some modern homes were built. A high probability of major disturbances by large construction equipment makes testing in these areas unproductive. Another area which met all the criteria for a good site location and which had a relatively recent house built on an old foundation was not tested. Permission to test had been denied. If one's deductions are correct, there is a good chance it is the site of the seventeenth century Kent homestead. It is approximately where the Kent homelot was located and the road in front of the house was not put in until 1800 (Clark 2: 58). According to D. Clark, there was a house and barn on the Kent lot by 1696 but by 1795 it was probably gone (Clark 2: 43). The road cut through the Benoni King lot on which this early home stood. Thus, the old house site is quite likely either the house and property we could not test or it was south of Bridge Street where the modern houses now stand. Without additional field work it is impossible to say.

Site #0227:

Documentary research indicated that this site was part of a 50-acre homelot granted to Anthony Austin and that he probably lived on this property from the time he received it in 1676 until he died in 1708. A search of the land records showed that he did not receive a small houselot on High Street, and the only other acreage he received during the first few years of settlement was five acres of meadow land on Muddy Brook and an additional 80 acres on the Windsor line in 1681. In 1698 he did purchase a six-acre houselot on High Street from Thomas Tylor but his son, Richard, apparently received it as part of his inheritance. Anthony, Sr. probably never lived there. His son, John, inherited this houselot on Feather Street and lived on it from 1708 until 1738 when William, John's son, inherited the houselot. In 1757 William Austin sold the house and houselot to Robert Granger. This is the first mention of a house, although it is clear from the deeds that there were buildings standing before that time on the east 1/3 of the original 50-acre houselot.

After this time the land and buildings passed through a number of hands. Robert Granger's sons, Zadock and Robert, both owned it for a time, then Oliver Phelps owned it for a year, from 1784 to 1785. It returned to the Granger family until 1839 when Sheldon Hitchcock obtained it. In 1844 Archibald Kinney purchased it, keeping it until he died in about 1892.⁴

Using the land record descriptions alone, it was impossible to understand the building sequence on the Austin houselot. From them, the only possible conclusion was that sometime before 1757 a house stood on this property. The survey of the standing structures on the property by an architectural historian, however, demonstrated that there were at least three periods of construction on the same site. The earliest structure was an early eighteenth century barn, the second a mid-eighteenth century house, and the third a mid-nineteenth century house, all three of which had been converted into a nineteenth century farm complex. To form this complex, the early barn, at the very least, was turned around (moving the original entrance to the north) and a bay added onto either end. The mid-eighteenth century house was stripped down to the frame, converted into a barn, and moved to the west end of the barn. The mid-nineteenth century house was built near the road, just east of the eighteenth century barn (see Figure 1).

A knowledge of the architectural sequence provided significant clues for the archaeological survey. From them, we knew that this particular site probably dated from at least the early eighteenth century and that the foundation for the earlier structure was probably not far away. Evidence from the foundation of the later house showed that it was original to the nineteenth century house and not the foundation for the earlier house. To locate the earlier components of the site, fields with good visibility were surface collected and STP's were dug where the visibility was low. For areas where the crop prevented either method, plans were made to return later in the summer after the crops had been harvested. Knowing that neither the older house or the barn stood in their original positions, the ground under both structures was tested for either refuse deposits or structural remains. Where concentrations of artifacts were picked up by surface collections or STP's, squares were dug to obtain more information. Only after all areas around the house had been tested was permission sought from the landowner to dig STP's in the lawn, near the standing nineteenth century house.

Archaeologically, the continuous occupation of the site from the third quarter of the eighteenth century was identified, with only a few hints of an earlier occupation present. Overall, there was a scatter of artifacts throughout the site dating from the late seventeenth century and a few areas of primary deposits, all of which dated from the late eighteenth century and later. From these artifact

SITE No. 0227

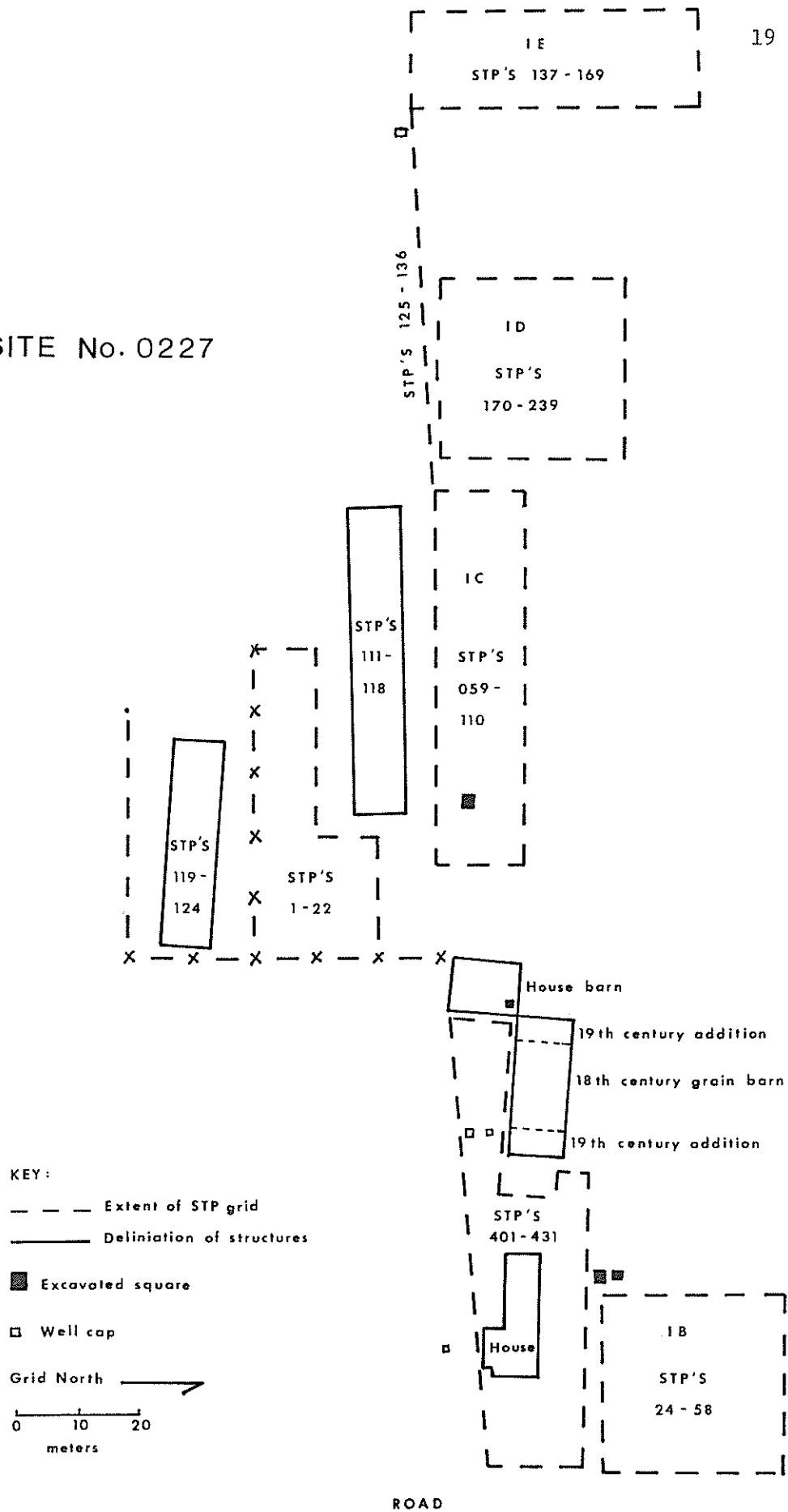


Figure 1

concentrations, the general location of the earlier mid-eighteenth century house became evident. Just north of the house surface collections and a square showed a high concentration of late eighteenth century to mid-nineteenth century artifacts. It seemed clear that the earlier house had to have been very close to the later nineteenth century one. STP's subsequently dug in the front lawn bore out this theory. What was probably the corner of the foundation of the earlier house was located in one STP in the front lawn. This interpretation was reinforced by the fact that an 1853 tax list showed the value of the house on that property to have doubled in that year. Chances were good that they built the new house in the 1850's, stripped the older one, moved it to its present location, and turned it into a barn. The dates of the artifacts excavated from these areas confirm the construction and demolition date suggested by the tax list and architectural evidence.

Despite the presence of the early barn and despite the land records which strongly suggested buildings on the east third of the lot before 1757, no archaeological remains were found that could be attributed to this early period. The early artifacts were scattered surface finds, and they came from no one place in particular. There were a few on the far west end of the area tested and just to the north of the early barn, but in neither case was there any concentration of artifacts that might be suggestive of a house site. The early years of the Austin homelot remain elusive for the archaeological survey. Unfortunately, the survey was restricted to the front of the Austin homelot because most of the farmland was either overgrown or in hay and could not be tested. For the overgrown part, it would have taken a substantial investment of time to adequately survey and it could not be done.

The fact that neither structural or artifact remains from the seventeenth century were found should not be taken as meaning it was not there. Rather, seventeenth century sites have remained quite elusive in New England. Even on known sites where the early structure has survived, intensive excavations of the area surrounding the building has often failed to turn up any deposits dating to the earliest period of occupation. Two notable examples of this are the Mott Farm in Portsmouth, Rhode Island, and the Narbonne House in Salem, Massachusetts.

One can make the judgement, then, that archaeological surveys, in particular, cannot define the length of occupation on the site using artifacts alone. It takes the combination of all available resources and even then it is impossible to know for sure. Just because one did not find anything one cannot conclude that nothing exists. To identify sites, a survey cannot rely on its field methods alone. A number of research procedures have to be employed, among them a systematic use of land records, maps, tax lists, and a knowledgeable survey of historic structures.

Site #0227 is also important in that it is an excellent example of how surviving structures, outbuildings not often made an integral part of architectural surveys, can provide such vital clues to the occupational history of a site. Without them, the interpretation would have been phenomenally more difficult. The only clue of an earlier occupation would have been the artifacts excavated just to the north of the mid-nineteenth century house that predated by a few years the construction date of the house. However there was almost nothing archaeologically that would have indicated an even earlier component in the occupation of the site.

As archaeologists we chose to focus on the actual process of settlement from the viewpoint of how the settlers perceived their landscape and how they chose their sites, partly because it would provide a better means to locate historic

sites, but also because it would provide a more solid foundation for further studies. There are other problems related to settlement patterns that we could have focused on. Among these are the origin and persistence of the myth of nucleated villages in American society; the origin, development, and disappearance of the common fields; the development of the town center in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; and the socioeconomic reasons for these evolving settlement pattern phenomena. However, if a simple study of maps and land records cannot produce an accurate understanding of the landscape, then the process of settlement is the only means through which we can begin to obtain a more accurate picture of the landscape. Such an approach should ultimately prove far more productive for subsequent studies.

Even before research was begun it was evident that the working model of a nucleated village laid out along two parallel streets was only partially correct. The center of Suffield was nucleated from the early years to some extent, but there was also an important dispersed element within the community from the very beginning. Variability exists even within any town. Within Suffield, distinct differences developed in different parts of town. Specific documentary research has not been done for all parts of town, but the initial impression shows the center to have been more or less nucleated with relatively small houselots interspersed with larger lots, a meeting house, school, and minister's lot. Feather Street, the other street that runs parallel to the river, also had long narrow lots but they tended to be much larger and homes were generally more dispersed. The west part of town, also, had dispersed homes on some very early land grants. Beginning with the initial settlement industry was active and apparently was always contained along the streams until the turn of this century.

Thus, research on the settlement pattern model was based on the belief that within any given town there would be variations in the landscape, variations that would be based on different land uses and variations in the topography. Given the limited time frame of the research, it would be necessary to focus on a certain part or parts of town that would prove most productive. Consequently, our generalizations about settlement patterns would have to fall into these limits.

To study settlement patterns one must be aware of socioeconomic patterns as they were manifested in given localities within the town. In the center of town, it was agriculturally based until the late eighteenth century. From that time, however, the center village took on an increasingly commercial character as trade and industry developed in New England. Within this transformation into a commercial center, the form of settlement probably remained much the same and retained much the nucleated character it had had from the beginning.

Of the other parts of town, we chose to focus primarily on Feather Street, one of the two parallel streets that was not part of the village center and whose homes were dispersed from the beginning. This choice provided the opportunity to study the settlement pattern of one of the oldest parts that did not conform to the accepted model for a Connecticut River Valley town. This part of town remained rural, agricultural, and for the most part unchanged in its basic settlement pattern. Also, a portion of one of the streams was chosen to study because of the striking contrast between it and the rest of town which has been continuously occupied since the seventeenth century. Industry along the streams has today been abandoned, and only a few signs of the previous activity are visible. An assessment of this part of town seemed critical for a preservation study aimed at evaluating archaeological resources.

Thus our areas chosen to study were based in large part on land use and how that changed over time. Along Feather Street, where there was a continuity of use, one would expect a relative continuity in settlement patterns. Given changes in land use as in the case of the streams, one would expect greater changes in the landscape. Thus, as our work had to become focused specifically within certain portions of Suffield, it had to be "contextural." It had to draw on primary documents, architecture, and archaeology in those areas to look at how that landscape had been affected by changing socioeconomic patterns and the changing uses of land.

Some of the ideas will be applicable to other parts of Suffield and other New England towns. But these ideas are based on research in certain portions of a Connecticut Valley town, an outlying portion that remained rural and agricultural throughout its history and a stream that is now largely abandoned. In other areas where a significant commercial interest developed in towns, there will be a difference. For example, the town center in so many towns underwent a significant change with the development of industry, trade, and commerce in New England during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In inferences to be made for other towns, or even other parts of Suffield, they must first be prefaced by an analysis of that particular context. The main danger in this type of approach is that it is so easy to generalize to other situations. On the other hand, new insights can be had and assumptions of nucleated villages will now have to take into account this rather significant dispersed element. It is a place to begin to ask many new questions.

For this study of settlement patterns in rural New England, the approach has helped to form the notion that from the initial years of settlement there was a basic continuity in settlement pattern within the outlying portion of Suffield. From the seventeenth century, no industry or any other type of land use other than farming was ever established. Within this basic continuity of land use, the landscape has stayed relatively the same. To the casual observer it would appear that the seventeenth century landscape with dispersed homes on their own homelots with houses located either on or off the town highway depending on the terrain and soils of his homelot, would be rather different from the late eighteenth and nineteenth century landscape where there is such a clear relationship between the roads and houses. However if the process in which this occurred is considered, then it should become more evident that they really are not so different.

Given what information was gained from the survey of historic sites along Feather Street, Thrall Avenue, and Bridge Street, one must conclude that the settlement pattern never really changed. Providing our survey methods are adequate and that if seventeenth century sites had existed elsewhere we would have found them, one must conclude that settlers built homes on what seemed a good location and that over time these sites were either continually or intermittently occupied. In this area, Thrall Avenue was built within the first few years and our guess now is that some of the early sites are probably along this road. Gradually other roads (such as Bridge Street) were placed in a way that accommodated already standing houses. Thus, the process of settlement and road building becomes very much one and the same thing. Over time, the two became indistinguishable from one another because, over time, both were laid out on the most advantageous terrain. By the eighteenth century, a more distinct relationship between roads and houses should have developed. Along Feather (East) Street now, south of Bridge Street, the topography would suggest that the houses were always placed along the road because there seems to be few other places as well suited. Now it becomes possible to reformulate our model of this rural outlying area to show a continuity over time. Rather than undergoing fundamental change over time the landscape developed around itself. Homelots were passed down through the generations, split among sons, or sold to others. Through time more homes were built directly on the road. But the basic pattern did not change.

Whether or not houses in the seventeenth century were actually located on or off the road remains a problem because none were located this summer, either on or off the road. Given this difficulty one must seriously examine the adequacy of survey methods or, indeed, of archaeology itself. If field methods were used alone, without extensive documentary records, certainly the only conclusion that could be made would be one of inadequacy. Even with an extensive effort at locating sites with the combined use of documents, we are faced with no verified seventeenth century sites and only our logic as to where they should be.

The study has taught a great deal about the best methods for an archaeological survey of historic sites. They are, ultimately, dependent on the extensive use of documentary sources. In doing an archaeological survey to locate historic sites, it has become more than clear that without this extensive documentary work it would be impossible to do any kind of systematic survey. So time consuming are these efforts that our survey required up to eight months of work to even begin field work. However the research is vitally important. Without it, one would have no idea of what sites were potentially there, nor have any means of evaluating one's research methods in the end.

To be able to locate sites one must first become familiar with the original land grants and how that property was split up over time by different landowners. The locations of historic houses, when looked at in this light, begin to make sense. Some are not on the highest locations or necessarily the best-drained soils, but the study of land records showed that the property was split among sons. For some, their lands did not contain the higher elevated land. If our guess is correct, the houses they built were, within their property bounds, located on the higher land.

A good working knowledge of land inheritances, roads, the local topography, and soils provides the best background for a survey of historic sites. With this knowledge it is easier to evaluate the survey results. The fact that we surveyed a relatively large area on what we were sure were homelots with homes on them in the seventeenth century and found absolutely no trace of them makes a little better case for claiming that they are probably sites that have been continually occupied or intermittently re-occupied. If this is indeed true and the early sites are still occupied, there are many implications for historic surveys of this type. It will take extensive surveying of much more ground to make any more definite statements.

In reformulating our model, we have gone on the assumption that the survey methods were adequate enough that if a site had been there, there would have been some indication. There should have been enough that it would have made us take a closer look. The fact is, on the ridge that was tested so extensively, there was nothing. The only area not tested was where homes are located today. Thus, my assumption might well be correct that the seventeenth century site was located either on the site of the older home, or where the modern homes were built. Or, indeed, we may be far wrong, and the very early sites may be way off the road. In either case, much more extensive testing is needed to verify either claim. It would seem that this year's research has opened up more questions than it has answered. However, the questions are now much more knowledgeable than when the research was first begun.

Industrial Site Survey:

Although agriculture remained the predominant economic activity in Suffield throughout its history, industry was present in Suffield from the first years of settlement. From the beginning the town encouraged economic enterprise. In a committee meeting January 12, 1670/1, it was declared:

That for Incouragement of some persons to build a Cornmill and Saw Mill for the Comm^{tee} do agree to allow to such person, or persons as shall undertake the same, Sixty Acres of Land for each mill and that as conveniently as may be adjoining to such Place, or Places as may be most meet for the Purpose, or best suit for the Desires of such Undertakers; and do Grant all Conveniences of the Streams to such Persons, and free Liberty for Cutting Timber in the Commons for Boards, and such like uses (Sheldon 1889: 57).

Along Stony Brook a number of mills were established. Major John Pynchon, who had originally purchased the lands from the Indians, was one of the first to establish mills. By 1700 the town approved the setting up of an Iron Works at any place where it was convenient (Sheldon 1889: 137, 151).

While water remained the main power source, the streams remained the location of industry in Suffield. Stony Brook, at least along the portion surveyed, was a center for both small scale and more extensive industrial activity. Among these were sawmills, gristmills, cotton factory, jeans and satinette factory, iron works, oil mill, and two paper mills. Some of these mills were established in the seventeenth century and from that time the sites were used either continually or intermittently until the turn of this century. Beginning at the end of the nineteenth century, the area went into decline and, by the 1920's, there was nothing left of its past except for some buildings. Since then floods and fires have taken their toll. Today the stream banks are mostly abandoned, with only a few buildings and foundations left of the former activity.

Along the section of Stony Brook chosen to survey were five mill sites, some of which had one or more mills in operation at any one time from the seventeenth century. In our survey only two of these sites were definitely identified, mapped, and photographed. Time and incomplete permissions to all properties along the stream prohibited work on the other sites. One site on which there are still buildings standing was that of the Eagle Paper Mill. Originally part of the Norton family farm, ten acres were sold in 1818 to Asa Butler and in 1818 his brother, Simeon, and Wateman Ward became owners of the Eagle Paper Mill. In 1877 a fire destroyed much of the mill but it was taken over by the American Writing Paper Company and operated by them until 1900. Some of the buildings are currently private residences and foundations of some of the buildings are still exposed.

The other site surveyed was that of the Franklin Paper Mill. This site was the location of some of the earliest mill activity in Suffield. In 1672/3 Major John Pynchon built a sawmill which was burned by the Indians during the King Philip's War in 1675 but was soon rebuilt along with a cornmill. These mills, according to Delphina Clark, were probably abandoned at the time of Major Pynchon's death in 1704. After that time the land passed through several hands but there do not appear to have been any mills until 1786 when Daniel Austin, Joseph Pease, and Elijah Easton built a sawmill. In 1812 a cotton factory was added and in about 1825 a paper factory, too. Eventually the paper mill was renamed the Franklin Mill; it changed hands a number of times and in 1914 the buildings burned and subsequently were abandoned.

On these two sites there are some visible remains of the former activity. Some structures still stand and remains of some foundations are still evident. Time did not permit any archaeological testing that would provide any assessment of the integrity of subsurface deposits. It would seem, however, that the integrity of these multi-component sites would be highly variable. With the combination of the disturbance of earlier mills by the construction of later mills and occasional floods, one would expect a lot of mixing of components. Because of this continual use of the same site, it could be extremely difficult if not impossible to isolate mills and mill complexes. However, given the nature of streams, which can protect with silt deposits as much as they can destroy with floods, there may still be some potential. Plus, the fact that these areas are today abandoned and do not seem to be subject to development may mean there could be some potential for further research.

Perhaps one of the best potential for research made evident by our survey of these sites is in the study of historic environments. On the Franklin Paper Mill site, sediments from a mill pond that probably date to at least the early nineteenth century were left exposed when the 1955 flood washed out the south embankment of the dam. A single bank cut was made in the pond sediments. With information from this bank cut, an assessment has been made of the research potential for the mills along Stony Brook.⁵

Like abandoned mill ponds throughout New England, the sediments of this mill pond offer some interesting possibilities for environmental research. The sediments should preserve evidence of both regional vegetation and drainage basin water quality. The study of these sediments should offer insights into changing environmental quality during the rise and decline of industry in Suffield and may perhaps offer a baseline to evaluate twentieth century environmental changes. A vegetational record may be preserved in the form of pollen grains and spores. As long as the sediments have not been subjected to repeated drying and wetting, there is a good chance that pollen grains are preserved in the sediments.

Another potential area of research is water quality. Located near the mouth of the stream, this mill pond may offer a record of water quality just before the stream entered the Connecticut River. The effluents from a variety of industries probably resulted in the pollution of the brook, or at least in changes in its chemistry, fauna, and flora. Microscopic flora and fauna such as algae, diatoms, and Cladocera, whose populations are rapidly affected by changes in stream chemistry, should be preserved in the sediments. This change, as well as shifting agricultural and industrial practices, may be reflected in the geochemistry of the sediments.

A study of Stony Brook mill pond sediments could be undertaken as one of a number which would be intended to study the historic environment on a regional scale. Such a program might place emphasis on the study of mill ponds because of their often rapid sedimentation, potential for tight chronology, and potential for reflecting changes in water quality with changes in land use practices. If particular industries produce distinctive effluents which are preserved in sediments (e.g., a textile mill might dump dyes, a paper mill bleaches, and iron works heavy elements), rises and declines in the chemical signatures of these industries might reflect the rise and decline of the respective industry or of particular mills. The mill ponds on Stony Brook, particularly the one at Franklin Paper Mill, could be used for a pilot study undertaken by geologists, geochemists, paleoecologists, and historians to study cultural and environmental changes in the surrounding area.

The Preservation of Resources

The Connecticut River Valley has always been one of the state's richest resources. From the early seventeenth century colonists established a fur trading post in Windsor, and William Pynchon a series of posts along valley sites. In a region with predominantly hilly, rocky soils, the valley's rich and fertile soils and meadowlands provided some of the best agricultural land in New England. When communication, transportation, and trade was mostly by water, the river provided direct access to the sea. Thus, the valley region has always been special and its towns have reflected this quality (Martin 1939, McManis 1975).

Today the Connecticut Valley is rapidly undergoing urban development. Of all the valley towns, Suffield is one of the few remaining with any significant amount of undeveloped land that was part of the earliest settlement. Archaeological work in the town, however, is difficult in the sense that the town itself is undergoing rapid development and farmlands are currently being turned into sometimes rather extensive housing developments. Survey work is also difficult in the sense that almost all the land is either privately owned, or much is being bought up by developers. The task of selecting a region to test and obtain needed permissions is formidable and the event of gaining access to all necessary lands almost impossible. If one were to conduct an extensive campaign in town to gain support it might be more feasible, but even that effort is a long term project that requires a great deal of time, commitment, and personal interaction with the community. The support for our work in town was extensive and much appreciated by the AIAI staff. The problem, however, was that much of our work was contingent upon gaining access to a particular piece of property that documentary research indicated as having the presence of a site. Without permission from the owner of that piece of property, we could not proceed.

Nonetheless, given our knowledge of historic sites in Suffield, the current threat of destruction and the fact that the town is the last Connecticut Valley town with any significant farmlands left, it would seem prudent to investigate the possibility of developing a plan that could preserve portions of town with historical significance. Certain portions have been nominated or on the National Register of Historic Places but additional outlying regions could provide significant data on settlements in the river valley.

Although our limited investigation of Suffield uncovered relatively few sites this past summer, it became very clear that the majority of historic sites should be located directly on the roads and many of the older sites on or near the more recent sites. The integrity of the subsurface deposits on these sites varies tremendously from being completely destroyed to being almost undisturbed. Nevertheless, the preservation and study of some of the older regions of town would preserve at least a portion of a Connecticut Valley town.

The results of our research present some interesting implications for both archaeological and architectural surveys, as well as preservation programs that draw on their data. There does seem to be a close correlation between standing structures and archaeological sites. Further research should be aimed at this relationship, as any subsequent management plan should take this into account. Architectural surveys will have to come to question the criteria often used for evaluating the significance of a standing structure. Evaluation procedures may well have to incorporate far more data from many more resources. Given the evidence from Suffield, one must conclude that whether or not a particular standing structure is worthy of preservation is irrelevant. It is the fact that there is a fair probability of its being located on or near earlier sites that gives it historical importance. Archaeologists will have to incorporate architectural data more

fully into their research strategies. Further research should be based on an integrated study combining extensive documentary research, an architectural survey of houses and associated outbuildings, and an archaeological survey. When integrated, one should gain a more efficient research method that can more readily pinpoint the occupation period of a site than if any one resource were used on its own.

Notes

1. Maps used extensively are: 1. A Plan of Suffield First Society, December 1783. The original copy is at the Kent Memorial Library, Suffield, Connecticut. 2. Smith's Map of Hartford County, Connecticut. Surveyed by E. M. Woodford 1855. 3. Atlas of Hartford City and County, Published by Baker and Tilden, 1869. Surveyed by F. W. Beers.
2. Land Records for Suffield are kept in a number of places. Some are in the Hampton County Courthouse in Massachusetts. Others are recopied in volumes kept in the historical collection of the Kent Memorial Library and the rest are in the Suffield Town Hall. Delphina H. Clark produced the Digest of Land Records of Suffield, which contains summaries of the land transactions kept in the Hampton County Courthouse. Delphina Clark's notes on land transfers are kept in the Kent Memorial Library.
3. In July 1777, Charles Blaskowitz surveyed a map entitled "A Topographical Chart of the Bay of Narraganset in the Province of New England with all the Isles contained therein; among which Rhode Island and Connecticut have been particularly surveyed." A copy is in the Connecticut State Library. The second map was surveyed by L. A. and C. L. Berthier, Plan of Rhode Island, in 1780. The original is in the John Carter Brown Library, Brown University.
4. For a history of this homelot refer to D. H. Clark's notes, Volume 2, pp. 78-80. References to the land records for this property and others discussed in this section are as follows:
 To Anthony Austin, March 10, 1676. Suffield Town Book 1670-1889, p. 36.
 To Anthony Austin, April 1677. Suffield Town Records Volume I, p. 154.
 To Anthony Austin, 1698/9. Delphina H. Clark's Digest of Land Records 1679-1750. p. 87.
 Also Hampton County Records Volume B, p. 377.
 There is no record of the transfer of the High Street homelot to Richard, but he probably received it soon after his father bought it, for on February 11, 1698/9 he bought a 10-acre houselot from Stephen Tylor which lay adjacent to the houselot his father purchased and in 1724/5 the land deed to his son, Richard, Jr., showed the houselot to have 20 acres.
 To Richard Austin from Stephen Tylor. Hampton County Records Volume B, p. 379.
 To Richard Austin, Jr., from Richard Austin, Sr. February 3, 1724/5. Hampton County Records Volume E, p. 474.
 To Robert Granger from William Austin, November 17, 1757. Suffield Town Records, Volume 1, p. 379.
 References for subsequent land transactions are as follows:
 Robert Granger to Zadock Granger, April 27, 1759. Suffield Land Records Volume 1, p. 380.
 Zadock Granger to Robert Granger, Sr., August 18, 1764. Suffield Land Records Volume 2, p. 431.
 Robert Granger, Sr. to Robert Granger, Jr., 1768. Suffield Land Records Volume 3, p. 419.
 Robert Granger to Oliver Phelps, 1784. Suffield Land Records Volume 5, p. 108.
 Oliver Phelps to Zadock Granger, 1785. Suffield Land Records Volume 6, p. 167.
 Zadock Granger to Rufus Granger, 1788. Suffield Land Records Volume 6, p. 229.
 Rufus Granger to Rufus Granger, Jr., 1825. Suffield Land Records, Volume 15, p. 382.
 Heirs of Rufus Granger to Sheldon Hitchcock, 1839. Suffield Land Records Volume 18, p. 215.

Sheldon Hitchcock to Archibald Kenney, 1844. Suffield Land Records Volume 21, p. 367.

Kenney Heirs to Oliver Wilson Kellos, Jr., 1892. Suffield Land Records Volume 35, p. 305.

5. The following text is an edited version of a longer discussion of the research potential of mill pond sediments submitted by Chris Borstel. Those interested may contact the AIAI for additional information.

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