

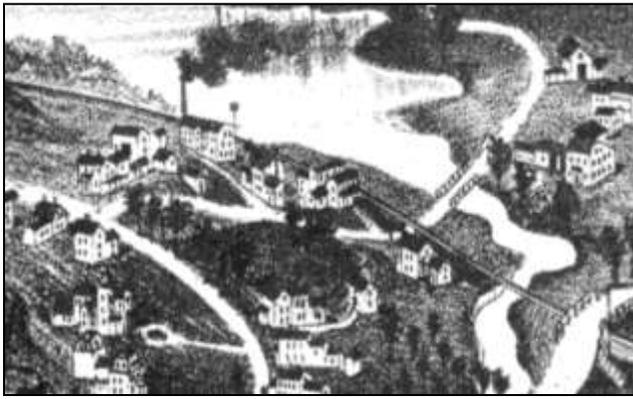
INDUSTRIAL SITES ALONG THE ABERJONA RIVER

From the Mystic Lake to the Woburn Line

By Ellen Knight

BETWEEN MYSTIC LAKE AND BACON STREET

Symmes/Bacon Mills



From about 1671 until 1876, one or two mills stood on the island in this channel. In 1876 Robert Bacon moved his mill to the foot of Grove Place where it stayed until the early 1950s. Known as Baconville, the area was a thriving industrial site for which the Wedgemere train station was built. Industries and products from these mills included: fulled and dyed cloth, canal boat

manufacture, cotton batting, print works, a sash and blind factory, room paper, sawed mahogany, brass finishing and glass grinding, isinglass, hair felt, carpet felt or fabrilla, nail-works, and veneer mahogany and rosewood mill. The Bacon Mill is pictured here in 1886 (looking downstream from Bacon Street to the Mystic Lakes).



BETWEEN BACON STREET BRIDGE AND WATERFIELD BRIDGE

Thompson/Waldmyer Tanneries & Railroad Freight Yard, later Manchester Field



From 1838 until the 1890s, a tannery stood just south of the Waterfield Bridge, by the railroad and river on the site of Manchester Field (before the channel was moved). It was built by Benjamin Thompson and was sold in 1870, acquired by Philip Waldmyer (*when it looked as shown right*). Next to the tannery was a lumber

and bark business and a coal business. Until the 1890s, the freight yard was also in this area.



MILL POND

Converse/Richardson/Whitney Mill, now Locatelli Building site

For about three centuries (c. 1642 – 1911) a mill stood just south of the dam at Main Street. The first was a grist mill. During the nineteenth century several small industries operated at the site, including sash and blind shops, dye shop, lasting machines, manufactory of leather splitting machinery, shoe-pegging, wood-working lathes, mahogany veneering, printing presses, manufactory of knives and carriers' tools, furniture, and machinery. The Whitney Mill is shown as rebuilt in 1872.



Winchester Laundries, now the Mill Pond Building

The current Mill Pond Building was formerly the home of The Winchester Laundries, which in 1926 was asked to control a merger of four other laundries, known as New England Laundries, Inc. The first laundry building was built on this site in 1898 and was replaced in 1912 by a large brick and concrete building.



SKILLINGS ROAD TO SWANTON STREET

Freight Yard, now part of Ciarcia Field

A one-acre freight yard stood between the southern end of Summer Street and the railroad after 1939. (See map below)

Moseley/Loring & Avery/Beggs & Cobb Tanneries, now site of Parkview Condominiums

The site of the Parkview Condominiums was formerly the site of a large tannery from at least 1870 to 1959, when the buildings were destroyed by fire.

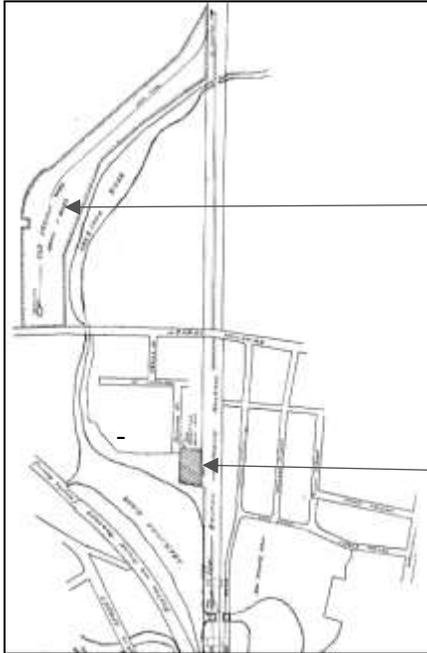


1922 Beggs & Cobb viewed from the Swanton Street Bridge

FROM SWANTON STREET TO CROSS STREET

Former Freight yard, now site of The Village

From 1899 to 1939, approx. 11 acres to the west of the river above Swanton Street were used as the railroad freight yard.



Old Freight Yard 1939

New Freight Yard 1939

McKay Metallic Fastener/Puffer Manufacturing, now Town Transfer Station Site

The McKay Metallic Fastener Co., manufacturers of shoemaking machinery, built a factory in 1893 on vacant land near the river north of Swanton St. After the company moved to Beverly, the building was sold about 1906 to the Puffer Manufacturing Company, manufacturers of soda water fountains and used by them 20 years or more. Damaged by fire and hurricane, it was partly rebuilt by the Grief Brothers. During the 1940s, the Town purchased the site for a dump and incinerator, which opened in 1949.



McKay factory c. 1906



Puffer Manufacturing, 1922

Maxwell Tannery/Whitten Gelatin, now Winchester Community Park

Now the site of soccer fields, this area was industrial from at least 1854. From 1870 to 1902, it was the site of the John Maxwell's Eagle Tannery. After the tannery burned in 1887, Maxwell rebuilt it. It was sold about 1902 for a gelatin manufactory known for about ten years as the Winchester Manufacturing Company, then the J. O. Whitten Co., manufacturers of Plymouth Rock Gelatin. The factory was also described as a glue and gelatin factory. Between 1970 and 1973, the property was owned by Swift and Co., then General Gelatin, which continued producing gelatin. In 1979 Hudson Industries took over the property for the production of glue. The sale of the vacant building to General Foods Corp. was reportedly in the closing stages when fire broke out in 1981 destroying the buildings. The site laid vacant ever since.

North of the tannery/gelatin factory was a coal and wood business, whose buildings were demolished in 1949.



McLatchy Patent Leather, 50 Cross Street

This commercial building was formerly the home of the Middlesex Japanning Co., manufacturers of patent leather (1915); Waite & McLatchy Co. (incorporated 1919), also manufacturers of patent leather; and then the Allen H. McLatchy Co., which in 1929 had a capacity of 1,250 sides.

The McLatchy factory behind Leonard Pond during the construction of the pool in the 1930s



WASHINGTON STREET

Richardson/Parker mills, Winn factory, now Winchester Hospital Cancer Center

About 1790, Jeduthan Richardson built a grist mill at this site. He later built a sawmill on Sawmill Brook. From the 1830s to 1868 the site west of Washington Street was the site of a mahogany mill. Then it was the site of the J. H. Winn & Sons Company, absorbed in 1968 by McCord Corporation, a Detroit-based supplier of the auto industry. Prior to purchase in 2004 by Winchester Hospital, the buildings were being used by a church.



WOBURN LINE

Atlantic Gelatin

Though the industrial buildings are located in Woburn, the “Gelly” site includes land in Winchester through which the river flows. Joseph H. Cohen established a gelatin plant on the site in 1919. In 1930 General Foods bought the Atlantic Gelatin Company. In 1985, General Foods was purchased by Philip Morris which subsequently bought Kraft Foods and merged the two food companies in 1989.

