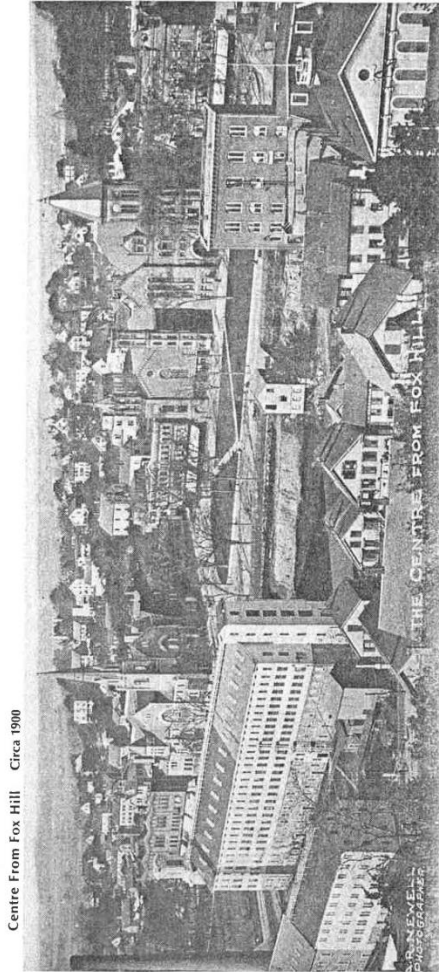
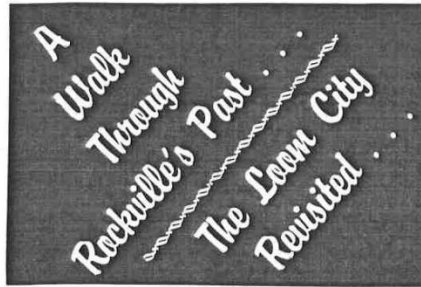


Ward St. (Florence Hill) Early 1900



Centre From Fox Hill Circa 1900



VERNON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Application for Membership

NAME _____ DATE _____

ADDRESS _____

CHECK TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP

- INDIVIDUAL _____ \$5
- FULL TIME STUDENT _____ \$3
- FAMILY _____ \$10
- BUSINESS and INDUSTRIAL _____ \$25
- LIFE _____ \$250

Membership is open to all interested persons.
Mail with your check to Vernon Historical Society,
Box 2055, Vernon, CT 06066



Fitch Mills 1885

A SELF-GUIDED WALKING TOUR OF THE CITY OF ROCKVILLE, CT.

The City of Rockville is located in the northeast corner of the town of Vernon and grew out of the textile industry that developed along the banks of the Hockanum River in the early nineteenth century. Incorporated in 1889 as a city within the town of Vernon, Rockville's moment in history was all too brief, as was the history of the textile industry that gave it birth. Today, only the urban and industrial landscape, so at odds with its suburban surroundings, remains to remind us of the busy city that once moved to the rhythm of falling water and the click of the looms. Rockville's history is the history of the nineteenth century and the Industrial Revolution. In the vernacular architecture of its mills, downtown, and residential neighborhoods, lies a rich social history that deserves to be preserved.

THE AUTOMOBILE HILL CLIMB

In June, 1908, following the suggestion of the Rockville Business Men's Association, the town of Vernon marked its one hundredth birthday with a week long "Old Home Week" celebration. The highlight of the week's events was the Automobile Hill Climb held on Tuesday, June 30. The course ran seven-eighths of a mile up New England Hill (Vernon Ave.) and the race was witnessed by an estimated 10,000 persons. Several of the seventy entries were driven by drivers of national reputation and the race attracted visitors from miles away. "Never in Vernon's history," boasted the chronicler of the event, "were there so many automobiles in town."

THE LOOM CITY OVER THE YEARS

A CHRONOLOGY OF THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY IN ROCKVILLE

1821—Col. Francis McLean of Vernon, in partnership with George and Allyn Kellogg and Ralph Talcott, constructed the first textile factory on the Hockanum River, The Rock Manufacturing Co. This first mill manufactured satinets, a coarse fabric having a cotton warp and a wool filler.

1831—Col. McLean formed a new partnership with Alonzo Bailey and built the Frank Mill on a site further downstream. By 1847 the New England, Springville, and Hockanum companies were added to the complex of mills developing along the Hockanum River. All these early mills manufactured satinets.

1841—Allan Hammond, partner in the New England mill, introduced the Crompton loom and began the manufacture of all wool fancy cashmeres, thus pioneering the manufacture of the fine woolens for which Rockville would gain a national reputation.

1864—The Florence Mill was built on site of the old Frank mill. This mill, the earliest known example of the use of the Second Empire style Mansard roof on an industrial building in the United States is now a National Register Landmark.

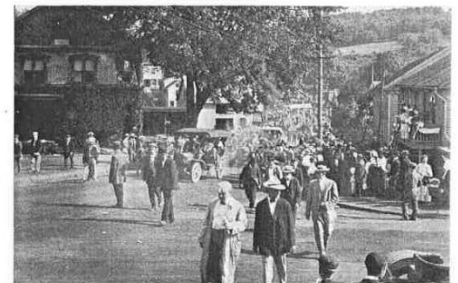
1865-1870—The manufacture of silk thread was introduced in Rockville with the construction of the Carlyle Thread Co. (1865), The Rose Silk Mill (1868), and the Dart Stone Mill (1868). Later these mills became the Belding Brothers silk mill and the Samuel Fitch Stockinet mill.

1892-1905—Rockville woolen mills attain national and international recognition, winning awards at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1892 and the Paris Exposition in 1900. The cloth for the inaugural suits of President William McKinley in 1897 and Theodore Roosevelt in 1905 was produced in the Rockville mills.

1906—Five Rockville woolen mills, the American, New England, Springville, Hockanum, and Minterburn mills, were consolidated into the Hockanum Mills Co. The last woolen mill, the Minterburn (now Roosevelt Mills) was built at this time.

1934—M. T. Stevens and Sons purchase the Hockanum Mills.

1952—M. T. Stevens close down permanently the Rockville woolen mills.



After the Race, Homecoming Week, 1908