Pawtucket Falls. In November 1821, a group of Boston and Merrimack Valley merchants visited the Pawtucket Falls in East Chelmsford. This visit set into motion the Lowell Experiment, which would take advantage of the natural 30-foot drop in the Merrimack River by harnessing the water through a series of canals to power the machinery, via belts and pulleys, in cotton textile mills and related industries. Little did they realize that by doing so, they were laying the foundation for one of the country’s major contributions to the Industrial Revolution. (Above and below LK.)
PAWTUCKET BRIDGE. A wooden toll bridge, known as the Middlesex Merrimack Bridge, was built in 1792 to connect pre-Lowell Falls Village with West Dracut. It was the first bridge in Massachusetts over the Merrimack River and served the trade route over Mammoth Road to southern New Hampshire. In 1861, all tolls were abolished with the sale of the bridge for $12,000 to Middlesex County, the City of Lowell, and the Town of Dracut. Its eventual replacement, the reinforced concrete bridge shown below, became known as the Pawtucket Bridge. Today most refer to it as the O'Donnell Bridge. (Above LK; below LHS.)
**The Riverbed.** At times of very low water, the Merrimack shows its rocky underside in a way that tempts the brave to use it as a walkway from one side to the other. These two views are taken from the Pawtucket and Moody Street sides of the river looking toward the Lowell Textile School, which moved to this site in 1904 and was one of only two textile schools in America at the time. Today the school’s name has changed and it is now part of the University of Massachusetts Lowell campus. (Above and below PD.)
A Lowell View. The Merrimack River dominates the city’s landscape and is the major geographic feature that defines Lowell. But although it is known for its contribution to the area’s urban development, it has areas of natural beauty (above) and has provided opportunities for recreation and relaxation for the thousands of residents and visitors to Lowell over its almost 200-year history. The group below exemplifies how many have used the river as a respite for reading or having a picnic. Today the Merrimack is also used for boating, fishing, and swimming. (Above LHS, below PD.)
LOWELL AND ITS RIVER. Some of the best views of the Merrimack River are from atop selected hills in the Centralville and Belvidere sections of Lowell. At certain vantage points, as shown above, there are dramatic vistas that convey to the viewer the scope and impact of the waterway on the city. Today, the river's water is still harnessed to produce some electricity and the city also relies on the related canal system for fire protection in the downtown area. (L.K.)
Moonlight on the Merrimack. By day, the river served as the power behind industrial development and expansion, and was a source for recreational activities. At night, its tranquility and beauty encouraged romantic walks and drives along its banks. In fact, many remember the courting ritual for young couples included parking along the Merrimack River to appreciate the reflection of the moon on the water. (TL.)
**NORTH COMMON.** The North Common enclosed by Fletcher, Pawtucket, and Salem Streets was located on the outer northwest edge of the city. This large park featured gently rolling hills, treed paths, and a popular band stand (above). On the high ground near the top of the park one can see the tower of the old Franklin Street Fire Station, now the Lafayette Club (below). Today large pieces of land on both North Common and South Common have been taken by the city for school buildings, changing the conditions of the agreement signed 160 years ago. (Above and below R.H.)
FORT HILL. The name Fort Hill came from the fort and palisade that were established atop the large hill in 1669 by Wannalancit, sachem of the Penacook Confederacy, to protect his people from possible Mohawk attack (above). With the arrival of the early colonial settlers, Fort Hill and the surrounding area became part of the town of Tewksbury. This area was dominated by the 247-acre farm of Zadock Rogers (below). In 1834, Rogers Farm, Fort Hill, and the Belvidere Village section of Tewksbury became part of Lowell. It is said that Tewksbury was eager to transfer this "rough and wild" little village to Lowell. (Above and below R.H.)
FORT HILL PARK. In 1886, Elizabeth Rogers, the surviving heir of Zadock Rogers, donated a large portion of the family farm to the city of Lowell for public open space. Ernest Bowditch of Boston was commissioned by the city to design a park. Bowditch, a well-respected landscape architect, also designed the Freeman Shedd Playground in Lowell, as well as the Cleveland Park System in Ohio, Castle Hill in Ipswich, Massachusetts, and several Newport, Rhode Island, estates including the home of wealthy businessman Cornelius Vanderbilt. (Above PD, below TL.)
FORT HILL PARK. The Bowditch design included large shade trees around the outer edge, a few specimen trees scattered throughout the park, strolling paths, gardens, fountains, and stone shelters and buildings (above). At one time, there was even a small public zoo on the top of the hill. Developers quickly subdivided the rest of the old Rogers farm and created several highly desirable residential neighborhoods. By 1900, Fort Hill Park was surrounded by large elegant homes (below) located along Fort Hill Avenue, Hanks Street, High Street, Waverly Avenue, and Huntington Street. (Above LK, below R.H.)
**Winged Victory.** Two Civil War memorials dominate the triangle-shaped Monument Square in front of Lowell’s City Hall. The first is the Ladd and Whitney obelisk and the second is Winged Victory, donated to the city in 1866 by James Cook Ayer to commemorate the end of the war. The nine-foot bronze statue depicts a woman holding a wreath of victory in one hand and a harvest sheaf of peace in another. Standing atop a seven-foot granite pedestal she gazes eastward down Merrimack Street. (L.K.)
PASSACONAWAY MONUMENT. Located in the Edson Cemetery, the monument was erected by the Passaconaway Tribe No. 32 of the “Improved Order of Red Men of Massachusetts,” and dedicated in August 1899. It honors the 17th century Penacook Confederation leader also known as Aspinquid, the Indian Saint. The bronze figure stands on a granite pedestal with a plaque citing that the chief “died at the age of 122.” Due to vandalism, several pieces of the sculpture are missing including the tomahawk in his right hand, his left arm that held a spear, and the feathers in his headdress. (PD.)
**ST. PAUL’S METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.** Located at Hurd and Warren Streets, this church was established because an earlier 1827 Methodist Episcopal church in the Chapel Hill section was too small for its growing parish. St. Paul’s was built in 1839 in the Greek Revival style. During the Civil War, the Reverend Clark spoke so strongly in favor of the North that a man climbed the church’s tower and, for the first time in any New England church, placed the Union flag there. This red brick church still stands, but the parish was closed in 2005. (R.H.)

![Image of St. Paul's M.E. Church](image1)

**INTERIOR VIEW OF ST. PAUL’S M.E. CHURCH.** Behind the carved altar is the pipe organ which was installed in 1905. Both altar and organ are located in the front of the square sanctuary with a balcony on three sides. As was typical in early New England Protestant churches, the sanctuary was on the second floor. (LHS.)
The Eliot Church. Located on Summer Street, this church was built on the site thought to be where Rev. John Eliot ministered to the Wamesits and Pawtucketts in the 1600s. Congregationalists established their first church in downtown Lowell in 1826 and the Second Congregational Church on Appleton Street in 1831. When some parishioners moved into the South Common area around the 1860s, they decided to build a new church. Property on Summer Street was bought, and the Eliot Congregational Church, named in honor of Rev. John Eliot, was started in 1874 by H. C. and J. F. Howe. The cornerstone of this red brick Gothic Revival building was laid on July 1, 1875, and the church was completed in November of that year. The tall spire of the bell tower is a Lowell landmark. In time, Protestant church memberships dwindled. As a result, members from the Congregational and Presbyterian Churches merged to become the Eliot Presbyterian Church. Today, the Eliot ministers to some of Lowell's new arrivals including West Africans. (PD.)
Southwick Hall. When this yellow brick mill-like building of the Lowell Textile School was built on the northwest side of the Merrimack River, the street name was changed from Moody Street to Textile Avenue. It was dedicated in 1903 to Royal and Dierexa Southwick, grandparents of wealthy Frederick Ayer. The Southwicks were Quakers and abolitionists who came to Lowell in the 1820s to help establish the Lowell Carpet Company. Graduates from this new textile school were eagerly sought by the textile industry to manage their companies and develop new products. The school’s strong reputation soon attracted students from all over the country and many parts of world. (Above and below TL.)