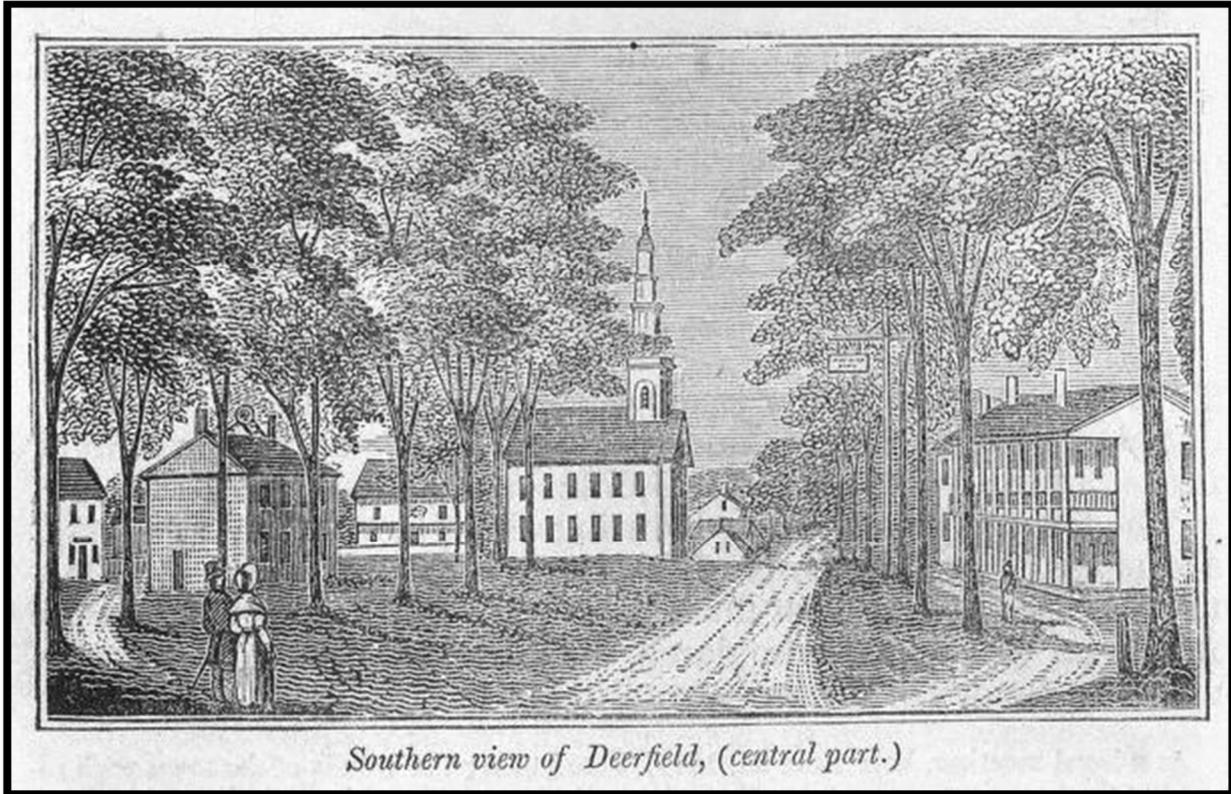


THE FIRST 150 YEARS

SETTLEMENT

In 1666, John Pynchon, an agent for settlers from Dedham in eastern Massachusetts, purchased 8,000 acres of land from the Pocumtuck Indians. He established a frontier settlement involving 43 proprietors on fertile land adjacent to the Deerfield and Connecticut Rivers. The settlement was centered in present-day Old Deerfield and encompassed parts of Greenfield, Gill, Shelburne, Conway, Ashfield, and Whately. It was incorporated in 1673 as Deerfield, the first town in what was to become Franklin County.



Southern view of Deerfield, (central part.)

CONFLICT

Two years later, in 1675, one of the earliest encounters of the King Philip's War took place when Indians attacked a wagon train accompanied by militiamen under the command of Capt. Thomas Lathrop, carrying corn from Deerfield to Hadley. Over 30 colonists were killed in what became known as the Bloody Brook Massacre. Skirmishing continued, culminating in a retaliatory attack in 1676 led by Capt. William Turner at Peskeomscut (now Turner's Falls but then a part of Deerfield). The 200 victims of the attack were mainly Native American children, women and the elderly. Decades later, in 1704, French and Indian forces attacked the village of Deerfield, burning down the meeting house and school as well as most of the residences. Fifty-six colonists were killed and 112 captives were forced to travel north on foot in the winter to Quebec. Many died along the way, others were later ransomed, some chose to stay in Canada and a few eventually returned on their own.

RECOVERY

Re-construction and reoccupation of Deerfield took place soon after the attack. Agriculture became the major economic focus with major crops of corn, wheat and onions as well as the raising of oxen. The settlement grew geographically both north and south and by 1767 the community of Bloody Brook - later to become South Deerfield - could support its own school and church. Transportation of goods took place primarily via the Connecticut River serving markets in Hartford and New York City and indirectly, Boston. With the onset of the American Revolution, Deerfield became a trading hub where craftsmen and shopkeepers supplied area farmers, westward-moving settlers and soldiers. Many of the account books from this era still survive.



CONTINUED GROWTH

The late 18th and early 19th centuries were a period of significant growth with the population nearly doubling to 2,000. In Old Deerfield architecturally noteworthy houses were built and elm trees planted to line the Street. In 1797 Deerfield Academy, the Town's first boarding school, was established. More than a century later it would be joined by Eaglebrook School and The Bement School. In 1812, a ferry across the river to Sunderland was replaced by a toll bridge which linked to a network of newly constructed roads extending throughout the area and the state. The development of a port at Cheapside, at the confluence of the Deerfield and Connecticut Rivers, also contributed to commercial growth of the area. It wouldn't be until the middle of the 19th century with the coming of the train that development would shift to South Deerfield.

DEERFIELD TODAY

GEOGRAPHY

According to the United States Census Bureau, the town has a total area of 33.4 square miles (86.6 km²), of which 32.4 square miles (83.9 km²) is land and 1.1 square miles (2.8 km²), or 3.17 percent, is water. Deerfield is bounded on the north by Greenfield, is situated 29 miles (47 km) north of Springfield, and about 93 miles (150 km) west of Boston.



Deerfield's northern point is located at the confluence of the Deerfield and Connecticut rivers, with the former flowing through the northwest corner of the town and the latter forming the eastern border of the town. Several brooks and the Mill River also flow through the town. North Sugarloaf Mountain rises above the Connecticut in the southeast corner, providing a panoramic view of the valley and the town center. The Pocumtuck Range rises along the eastern side of town north of Sugarloaf.

Interstate 91 passes from south to north through the central part of town, crossing the Deerfield River near the river's southernmost bend. The interstate is paralleled by U.S. Route 5 and Massachusetts Route 10, which run concurrently through the town. Route 116 also passes through town, combining with Routes 5 and 10 for a one-mile stretch, briefly passing into Whately before separating and crossing through the southern part of town and over the Connecticut River at the Sunderland Bridge. All three routes historically crossed through the center of the village prior to the construction of I-91 but were rerouted to a more direct route closer to the highway.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Historical Population

Year	Pop.	±%
1840	1,934	—
1850	2,421	+25.2%
1860	3,073	+26.9%
1870	3,632	+18.2%
1880	3,543	-2.5%
1890	2,910	-17.9%
1900	1,969	-32.3%
1910	2,209	+12.2%
1920	2,803	+26.9%
1930	2,882	+2.8%
1940	2,684	-6.9%
1950	3,086	+15.0%
1960	3,338	+8.2%
1970	3,850	+15.3%
1980	4,517	+17.3%
1990	5,018	+11.1%
2000	4,750	-5.3%
2010	5,125	+7.9%

Source: United States Census records and Population Estimates Program data.

GOVERNMENT

Deerfield employs the open town meeting form of government and is led by a Selectboard. The town has its own police, fire, and public works departments. The fire department and the post office both have two branches, in South Deerfield (where most of the town offices are) and in Old Deerfield Village, near Memorial Hall and the Old Town Hall. The town's Tilton Library is connected to the regional library network and is located in South Deerfield. The nearest hospital, Baystate Franklin Medical Center, is located in Greenfield, as are many regional and state offices.

Deerfield is represented in the Massachusetts House of Representatives by the First Franklin district, which includes the southeastern third of Franklin County and towns in north central Hampshire County. The town is represented in the Massachusetts Senate by the Hampshire and Franklin district, which includes much of eastern Franklin and Hampshire Counties. The town is patrolled by the Second (Shelburne Falls) Barracks of Troop B of the Massachusetts State Police.

Deerfield is represented in the United States House of Representatives as part of Massachusetts's 2nd congressional district and has been represented by Jim McGovern of

Worcester. Massachusetts is currently represented in the United States Senate by senators Ed Markey and Elizabeth Warren.

EDUCATION

Deerfield is the central member of Frontier Regional and Union 38 School Districts, which also includes Conway, Whately, and Sunderland. Each town operates its own elementary school, with Deerfield Elementary School serving the town's students from kindergarten through sixth grades. All four towns send seventh through twelfth grade students to Frontier Regional School in South Deerfield. Frontier's athletics teams are nicknamed the Red Hawks, and the team colors are red and blue. There are many art programs available during and after school at Frontier.

Private schools in the town include The Bement School (a coeducational boarding school for grades K-9), Eaglebrook School (a private boys' boarding school for grades 6-9), and Deerfield Academy, a private, coeducational secondary preparatory school.

The nearest community college, Greenfield Community College, is located in Greenfield. The nearest state colleges are Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts in North Adams and Westfield State College; the nearest state university is the University of Massachusetts Amherst. The nearest private colleges, including members of the Five Colleges and Seven Sisters, are located to the south and southeast, in the towns of Northampton, Amherst, and South Hadley.