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Survey of Architectural History in Cambridge East Cambridge

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Industrial Development and Architecture

East Cambridge was the first part of Cambridge to attract industry and until the 1880s was unrivaled as the industrial center of the city. Most of its early enterprises needed access to transportation and cheap waterfront land, both of which were available in abundance. The Charles and Miller's rivers, although tidal, accommodated coastal shipping, while the turnpikes, the Middlesex Canal, and the railroads gave unparalleled access to the interior. Boston, a short walk across the Canal Bridge, provided both a market and a labor force. In East Cambridge the stage was set for Cambridge to become, as it did by 1920, an industrial city second only to Worcester in Massachusetts.