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Survey of Architectural History in Cambridge East Cambridge

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Life and Work in the 19th Century

East Cambridge is much more than a collection of buildings. The generations of families and workers who lived here established a vital neighborhood. Information on the earliest residents is sparse, but it is known that many were glassworkers or other craftsmen. By 1850, a number of industries were flourishing, and immigration was bringing many new settlers; socially the community remained mixed, with a variety of ethnic groups and occupations living on most streets. As the area became increasingly industrial toward the end of the century, residential patterns changed, and streets became known for particular nationalities or occupations. This chapter focuses on how industrialization and immigration influenced the social and physical development of the neighborhood.