

# Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

## Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	MLT.S
Historic Name:	Milton Poor Farm - Milton Town Farm
Common Name:	
City/Town:	Milton
Village/Neighborhood:	
Local No:	K-6-2;
Year Constructed:	
Use(s):	Abandoned or Vacant; Agricultural; Poor House or Almshouse;
Significance:	Agriculture; Architecture; Politics Government; Social History;
Designation(s):	
Building Materials:	
Demolished	No



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125  
[www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc)

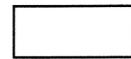
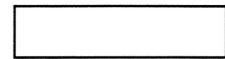
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# FORM A - AREA

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's Sheets USGS Quad Area Letter Form Numbers in Area

MLT.S



6  
2 218, 192-193;

704-705,  
944-953

## Photograph



## Topographic or Assessor's Map

**Town:** Milton, Massachusetts

**Place (neighborhood or village):** Gov. Stoughton historical property

**Name of Area:** Milton Poor Farm, Parcel K62

**Present Use:** Open space, active walking trails connecting to the blue hills, Milton animal Shelter, housing,

**Construction Dates or Period:** late 19<sup>th</sup>, early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries

**Overall Condition:** Historical buildings need repair, fields and stone walls are original to the 19<sup>th</sup> century

**Major Intrusions and Alterations:** animal Shelter built in 1980, some pavement added, two structures currently used as housing are original but have been undated slightly

**Acreage:** +/- 34 acres

**Recorded by:** Joseph P. Grogan / Frank Mulligan

**Organization:** Milton Friends of Town Farm

**Date (month/year):** 3/09

**RECEIVED**

APR 07 2009

MASS. HIST. COMM

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.  
*If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

*Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.*

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

*Describe architectural, structural and landscape features and evaluate in terms of other areas within the community.*

## GENERAL LAYOUT AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES

**The Milton Poor Farm-Milton Town Farm** is a 34-acre tract of land, roughly rectangular in shape and composed of rolling terrain. It is located on Governor Stoughton Lane, off Canton Avenue on Wigwam Hill near the center of Milton. The property is bordered on the northeast and southeast by Indian Cliffs, a single-family subdivision developed during the 1970s on the former Col. Henry Russell Farm, and on the northwest by Quisset Brook, an attached townhouse subdivision developed during the mid-1980s on part of the former Lamb Estate. These boundaries are defined by 19<sup>th</sup> century fieldstone walls. Land owned by the department of Conservation and Recreation bordering Unquity Road forms the southwestern boundary. Originally this boundary extended to Pine Tree Brook but was redrawn when six acres of land were taken for the newly created Blue Hills Reservation in ca. 1896.

The entrance to the farm from Governor Stoughton Lane is located at the northern corner of the property, marked by the 1907 Entrance Bound Stone, located on the right (west) at the entrance to the driveway. The cut granite marker measures 11" high x 8" wide x 8" long. "Town Farm" is carved into its face. The driveway immediately divides into two roadways: a paved lane leading directly to a complex of buildings formed by the 1854 Main Almshouse (MHC #218) and 1871 Men's Almshouse (MHC #192), the 1882 Stable and the 1908 Animal Shelter; dirt lane leading to the 1888 Pest House (MHC #193), isolated several hundred feet southeasterly behind the Men's Almshouse. A hydrant dating to 1904 when the farm was connected to town water is located at the fork in the road. Informal lawns with scattered stone outcroppings surround each of the dwellings. Vegetable and flower gardens and chicken coops, dating to 1975, are presently located behind the Men's Almshouse and extend to the entrance of the Pest House section, defined by a fieldstone wall. This garden section is further defined on one side (northeast) by the Pest House driveway and a line of 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century pear and plums trees and on the other side (southwest) by a line of mid-20<sup>th</sup> century evergreen trees along the fenced border with the Stable Pasture.

**There are two agricultural fields, a pasture and an orchard, all presently grassed over and used for grazing horses.**

**Field #1**, dating to 1862 or 1885, is a ca. 4-acre rectangular piece of grass covered land located on a slope below the Pest House and its driveway, along the northeastern and southeastern border with Indian Cliffs, the former Col. Henry Russell farm. Originally, the field was used to grow crops of corn, potatoes and hay. A ridge and furrow plow line can be seen extending the length of the field. The field is defined by fieldstone walls, wire fences and a wood lot along the Indian Cliffs boundary. The stone wall along the boundary with Indian Cliffs dates to 1886. Overgrowth is noted on sections of the field as well as a vegetable garden dating to ca. 1980. Since ca. 1980, the field has been divided into two sections by a wire fence.

*Follow Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey Manual instructions for completing this form.*



**Field #2**, dating to 1862 or 1885, is a ca. 2.5-acre piece of mostly grass-covered land, roughly rectangular in shape, located on the southwestern side of the Main Almshouse along the northwestern border of the Poor Farm with the Quisset Brook development. A 10-20 foot section of overgrowth is located at the rear of the field. Originally, the field was used to grow crops of corn, potatoes and hay. The field is defined by fieldstone walls along the Quisset Brook border and in the southwest (rear) and southeast (side) where it abuts the Wood Lot and the Orchard, respectively. Originally, the front of field extended to the rear of the barn, giving outdoor access for the cows and horses housed in the basement of the main block and of the ell. While a section of the field still fronts the ell's stall, a middle section was paved for a parking area in 1970 for the Dog Pound located in the former basement cow-shed and later for the construction of the 1980 Animal Shelter.

**The Stable Pasture** is located on the southeastern side of the Stable and thus is dated to the 1882 construction of the Stable. The ca. 1-acre pasture is defined by fieldstone walls on the southeast and southwest, where it abuts the Wood Lot and the Orchard, respectively, and by a wire fence along the evergreen border with the garden area behind the Men's Almshouse. Access to the pasture is from the Stable. Doors from both the main block and the ell open on to a small enclosed dirt-covered paddock which leads to the grass-covered pasture.

**The Orchard**, 1862, is a ca. 1-acre piece of sloping, grass-covered land, roughly rectangular in shape, which is located to the south of the barn. It is enclosed by fieldstone walls and abuts the Stable Pasture in the northeast, the Wood Lot in the southeast and southwest, and Field #2 in the northwest. Until fairly recently, fruit trees had continued to produce several varieties of apples, e.g. Rhode Island Greening, russet, Baldwin, Red delicious and Macintosh, as well as pears and plums. Today the remains of fruit trees and several larger deciduous trees are scattered across the former orchard.

**The Wood Lot** is estimated to still cover two-thirds of the Poor Farm as it did in the 1907 survey. It is located at the rear of the property, while the buildings and cultivated areas are located on the front third of the farm accessed from Governor Stoughton Lane. The Wood Lot is composed predominately of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century mixed hardwood trees, e.g. Red, White and Chestnut Oaks as well as Beeches and Chestnuts. The land is fairly level at the front of the woods and then drops off sharply down to wetlands at the southwestern border near Unquity Road. The woods are accessed by a path, dating to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which begins in front of the Pest House and traverses the woods down to Unquity Road. Two piles of arranged field stones that are currently thought to be 19<sup>th</sup> century loading platforms to transfer cut wood onto carts are located in the woods behind the Orchard.

## BUILDINGS

**The Main Almshouse, 169 Governor Stoughton Lane** (MHC #218), 1854, is located on, the right side of the complex as one enters from Governor Stoughton Lane. It faces the Men's Almshouse over the driveway. The L-shaped Greek Revival/Italianate dwelling rises 2 1/2 stories from a cut granite foundation to a slate front gable roof with return eaves. A single chimney is located at the ridge on the ell. The house is sheathed with wood clapboard. Wide bands of wood line the gables and cornices of the main block and ell and serve as corner boards. The main entrance of the three-bay facade is set within a simple enframement and flanked by full-length sidelights. The full-length porch with chamfered posts and a square-cut frieze and balustrade was added in 1882 as was the porch at the secondary entrance in the ell. Windows are simply framed and contain six-over-six sash. The arched gable windows have hooded crowns. In 1882 the ell was enlarged with a 2 1/2 story, four-bay gable block to the rear and 2-story, flat roof block to the



side. In 1980 a chimney was constructed in front of the ell and attached to the wall by a stove pipe and iron brackets. The interior arrangement of rooms is reported to be historically intact.

The **Men's Almshouse, 175 Governor Stoughton Lane** (MHC #192) is located on the left side of the complex as one enters from Governor Stoughton Lane. It faces the Main Almshouse over a small lawn and driveway. The simple wood clapboard dormitory is composed of two sections, the 1871 main block and an 1893 addition. The 1 ½ story, main block, three bays wide by two bays deep, is set on a fieldstone foundation and enclosed by slate side gable roof with a central chimney piercing the ridge. The windows are framed with roughly cut wedge-shaped lintels and contain six-over-six sash. The central entrance with a 4-light transom is now accessed by a 1990 ramp and deck. An additional ramp was added in the rear when a window was made into doorway. The interior is organized around a central staircase with a single room to either side on both the first and second floors. The first floor room on the right of the entrance contains the fireplace. An article in the 1905 *Milton Record Newspaper* describes this room as the "reading room for the men's dormitory." In 1893 a 2-story addition was constructed on the northeastern side elevation to provide eight additional 8' by 8' rooms. The wood clapboard wing is rectangular in shape, two bays wide and one bay deep, and is enclosed by a slate front gable roof with a center chimney set on the ridge. Windows are simply framed and contain six-over-six sash. There is an entrance on the northeastern side elevation. A fieldstone cellar for heating apparatus was added under this section in 1904.

The **Stable, 181 Governor Stoughton Lane**, 1882, is located at the end of the driveway. The wood clapboard, post and beam building is three bays wide and three bays deep with a rear ell added in 1887. It rises 1 ½ stories to a side gable slate roof with salt box profile on the driveway side. There is a center peak gable over the hayloft opening with hoisting post. A single chimney is located on the front slope and a cupola at the ridge. Windows are simply framed and contain six-over-six sash. The center carriage opening of the three-bay facade opens onto an interior that is historically intact. The carriage room with two harness rooms on the southeastern side (pasture) is located in the front. A doorway at the rear leads to the horse stalls. The six narrow straight stalls and one boxed stall are located along an aisle to either side of the doorway and are intact with hay cribs and hayloft trap doors above. A door on the southeastern side leads out to the paddock. The 1887 ell was added behind the stalls near the pasture. It contained a cow milking parlor on the first floor with a door to the paddock and a horse stall in the basement accessed from Field #2. The stalls in both the barn and ell are presently used to house the horses belonging to the residents of the farm. A full basement with granite pillars and a dirt floor is located under the main barn and is accessed by a door from the Animal Shelter parking lot. Originally cows were kept here. In the 1970s a section of this area was used for the dog pound. A pipe remains at the front of the basement from 1904 when a cistern was connected to the hydrant and town water. In 1882 a three-bay open carriage shed was built off the side of the ell to shelter one side of the paddock. It was demolished in 1978, leaving an outline of its roof on the side of the barn.

The **Pest House, 208 Governor Stoughton Lane** (MHC #193), 1888, faces southwest over a front lawn towards the Wood Lot beyond, while the rear overlooks Field #1. The driveway is located on the northwestern side. The house is a simple 1-story wood shingle dwelling, set on a fieldstone foundation. The rectangular main block, three bays wide and one bay deep, is enclosed by an asphalt shingle side gable roof. Windows and the center entrance are simply framed and contain six-over-six sash and a panel door respectively. A 1-story, shed roof addition was constructed across the rear on a fieldstone foundation. There are two chimneys, one located on the addition and one at the junction of the main block and the addition. The addition was probably constructed in 1904 when the house was improved with a new nurse's room, cellar and furnace. There is a secondary entrance in the side of the addition, which is now accessed by a post-1960 stairway and deck.



The Animal Shelter, 1980, is located at the end of the driveway to rear and side of the Stable. Field #2 is located to its rear and side (northeast). The rectangular two-bay building is sheathed in vertical boarding and rises one 1 story from a concrete foundation to an asphalt shingle front gable roof. Caged runways extend to either side for outdoor animal exercise.



**INVENTORY FORM A CONTINUATION SHEET**

MILTON

MILTON POOR FARM

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area Letter Form Nos.

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<b>MCH #</b>	<b>HISTORIC NAME</b>	<b>ADDRESS</b>	<b>DATE</b>
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**Buildings**

218	Main Almshouse	169 Gov. Stoughton Lane	1854
192	Men's Almshouse	175 Gov. Stoughton Lane	1871
704	Stable	181 Gov. Stoughton Lane	1882
193	Pest House	208 Gov. Stoughton Lane	1888
705	Animal Shelter	181 Gov. Stoughton Lane	1980

**Structures**

946	Loading Platform (2)	Gov. Stoughton Lane	19 <sup>th</sup> c.
947	Stone Walls	Gov. Stoughton Lane	19 <sup>th</sup> c.
948	Entrance Bound Stone	Gov. Stoughton Lane	1907

**Landscape Features**

949	Field #1	Gov. Stoughton Lane	1862/1885
950	Field #2	Gov. Stoughton Lane	1862/1885
951	Stable Pasture	Gov. Stoughton Lane	1882
952	Orchard	Gov. Stoughton Lane	1862
953	Wood Lot	Gov. Stoughton Lane	19 <sup>th</sup> /20 <sup>th</sup> c.

**HISTORICAL NARRATIVE**

*Explain historical development of the area. Discuss how this relates to the historical development of the community.*

**The 19<sup>th</sup> Century Milton Poor Farm – Milton Town Farm****HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE**

**The Milton Poor Farm - Milton Town Farm** has been a distinct and significant property in the Town of Milton since 1701. In that year Governor William Stoughton willed to the Town a wood lot to be used for the benefit of the poor. The Poor Farm was formally established in ca. 1805 on a cleared section of the wood lot with the construction of the first almshouse. The property continued to serve as a poor farm until 1941. Extant on the property today is a complex of 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings, including the second Main Almshouse (1854), the Men's Almshouse (1871), the Pest House (1888) which was used to isolate small pox victims, and the Stable (1882). 19<sup>th</sup> century landscape features include two agricultural fields, a stable pasture, an orchard, and a wood lot. Since 1941 the buildings have been rented by the Town and the monies used for families in need. The fields, pasture and orchard have most recently been used to graze horses. The general layout and buildings of the Poor Farm are historically intact and have not been significantly altered since 1941. However, the Milton Poor Farm is presently threatened with the construction of a large scale development and would require the demolition of the historically significant buildings, structures and architectural features. To date the Milton Poor Farm has not been

## INVENTORY FORM A CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

MILTON

MILTON POOR FARM

Area Letter Form Nos.

S

managed properly to preserve the historical significance while generating revenue to its maximum potential to "benefit the poor of Milton" according to the will of Governor William Stoughton.

**Governor William Stoughton (1631-1701)**, *Acting Royal Governor of Massachusetts 1694-1699, 1700-1701*. Governor Stoughton is perhaps best remembered as the first Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Court. While serving as Lieutenant Governor, Stoughton was named Chief Justice of the new court in order that he presides over the remaining cases of the Salem Witch trials. Judge Stoughton had no legal training and served both as judge and prosecutor. When Governor Phips was recalled to London, Stoughton ascended to the Governor's office, while still serving as Chief Justice. He was an adroit politician, who managed the factions of the Colony's politics using the power of his governorship and judgeship and appointments to both his council and to lower courts. Governor Stoughton died while serving as Acting Governor, following the death Governor Richard Coote. Upon his death he left a large tract of land in Milton Massachusetts of incredible historical significance with specific directives under his Last Will and Testament that the land be used to "benefit the poor of Milton"

**The Milton Poor Farm - Milton Town Farm** retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association and fulfills Criteria A and C of the National Register Places at the local level.



X see continuation sheet

## FORM A - AREA

Massachusetts Historical  
Commission  
The Massachusetts Archives  
Building

Assessor's Sheets

USGS Quad

Area Letter Form Number

K-6-2

Boston, South

S

See attached  
Data SheetTown MILTONPlace (*neighborhood or village*)Name of Area MILTON POOR FARM-TOWN FARMPresent Use Residential and AgriculturalConstruction Dates or Period 1854 - 1941Overall Condition Fair

Major Intrusions and Alterations

Since 1941:

Open Carriage Shed (demolished 1978):Milton Animal Shelter (constructed 1980)Acreage 34Recorded by Edith G. CliffordOrganization Milton Historical CommissionDate (month/year) April 1999

See attached

RECEIVED

JUL 30 1999

MASS. HIST. COMM

Follow Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey Manual instructions for completing this form.

AREA FORM

WOL 2

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Yes see continuation sheet

MLT.S

Describe architectural structural and landscape features and evaluate in terms of other areas within the community.

SEE ATTACHED

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Yes see continuation sheet

Explain historical development of the area. Discuss how this area relates to the historical development of the community.

SEE ATTACHED

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Yes

see continuation sheet

SEE ATTACHED

Yes      Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

**INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET**  
**Physical Description – Page 1**

**MILTON**  
**Area S**

**GENERAL LAYOUT AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES**

The Milton Poor Farm-Town Farm is a 34-acre tract of land, roughly rectangular in shape and composed of rolling terrain. It is located on Governor Stoughton Lane, off Canton Avenue on Wigwam Hill near the center of Milton. The property is bordered on the northeast and southeast by Indian Cliffs, a single-family subdivision developed during the 1970s on the former Col. Henry Russell Farm, and on the northwest by Quisset Brook, an attached townhouse subdivision developed during the mid-1980s on part of the former Lamb Estate. These boundaries are defined by 19<sup>th</sup> century fieldstone walls. Land owned by the Metropolitan District Commission bordering Unquity Road forms the southwestern boundary. Originally this boundary extended to Pine Tree Brook but was redrawn when six acres of land were taken for the newly created Blue Hills Reservation in ca. 1896.

The entrance to the farm from Governor Stoughton Lane is located at the northern corner of the property, marked by the 1907 Entrance Bound Stone, located on the right (west) at the entrance to the driveway. The cut granite marker measures 11" high x 8" wide x 8" long. "Town Farm" is carved into its face. The driveway immediately divides into two roadways: a paved lane leading directly to a complex of buildings formed by the 1854 Main Almshouse (MHC #218) and 1871 Men's Almshouse (MHC #192), the 1882 Stable and the 1980 Animal Shelter; and a dirt lane leading to the 1888 Pest House (MHC #193), isolated several hundred feet southeasterly behind the Men's Almshouse. A hydrant dating to 1904 when the farm was connected to town water is located at the fork in the road. Informal lawns with scattered stone outcroppings surround each of the dwellings. Vegetable and flower gardens and chicken coops, dating to 1975, are presently located behind the Men's Almshouse and extend to the entrance of the Pest House section, defined by a fieldstone wall. This garden section is further defined on one side (northeast) by the Pest House driveway and a line of 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century pear and plums trees and on the other side (southwest) by a line of mid-20<sup>th</sup> century evergreen trees along the fenced border with the Stable Pasture.

**INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET**  
**Physical Description – Page 2**

**MILTON**  
**Area S**

**GENERAL LAYOUT AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES (CON'T)**

There are two agricultural fields, a pasture and an orchard, all presently grassed over and used for grazing horses.

**Field #1**, dating to 1862 or 1885, is a ca. 4-acre rectangular piece of grass-covered land located on a slope below the Pest House and its driveway, along the northeastern and southeastern border with Indian Cliffs, the former Col. Henry Russell farm. Originally, the field was used to grow crops of corn, potatoes and hay. A ridge and furrow plow line can be seen extending the length of the field. The field is defined by **fieldstone walls**, wire fences and a wood lot along the Indian Cliffs boundary. The stone wall along the boundary with Indian Cliffs dates to 1886. Overgrowth is noted on sections of the field as well as a vegetable garden dating to ca. 1980. Since ca. 1980, the field has been divided into two sections by a wire fence.

**Field #2**, dating to 1862 or 1885, is a ca. 2.5 piece of mostly grass-covered land, roughly rectangular in shape, located on the southwestern side of the Main Almshouse along the northwestern border of the Poor Farm with the Quisset Brook development. A 10-20 foot section of overgrowth is located at the rear of the field. Originally, the field was used to grow crops of corn, potatoes and hay. The field is defined by **fieldstone walls** along the Quisset Brook border and in the southwest (rear) and southeast (side) where it abuts the Wood Lot and the Orchard, respectively. Originally, the front of field extended to the rear of the barn, giving outdoor access for the cows and horses housed in the basement of the main block and of the ell. While a section of the field still fronts the ell's stall, a middle section was paved for a parking area in 1970 for the Dog Pound located in the former basement cow shed and later for the construction of the 1980 Animal Shelter.

**The Stable Pasture** is located on the southeastern side of the Stable and thus is dated to the 1882 construction of the Stable. The ca. 1-acre pasture is defined by **fieldstone walls** on the southeast and southwest, where it abuts the Wood Lot and the Orchard, respectively, and by a wire fence along the evergreen border with the garden area behind the Men's Almshouse. Access to the pasture is from the Stable. Doors from both the main block and the ell open on to a small enclosed dirt-covered paddock which leads to the grass-covered pasture.

**GENERAL LAYOUT AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES**

Physical Description – Page 2  
MILTON AREA S INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Page 2  
MILTON  
Area S

**INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET**  
**Physical Description – Page 3**

**MILTON**  
**Area S**

#### **GENERAL LAYOUT AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES (CON'T)**

**The Orchard**, 1862, is a ca.1-acre piece of sloping, grass-covered land, roughly rectangular in shape, that is located to the south of the barn. It is enclosed by **fieldstone walls** and abuts the Stable Pasture in the northeast, the Wood Lot in the southeast and southwest, and Field #2 in the northwest. Until fairly recently, fruit trees had continue to produce several varieties of apples, e.g. Rhode Island Greening, Russet, Baldwin, Red Delicious and Macintosh, as well as pears and plums. Today the remains of fruit trees and several larger deciduous trees are scattered across the former orchard.

**The Wood Lot** is estimated to still cover two-thirds of the Poor Farm as it did in the 1907 survey. It is located at the rear of the property, while the buildings and cultivated areas are located on the front third of the farm accessed from Governor Stoughton Lane. The Wood Lot is composed predominately of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century mixed hardwood trees, e.g. Red, White and Chestnut Oaks as well as Beeches and Chestnuts. The land is fairly level at the front of the woods and then drops off sharply down to wetlands at the southwestern border near Unquity Road. The woods are accessed by a path, dating to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, that begins in front of the Pest House and traverses the woods down to Unquity Road. Two piles of arranged fieldstones that are currently thought to be 19<sup>th</sup> century **loading platforms** to transfer cut wood onto carts are located in the woods behind the Orchard.

**INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET**  
**Physical Description – Page 4**

**MILTON**  
**Area S**

**BUILDINGS**

The **Main Almshouse, 169 Governor Stoughton Lane** (MHC #218), 1854, is located on the right side of the complex as one enters from Governor Stoughton Lane. It faces the Men's Almshouse over the driveway. The L-shaped Greek Revival/Italianate dwelling rises 2 1/2 stories from a cut granite foundation to a slate front gable roof with return eaves. A single chimney is located at the ridge on the ell. The house is sheathed with wood clapboard. Wide bands of wood line the gables and cornices of the main block and ell and serve as cornerboards. The main entrance of the three-bay façade is set within a simple enframement and flanked by full-length sidelights. The full-length porch with chamfered posts and a square-cut frieze and balustrade was added in 1882 as was the porch at the secondary entrance in the ell. Windows are simply framed and contain six-over-six sash. The arched gable windows have hooded crowns. In 1882 the ell was enlarged with a 2 1/2-story, four-bay gable block to the rear and 2-story, flat roof block to the side. In 1980 a chimney was constructed in front of the ell and attached to the wall by a stove pipe and iron brackets. The interior arrangement of rooms is reported to be historically intact.

The **Men's Almshouse, 175 Governor Stoughton Lane** (MHC #192), is located on the left side of the complex as one enters from Governor Stoughton Lane. It faces the Main Almshouse over a small lawn and driveway. The simple wood clapboard dormitory is composed of two sections, the 1871 main block and an 1893 addition. The 1 1/2-story, main block, three bays wide by two bays deep, is set on a fieldstone foundation and enclosed by slate side gable roof with a central chimney piercing the ridge. The windows are framed with roughly cut wedge-shaped lintels and contain six-over-six sash. The central entrance with a 4-light transom is now accessed by a 1990 ramp and deck. An additional ramp was added in the rear when a window was made into doorway. The interior is organized around a central staircase with a single room to either side on both the first and second floors. The first floor room on the right of the entrance contains the fireplace. An article in the 1905 *Milton Record Newspaper* describes this room as the "reading room for the men's dormitory." In 1893 a 2-story addition was constructed on the northeastern side elevation to provide eight additional 8' by 8' rooms. The wood clapboard wing is rectangular in shape, two bays wide and one bay deep, and is enclosed by a slate front gable roof with a center chimney set on the ridge. Windows are simply framed and contain six-over-six sash. There is an entrance on the northeastern side elevation. A fieldstone cellar for heating apparatus was added under this section in 1904.

GENERAL INFORMATION SHEET (CONT'D)

Physical Description – Page 4  
MASSACHUSETTS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VLG 2  
MILTON

**INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET**  
**Physical Description – Page 5**

**MILTON**  
**Area S**

**BUILDINGS (CON'T)**

The **Stable**, 181 Governor Stoughton Lane, 1882, is located at the end of the driveway. The wood clapboard, post and beam building is three bays wide and three bays deep with a rear ell added in 1887. It rises 1 1/2 stories to a side gable slate roof with salt box profile on the driveway side. There is a center peak gable over the hayloft opening with hoisting post. A single chimney is located on the front slope and a cupola at the ridge. Windows are simply framed and contain six-over-six sash. The center carriage opening of the three-bay facade opens onto an interior that is historically intact. The carriage room with two harness rooms on the southeastern side (pasture) is located in the front. A doorway at the rear leads to the horse stalls. The six narrow straight stalls and one boxed stall are located along an aisle to either side of the doorway and are intact with hay cribs and hayloft trap doors above. A door on the southeastern side leads out to the paddock. The 1887 ell was added behind the stalls near the pasture. It contained a cow milking parlor on the first floor with a door to the paddock and a horse stall in the basement accessed from Field #2. The stalls in both the barn and ell are presently used to house the horses belonging to the residents of the farm. A full basement with granite pillars and a dirt floor is located under the main barn and is accessed by a door from the Animal Shelter parking lot. Originally cows were kept here. In the 1970s a section of this area was used for the dog pound. A pipe remains at the front of the basement from 1904 when a cistern was connected to the hydrant and town water. In 1882 a three-bay open carriage shed was built off the side of the ell to shelter one side of the paddock. It was demolished in 1978, leaving an outline of its roof on the side of the barn.

The **Pest House**, 208 Governor Stoughton Lane (MHC #193), 1888, faces southwest over a front lawn towards the Wood Lot beyond, while the rear overlooks Field #1. The driveway is located on the northwestern side. The house is a simple 1-story wood shingle dwelling, set on a fieldstone foundation. The rectangular main block, three bays wide and one bay deep, is enclosed by an asphalt shingle side gable roof. Windows and the center entrance are simply framed and contain six-over-six sash and a panel door, respectively. A 1-story, shed roof addition was constructed across the rear on a fieldstone foundation. There are two chimneys, one located on the addition and one at the junction of the main block and the addition. The addition was probably constructed in 1904 when the house was improved with a new nurse's room, cellar and furnace. There is a secondary entrance in the side of the addition, which is now accessed by a post-1960 stairway and deck.

The **Animal Shelter**, 1980, is located at the end of the driveway to rear and side of the Stable. Field #2 is located to its rear and side (northeast). The rectangular two-bay building is sheathed in vertical boarding and rises one 1 story from a concrete foundation to an asphalt shingle front gable roof. Caged runways extend to either side for outdoor animal exercise.

**INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET**  
**Historical Narrative – Page 1**

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**Plantation and Colonial Periods (1620-1775)**

Upon his death in 1701, William Stoughton (1631-1701), who had served the Massachusetts Bay Colony as Lieutenant Governor and Governor, willed to the Town of Milton forty acres of his woodlot in Milton for the benefit of the poor. The lot was part of a 456-acre tract of land that his father, Israel (d. 1645), had owned as one of the English settlers of Dorchester. Milton Town Records of February 28, 1706/7 record the gift:

.... Honble mr. Stoughton Late Lt Governor to will and bequeath Forty Acres of His Woodlot in Milton unto the said Towne to be improved by the Select men of said Towne and their Successors for the Use and Benefit of the Poor of the said Town for Ever....mr. John Dane a Skilfull surveyor did on the 26<sup>th</sup> of November Enter upon the said Land & measure off forty acres for the said Town ...next to mr. Walter Moryes land, South Eastwardly, a brook being the bounds of the westerly End, & a multitude of Trees are marked in the Lines which cut the said Forty Acres from the Remaining of said wood lott, of which then marked Trees are agreed to be Bound-Trees....Graunted there should be a Liberty for the said select men, their successors, & Assignes to drive Carts & Cattle through the Remaining Land of said wood lot from ye highway ... unto the nearest Corner of the said forty Acres."

The land was located off the Taunton Road (today's Canton Avenue) on Wigwam Hill near the center of town. The cart and cattle path from the highway to the wood lot and later poor farm was named Governor Stoughton Lane in 1933. The lot remained unused for the next hundred years with the possible exception of providing wood for fuel at various times. Milton continued to care for its poor in the same manner as it had done since its incorporation as a town separate from Dorchester in 1662.

During the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries inhabitants of a town were entitled to town aid if they were unable to take care of themselves, but only if they legally resided in the town. On April 28, 1665 Milton Town Records state that no man should settle in the Town without the permission of Town Meeting or of the Selectmen. Thus it was the sad duty of the Selectmen and Constables for many years to send the poor and the sick back to the town of their legal residence. As late as 1793 Milton Constables ordered out of town a long list of Milton inhabitants, including some prominent men lest they too should in time become paupers and become a drain on the town's resources.

There is little specific information in the Town Records on the care of the poor during these years. The Office of the Overseers of the Poor is first mentioned in 1688 and was normally filled by the Selectmen. However, they did not record their expenditures. In 1786 Town Meeting voted "that the Poor be let out to the lowest bidder, and be under

**INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET**  
**Historical Narrative – Page 2**

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the inspection of the Selectmen.” However, the 1788 Town Records also indicate some people were cared for at home. From 1754 to 1771 there were various attempts to construct a workhouse, but nothing was done. Thereafter the energy and finances of the Town were directed towards the Revolution.

**Federal Period (1775-1830)**

After the Revolution, Town Meeting once again directed its attention to the poor. While in 1792 it was voted the care of the poor be supplied at the discretion of the Selectmen, ten years later a committee was chosen to see if the town could find another and more economical mode of providing for the poor than was then practiced. At the April 4, 1803 Town Meeting, the committee made three recommendations: 1) enclose four to six acres of the ‘Poor mans’ lot and plough not less than two of the acres; 2) authorize the Selectmen to purchase wood for fuel rather than cutting and transporting wood from the ‘Poor mans’ lot; and 3) “that a Convenient house be erected on part of the Poor mans lot constructed to contain four rooms in the whole when finished with smaller apartments either on one ground floor or two stories... that the same be undertaken the present season, and so far progressed as to make it tenantable for a family next season, and be finished as there shall be occasion for further use of it....” While the report was accepted, the project was put off for several years. Milton’s first poor house was probably completed in 1805, but certainly existed by the April 6, 1807 Town Meeting, when the Overseers of the Poor were elected separately from the Selectmen “to take the care and management of the Poor mans lot and the house built thereon.” Maps of Milton for 1831 and 1849 locate the poor house on the site of the present **Main Almshouse, 169 Governor Stoughton Lane (MHC #218)**.

In the years between 1807 and 1837, the year of Milton’s first published Annual Town Report, specific information on the poor mans lot in Milton Town Records is minimal. In November 1809, there is a discussion of the layout and upkeep of the fence around the poor mans lot, which was to be maintained by both the Town and its abutters. The brook running along the western boundary of the lot was identified as Pine Tree Brook.

On April 5, 1813 Town Meeting adopted rules for the regulation of the ‘work house’ or ‘poor house’, which included punishments for disorderly behavior, failure to work, if healthy, and leaving the premises without permission of the Keeper. One of the punishments listed for disturbing the peace was being put in a cage. (Town records of Foxboro and Marlboro describe the similar use of cages.) Other requirements included going to church on Sunday and going to bed and rising in the morning at the times

## INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MILTON

### Historical Narrative – Page 3

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designated by Keeper. In general there was no attempt to differentiate between the various causes of poverty, whether it be sickness, age, or insanity, although there were efforts to control alcoholism as a cause of poverty. Thus whenever any intemperate person applied for assistance, his name was posted to prevent taverns from selling liquor to him.

Over the years Town Meeting continued to support the poor house or almshouse as an economical means to aid the poor of the town. On March 24, 1821, Town Meeting voted “that the Poor shall receive no assistance from the Town but at the Alms House (extraordinary causalities excepted) ... and that the Overseers of the Poor may consider it a duty incumbent on them to procure labor for those who continue at the house.” However, a year later Town Meeting did authorize the Overseers of the Poor to grant support to persons outside of the Poor House.

Expenses incurred in managing the poor house for 1821 amounted to \$508. To gain further financial support, Town Meeting of March 9, 1823 authorized the Overseers of the Poor to sell timber logs from the Poor mans lot. By 1827 the Selectmen were once again chosen as the Overseers of the Poor and authorized by Town Meeting to adopt measures at their discretion for the support of the poor and economical management of the poor house and lot.

### Early Industrial Period (1830-1870)

By 1832 a revision of the system of supporting the poor was thought necessary to both decrease the expense to the Town and to improve the usefulness and comfort of the poor. The committee that looked into the matter reported to Town Meeting in November 1834 with the following recommendations: 1) “the house and buildings now ... occupied as a poor house are not located in a proper place ... with a sufficient quantity of good land to answer a good purpose of cultivation ... and the town shall provide sufficient accommodations to accommodate all the poor of the town ... they shall be removed to the house and thereafter no one shall receive any assistance at the town’s expense;” 2) a full-time overseer of the work house be hired, who has knowledge of road repair. All able-bodied paupers will work under his supervision on building and repairing the town’s roads. For this purpose the town will buy two yoke of oxen, two carts and various needed tools.”

While the poor house was not moved, a resident full-time superintendent and matron for the almshouse were hired and a system was put into place for putting the poor to work on

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**Historical Narrative – Page 4**

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the roads under supervision of the Superintendent of the Poor House who was also appointed the Superintendent of the Highways. In 1836 the Overseers of the Poor also served as the Surveyors of the Highways, responsibilities primarily carried out by the Selectmen. The system, supplemented with hired labor as needed, worked well until shortly after the Civil War when the Highway Department composed of hired labor became a separate division of town government under the supervision of the Selectmen.

Beginning in 1837/1838 Milton began publishing its Annual Town Reports. Listed for the year 1837 are the names and salary of the Superintendent of the Poor House and his wife, the Matron, as well as the various expenses incurred in managing the farm, which included clothes, food and doctor expenses for the inmates and feed for the livestock. Assistance was also given to the poor outside the poor house. In 1837 the town spent \$2404 in support of the poor. Also included in the reports are credits for produce sold from the farm, such apples and potatoes, which amounted in 1837 to \$353. Yearly inventories list the farm stock, provisions and tools as well as the road equipment.

Beginning in the Town Report for the year 1838 there is a Statement of Inmates of the Poor House, which records the number supported or assisted in the house. In 1838 twenty-nine people were supported in the house, with an average of eighteen in the house at one time. About fourteen were foreigners or non-Milton residents. By 1849 the Poor House was referred to consistently as the Almshouse and the Statement included not only numbers but also the names and ages of the 'inmates.' In that year the total number who were assisted at the house was twenty-three with seven single men and women, primarily in their 50s to 80s, remaining on a more permanent basis. Also listed are the names of those assisted outside the house, which included not only those living in Milton, but in neighboring towns and in the Boston House of Correction. One Milton case was that of a man who received private board and nursing for small pox. The expense for supporting the poor both at the farm and outside was \$2617.

The decade of the 1850s brought changes to the landscape of the Poor Farm. A new 30' square barn (demolished 1882) was constructed in 1851 and the following year a cattle shed (not extant) and fieldstone wall of 16 rods were constructed. However, at both the 1853 and 1854 Town Meeting the poor condition of the almshouse was reported, a condition made worse by the crowded space. In 1853 thirty-eight people were assisted at the almshouse, with fifteen older men and women remaining on a more permanent basis.

In 1854 the Town sold the old almshouse for \$102 and built the present Main Almshouse, 169 Governor Stoughton Lane (MHC #218) for \$2675 on the same site. The house was designed by John H. Burt and built by John A. Tucker, both of Milton. The first floor contained the Superintendent's room, a sleeping room, the

## INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

### Historical Narrative – Page 5

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pauper's kitchen and two sleeping rooms for the sick and aged. On the second story of the main house there were three sleeping rooms and the business room for the Selectmen or Overseers of the Poor and in the wing three additional sleeping rooms, two for single beds and one large room for three beds. The attic provided room for four more beds.

The house was thought to afford accommodations for twenty or more paupers.

In 1855 the town auditors reported favorably in their yearly evaluation on the new and commodious house and the care with which the Superintendent and Matron had carried out their duties. While the Superintendent had been mostly employed on the highways, the farm had not been neglected and a greater amount of vegetables and grain had been raised than in any previous year. Additional **fieldstone walls** were built in the following two years. By the end of the decade while seven mainly elderly men and woman remained on a more permanent basis at the almshouse, one hundred and twenty-one transients had been assisted with food and/or a night's lodging during 1859.

During the decade of the 1860s, the number of permanent residents ranged from 3 to 11, while the number of transients who founded assistance at the farm varied from 83 to 284. The Milton Annual Report for 1862 records the construction of a 30' by 16' shed for carts and tools (not extant) as well as various improvements to the land, including a four-acre field cultivated from former pasture and woodland and the planting of an orchard of fifty trees. The walled area of the **Orchard** still exists, although the fruit trees have died. The agricultural field is either the present grassed-covered **Field #1 or Field #2**, although speculation could lead to Field #2 which abuts the Orchard. Products harvested from the farm during 1862 included hay, 175 baskets of corn and 100 bushels of potatoes.

### Late Industrial Period (1870-1920)

"By 1873 the poor ceased to work on the roads, but those that were able continued to putter around at the farm work.... The Town Farm had started to become what it certainly was in later years, an old folks' home, largely for the infirm who had no place else to go." (Hamilton, page 168). During the 1870s while the number of the elderly inmates continued to vary from three to nine, the number of transients provided with food and/or a night's lodging varied considerably with a low of 117 persons in 1872 to a peak of 1742 persons in 1878, returning to 598 persons by 1879.

In the Annual Town Report for 1871 "a new building at Poor farm" is recorded, built by J. A. Tucker for \$735.00. While there is no further description of this building, it is thought to be the **Men's Almshouse, 175 Governor Stoughton Lane** (MHC #192), located across the driveway from **Main Almshouse** (MHC #218). The 1876 atlas confirms the

## INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET Historical Narrative – Page 6

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construction of a second almshouse at this location. In the 1882 Annual Town Report this second building is referred to as “the small house” and finally in the 1892 Annual Town Report its use as a dormitory for male inmates is revealed.

The 1882 Annual Town Report includes information on the four buildings that then existed at the Poor Farm: the almshouse, the small house, the tramp house and the stable. During that year additions were made to the Main Almshouse (MHC #218) by John H. Burt at a cost of #3,082: 1) A ell containing a large kitchen, washroom, milkroom and pantry on the lower floor with three bedrooms above; 2) an extension to “the rooms of the female occupants;” 3) a front piazza; and 4) unspecified “improvements in the inside arrangement.” No significant alterations have been made to the Main Almshouse since 1882.

Repairs were also made to the “small house,” discussed above as the Men’s Almshouse (MHC #192) and to the “tramp house.” (demolished ca. 1906). This is the first mention of the “tramp house.” The 1896 and 1905 atlases show a small building at the rear of Men’s Almshouse. It was not shown on the 1907 Town Farm survey map. It is presently thought that the tramp house was built in the 1870s to take care of the increasing numbers of transient persons who were assisted with food and a night’s lodging.

Finally, the present Stable, 181 Governor Stoughton Lane was built in 1882 by John H. Burt at a cost of \$2237 on “a better site”. It included “a horse stable, section for cows, carriageroom, harnessroom, and workshop, together with ample storage for hay.... Also a fine cellar under the same, with a cistern of ample capacity for daily use or in case of fire.” In the spring of 1887 Burt added the rear ell for the accommodation of the highway horse as well as a large shed for the storage of the highway property. Although the inmates of the Almshouse no longer worked on the roads, the Superintendent of the Almshouse continued to be appointed as Superintendent of the Highways by the Selectmen in their role as Overseers of the Poor and Surveyors of the Highway. While the shed was demolished in 1978, no further significant alterations have been made to the Stable since 1887.

The Town Reports of 1885 and 1886 mention further improvements to the farm. In 1885 two acres of wood lot were cleared and planted with corn for use as fodder. The agricultural field exists today as either the grass-covered Field #1 or Field #2. Four additional milk cows were bought. The sale of milk from the five cows that filled the new cow shed along with apples from the Orchard added to the income of the farm.

During 1886 the “old barn cellar was filled in, and many large rocks removed from the adjoining field, which have been used in building a wall on the line of Col. Henry S. Russell’s land.” The fieldstone wall is extant. This information leads to the speculation

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**Historical Narrative – Page 7**

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that the original barn was located near the present Pest House and the pest house driveway might have been the cart path to the barn. Field #1, which the Pest House overlooks, is located along the boundary with the former Col. Henry S. Russell farm. Although no foundation material has been reported, there is a depression in the earth behind the fieldstone wall at the entrance to the Pest House area.

During the 1880s the number of inmates at the Farm varied from three to sixteen men and women, primarily in their 50s to 80s. Interestingly while in the 1884 Annual Town Report 1025 transients were reported to have been assisted, this category of aid ceased to be reported beginning with the 1886 Annual Town Report. It would appear that this type of help was either stopped or phased out. As stated above, the 'tramp house' was finally demolished in ca. 1906.

The 1883 Annual Report noted that expenditures for outside aid increased that year because it was felt that "temporary aid might obviate an applicant becoming a permanent inmate ...and in the case of aged persons we dislike to remove them from friends who were willing to partially care for them," a distinct contrast in policy to that stated fifty years previously. Frequently the assistance came in the form of wood or coal for fuel "to poor women, ... a custom so long followed in Milton," as explained in the 1885 Annual Town Meeting Report. The wood was cut from the Wood Lot at the farm. While not mentioned in the Annual Town Reports, it is speculated that the two stacks of uncut stone presently located in the remaining Wood Lot were used as loading platforms to transfer the cut wood onto carts.

Since the mid-1850s Milton also took advantage of the developing state hospital and school system for the insane and retarded, thereby abandoning the previously mentioned 'cage' at the Poor Farm. The 1888 Annual Town Report stated that the largest expenditures in the distribution of outside poor aid was for the insane cases. Payments were made to the Worcester Lunatic Hospital (est. 1870), Taunton Lunatic Hospital (est. 1851) and the Westboro Insane Hospital (est. 1885). Additionally, a payment was made to the Massachusetts School for the Feeble-Minded (est. 1848).

In 1886 the Board of Health was organized as a separate town board. Two years later the Pest House, 208 Governor Stoughton Lane (MHC #193), used to isolate victims of small pox, is first mentioned in the 1888 Annual Town Report under the statement of expenses for the Health Department: "F. M. Severance, stock and labor, pest-house ... \$574 and R. F. Chapman, stock and labor, pest-house ... \$99." Frederick Severance was a prominent Milton builder and Rufus Chapman had a painting company in Milton Village. Thus the construction of the Pest House is dated at 1888. While the Health

**INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET**  
**Historical Narrative – Page 8**

**MILTON**  
**Area S**

Department had a number of expenses, the cost of running the pest house was charged to the Almshouse account: in 1888 – \$88 for 22 weeks' board of nurses and patients in small-pox cases; and in 1889 \$87 for a cook specifically for the pest house. The Pest House was probably built to conform with state law, which is referred to in the 1920 Annual Town Report.

When not in use by the Board of Health, the Pest House, also referred to as the "health building", was used to relieve the crowded conditions at the Men's Almshouse. This occurred in 1892, although the men had to leave so that the Board of Health could isolate one person at the end of the year. Thus it was recommended that an addition be constructed on the Men's Almshouse (MHC #192). This was completed by John Burt in 1893 at a cost of \$1552.

During the 1890s Town Reports begin to refer to the farm as the Town Farm. The number of inmates remained at twelve and below. The farm continued to be productive. The sale of milk and pork provided an income for the farm. Wood on the farm was sawed, split and delivered to the poor of the town for use as fuel. In 1898 the Board of Health made "improvements to the Pest House and purchased bedding so it can be used at any time for two cases of small pox, should any cases develop in town."

In ca. 1896 the only change that has been made to the farm's original boundaries occurred with the taking of six acres on the southwestern side for inclusion in the newly created Blue Hills Reservation by the Metropolitan Park Commission, as documented in a comparison of the Town Farm's boundaries in 1896 and 1905 Milton atlases.

In 1903 responsibility for the Town Farm was transferred from the Selectmen to a new town board, the Overseers of the Poor. During the next twenty years the farm continued to be managed by a resident superintendent and his wife. It was the policy of the Overseers to "admit as regular inmates only those who are too infirm properly to care for themselves in their own homes...." As in the past, the male and female inmates were single or widowed, ranging in age from 40-80. Their numbers ranged from four to fifteen annually.

The two almshouses as well as the stable and pest house, now called the detention hospital, continued to be maintained. In 1904 all four buildings were connected to the town water system. The Men's Almshouse (MHC #192) was improved with the construction of a cellar and installation of heating apparatus under the 1893 wing and the Pest House (MHC #193) was improved with a new nurse's room, a new cellar and furnace under the supervision of Milton architect George H. Ingraham. Since 1904 there have been no significant alterations to either building.

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**Historical Narrative – Page 9**

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As reported in the 1907 Annual Town Report, “the Town Farm contains thirty-four acres of rolling surface about two-thirds of which is covered with tree growth varying in age from ten to thirty years.” Stone bounds were set in place to mark the boundaries of property as part of the Town Farm survey project. The only one presently reported is the **Entrance Bound Stone** at the entrance to the driveway off Governor Stoughton Lane. The 1907 survey map is presently hanging on the wall of the den in the Main Almshouse. The **Wood Lot** continued to be cut, providing fuel for the poor.

The 1920 Annual Town Report stated that Town had to support the Pest House, or “detention hospital” as it was now referred to, in order to conform to the state law, although it was rarely used. With a rigorous town vaccination program, there were few small pox cases, one in 1901, three in 1902 and then the last reported case in 1918. During these years the Superintendent of the Town Farm was also appointed Superintendent of the Detention Hospital and the building was regularly maintained and painted.

**Early Modern Period (1920-1941)**

Between 1920 and 1940 the average number of inmates at the Town Farm was five. Despite the small number, the Town Farm continued to be supported by Town Meeting as in 1927 because it was “a good home for the aged poor of Milton,” who did not come under the responsibility of state laws as did the insane, deficient and delinquent. From time to time there were several additional people, “boarders,” who were supported by private contributions. By 1926 the single men and women lived together in the **Main Almshouse** (MHC #218). While the Matron continued to oversee the inmates, the Superintendent worked in the fields to make the farm productive, now with the help of hired labor.

From 1926 to 1931 the **Men’s Almshouse** (MHC #192) was used for families in need. Thereafter both this house and the **Pest House** (MHC #193), no longer used by the Board of Health (renamed the Public Health Board in 1924), were rented.

During the Depression, the Town Farm served as the distribution center for Federal aid. This use, along with providing care for the aged poor and for temporary emergency cases as well as farm work for unemployed men were the justifications for keeping the Town Farm, at times now called the “Town Infirmary,” in operation. In 1933 the road from Canton Avenue to the Town Farm was formally named Governor Stoughton Lane.

**INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET**  
**Historical Narrative – Page 10**

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In October 1940, there were no inmates at the Town Farm, for the first time in its history. Five months later, at the March 8, 1941 Town Meeting, Article 4 was accepted:

"Voted: To discontinue the Town Infirmary located on forty acres of land received under the will of Governor William Stoughton."

The Town Meeting also accepted Article 5:

"Voted, That the Selectmen be and hereby are authorized in the name and behalf of the Town to lease forty acres of land received under the will of Governor William Stoughton, and the buildings thereon, or any part, thereof, for a term not exceeding three years, for such rental and on such terms and conditions as the Selectmen shall determine, the net proceeds of such lease to be applied for the benefit of the poor of the Town as the Selectmen shall judge best."

## **1941 to Present**

Since 1941 the buildings have been rented and the monies received have been deposited in the Governor Stoughton Trust Fund, established in 1941. The Selectmen as Trustees of the Governor Stoughton Fund have used the fund to support Milton residents in need, e.g. pay for fuel assistance.

At present the three houses, Main Almshouse (MHC #218), Men's Almshouse (MHC #192) and the Pest House (MHC #193), are rented. The Stable is used by two of the families to board their horses.

In 1970 the Milton Dog Pound was located in the old cow shed in the basement of the Stable. A section of Field #2 was paved for a parking lot for the pound. In 1980 the Dog Pound was renamed the Animal Shelter and moved to its newly constructed quarters across from the Stable where it continues to operate. Fields #1 and #2, the Stable Pasture and the Orchard are currently used to graze horses. The Wood Lot was last lumbered by the Town in 1976.

**INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET**  
**Significance**

**MILTON**  
**Area S**

The Milton Poor Farm – Milton Town Farm has been a distinct and significant property in the Town of Milton since 1701. In that year Governor William Stoughton willed to the Town a wood lot to be used for the benefit of the poor. The Poor Farm was formally established in ca. 1805 on a cleared section of the wood lot with the construction of the first almshouse. The property continued to serve as a poor farm until 1941. Extant on the property today is a complex of 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings, including the second Main Almshouse (1854), the Men's Almshouse (1871), the Pest House (1888) which was used to isolate small pox victims, and the Stable (1882). 19<sup>th</sup> century landscape features include two agricultural fields, a stable pasture, an orchard, and a wood lot. Since 1941 the buildings have been rented by the Town and the monies used for families in need. The fields, pasture and orchard are presently used to graze horses. The general layout and buildings of the Poor Farm are historically intact and have not been significantly altered since 1941. However, the Milton Poor Farm is presently threatened with the construction of an elementary school in the wood lot and the demolition of the buildings. The Milton Poor Farm – Milton Town Farm retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association and fulfills Criteria A and C of the National Register Places at the local level.

**INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET**  
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**MILTON**  
**Area S**

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**INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET**  
**Data Sheet**

**MILTON  
 AREA S**

<b>MCH #</b>	<b>HISTORIC NAME</b>	<b>ADDRESS</b>	<b>DATE</b>
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**Buildings**

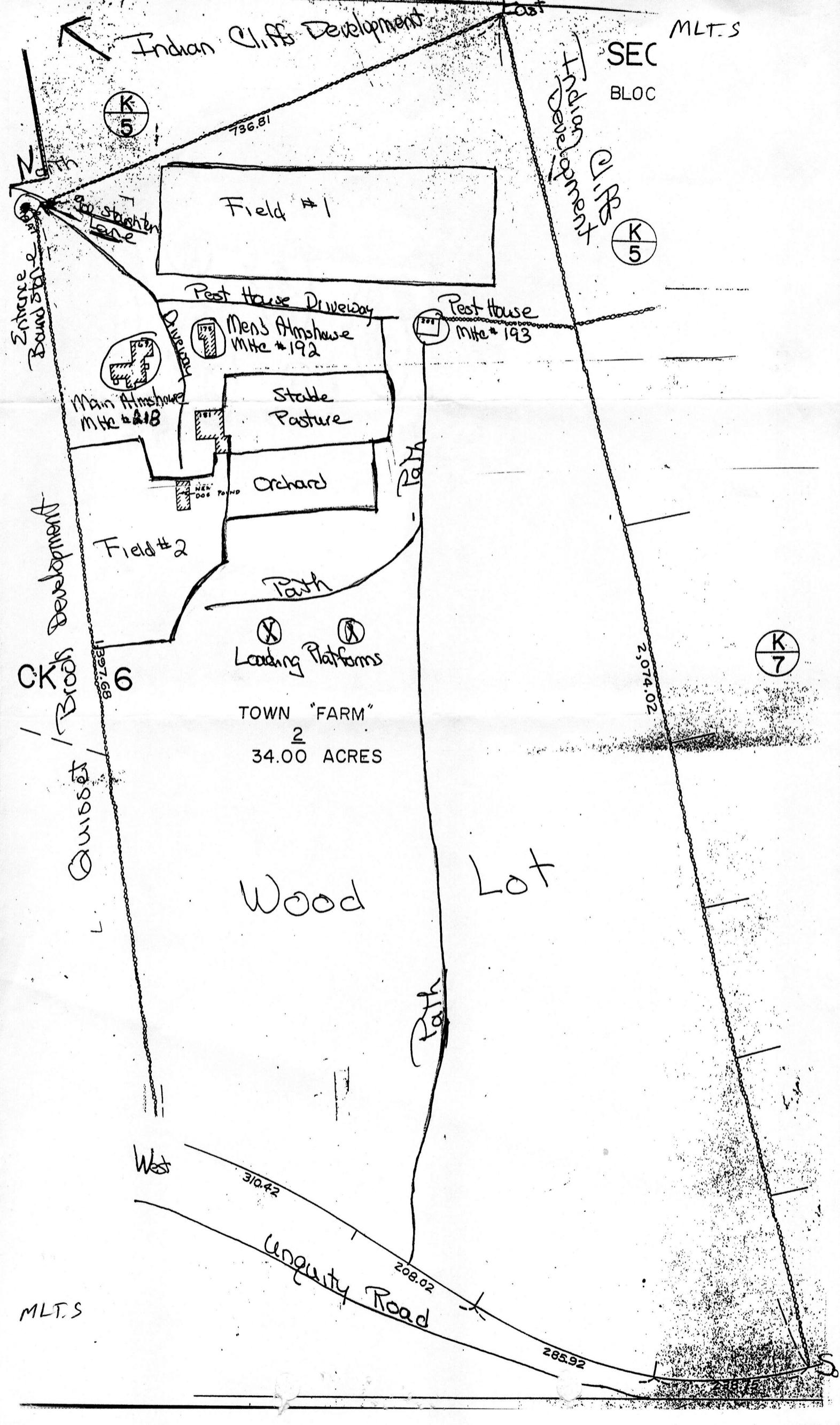
218	Main Almshouse	169 Governor Stoughton Lane	1854
192	Men's Almshouse	175 Governor Stoughton Lane	1871
704	Stable	181 Governor Stoughton Lane	1882
193	Pest House	208 Governor Stoughton Lane	1888
705	Animal Shelter	Governor Stoughton Lane	1980

**Structures**

946	Loading Platform (2)	Governor Stoughton Lane	19 <sup>th</sup> century
947	Stone Walls	Governor Stoughton Lane	19 <sup>th</sup> century
948	Entrance Bound Stone	Governor Stoughton Lane	1907

**Landscape Features**

949	Field #1	Governor Stoughton Lane	1862/1885
750	Field #2	Governor Stoughton Lane	1862/1885
951	Stable Pasture	Governor Stoughton Lane	1882
952	Orchard	Governor Stoughton Lane	1862
953	Wood Lot	Governor Stoughton Lane	19 <sup>th</sup> /20 <sup>th</sup> c.



**MHC INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET**

*MHC Inventory scanning project, 2008-2009*

**MACRIS No.** MLT 5



POOR FARM MAIN ALMSHOUSE  
169 GOV. STOUGHTON LN  
(MLT. 218)



POOR FARM STABLE  
181 GOV. STOUGHTON LN  
(MLT. 704)

**MHC INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET**

*MHC Inventory scanning project, 2008-2009*

MACRIS No. MLT. 5



Poor Farm Pest House  
208 Gov. Stoughton Ln  
(MLT. 193)



Poor Farm Stable Pasture  
Gov. Stoughton Ln  
(MLT. 951)

**MHC INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET**

*MHC Inventory scanning project, 2008-2009*

**MACRIS No. MLT. 5**



Poor Farm Men's Almshouse  
175 Gov. Stoughton Ln  
(MLT. 192)



Poor Farm Animal Shelter and Field  
Gov. Stoughton Ln  
(MLT. 705)

**MHC INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET**

*MHC Inventory scanning project, 2008-2009*

**MACRIS No. MLT. S**



Poor Farm FIELD #1  
GOV. STOUGHTON LN  
(MLT. 949)



Poor Farm ENTRANCE BOUND  
STONES  
GOV. STOUGHTON LN  
(MLT. 948)

**MHC INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET**

*MHC Inventory scanning project, 2008-2009*

MACRIS No. MLT. S



POOR FARM WOOD LOT  
GOV. STOUGHTON LN  
(MLT. 953)



POOR FARM ORCHARD  
GOV. STOUGHTON LN  
(MLT. 952)

MHC INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MHC Inventory scanning project, 2008-2009

MACRIS No. MLT.5



POOR FARM LOADING PLATFORM  
GOV STOUGHTON LN  
(MLT. 946)



POOR FARM ENTRANCE Bound STONE  
GOV. STOUGHTON LN  
(MLT. 948)

MLT.S

Original yellow form: Eligibility file  
Copies: Inventory form  
Town file(w/corresp.)  
Macris  
NR director \_\_\_\_\_

Community: Milton

**MHC OPINION: ELIGIBILITY FOR NATIONAL REGISTER**

Date Received: 7 Apr 09

Date Due:

Date Reviewed: 18 June 09

Type:  Individual  District (Attach map indicating boundaries)

Name: Milton Poor Farm aka Milton Town Farm Inventory Form: MLT.S, K 192-193, 218,  
704-705, 946-953

Address: Governor Stoughton Lane

Requested by: Joe Grogan, Frank Mulligan

Action:  Honor  ITC  Grant  R & C  
Other:

Agency: Staff in charge of Review:

**INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES**

**DISTRICTS**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligible	<input type="checkbox"/> Eligible
<input type="checkbox"/> Eligible, also in district	<input type="checkbox"/> Ineligible
<input type="checkbox"/> Eligible <u>only</u> in district	<input type="checkbox"/> More information needed
<input type="checkbox"/> Ineligible	
<input type="checkbox"/> More information needed	

**CRITERIA:**

A  B  C  D

**LEVEL:**

Local  State  National

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE** by Phil Bergen

This 34-acre location, owned by the Town of Milton, was donated by Royal Gov. William Stoughton in 1701, and was used as the town poor farm from ca. 1805-1940. It provided shelter, occupation, and financial relief for indigents, both as transients and permanent residents who worked in the fields, tilled crops, and lived collectively. The parcel includes two mid 19<sup>th</sup>-century almshouses, a "Pest House" that housed smallpox victims, a stable, a 1980 animal shelter, and a variety of fields, wood lots, and assorted structures associated with the farm. Buildings were rented out post-1940, and the stable continues to be used for its original purpose.

This is a rare surviving example of a type of community building, complete with most of its original land, which was fairly common in MA as an early form of local welfare. (Six acres were ceded to the MDC parkways in the 1890s.) Most remaining town farms have been subdivided – Milton's has retained its acreage. The land has been owned by the town for over 300 years.