

MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report

MILTON

Report Date: 1981

Associated Regional Report: Boston Area

Reconnaissance Survey Town Reports, produced for MHC's Statewide Reconnaissance Survey between 1979 and 1987, introduce the historical development of each of the Commonwealth's municipalities. Each report begins with an historic overview, a description of topography, and political boundaries. For the purposes of the survey, the historic period has been subdivided into seven periods: Contact (1500–1620), Plantation (1620–1675), Colonial (1675–1775), Federal (1775–1830), Early Industrial (1830–1870), Late Industrial (1870–1915), and Early Modern (1915–1940/55). Each report concludes with survey observations that evaluate the town's existing historic properties inventory and highlight significant historic buildings, settlement patterns, and present threats to these resources. A bibliography lists key secondary resources.

Town reports are designed for use together with a series of town maps that demarcate settlement patterns, transportation corridors and industrial sites for each historic period. These maps are in the form of color-coded, polyester overlays to the USGS topographic base map for each town on file and available for consultation at MHC. For further information on the organization and preparation of town reports, readers should contact MHC.

Users should keep in mind that these reports are now two decades or more old. The information they contain, including assessments of existing knowledge, planning recommendations, understanding of local development, and bibliographic references all date to the time they were written. In some cases, information on certain topics was not completed. No attempt has been made to update this information.

Electronic text was not available for digital capture, and as a result most of the reports have been scanned as PDF files. While all have been processed with optical character recognition, there will inevitably be some character recognition errors.

The activity that is the subject of the MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior. This program receives Federal financial assistance for identification and protection of historic properties. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, the U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability or age in its federally assisted programs. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility as described above, or if you desire further information please write to: Office of Equal Opportunity, National Park Service, 1849 C Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20240.



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MHC RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY REPORT

Date: May 1981

Community: Milton

I. TOPOGRAPHY

Town occupies 13.2 square miles, of which all but a small portion lie within the watershed of the Neponset River, which forms the town's northern boundary with Dorchester. The town's southern boundary is marked by the Blue Hills, the region's most celebrated range and the southern limit of the Boston Basin. Great Blue Hill, at 635 feet, the highest point within 10 miles of the coast between Maine and Florida, has for this reason had a long history in land surveys and meteorological observation.

Tidewater reaches inland along the Neponset as far as Milton Lower Falls, the first major waterpower on the river. In the late 18th and 19th centuries the village here became a major commercial and industrial center, though the Upper Falls (opposite Mattapan) also saw industrial development. None of the town's other streams developed as significant waterpower sources.

Probably nearly two thirds of the town drains into the Neponset via Pine Tree Brook, which rises in the Blue Hills near Hillside Pond. In the course of its run north, gathering smaller streams from either side, it passes through a broad, boggy inland plain (now the site of Pine Tree Brook Reservoir), hemmed in on all sides by higher elevations. The brook escapes to the north through a narrow gorge before reaching the Neponset above Lower Falls. Unquity Brook, rising at Milton Center in the valley opposite the town hall, flows east around the south side of Milton Hill to Gulliver's Creek, the former Neponset River terminus of the Granite Railway. Blue Hill River, the only stream not part of the Neponset system, flows off the south side of the Blue Hills into the Monaquot, reaching the sea at Weymouth Fore River.

Much of the town is hilly and not under 100 feet elevation, but the town's principal elevations north of the Blue Hills were Milton Hill (138 feet) and Brush Hill (258 feet), both heights overlooking the Neponset River. The former has long been famed for its magnificent view to the north and east across the Neponset meadows and out to sea.

II. POLITICAL BOUNDARIES

Originally part of Dorchester, called Unquetyquissett with 1660 grant line over Great Blue Hill surviving at Canton boundary. Established as Milton (1662) with original Braintree boundary intact as Quincy line through Cunningham Park. Portions of Braintree Iron Works grant (now Quincy) annexed during early 18th century with boundary at Blue Hill River. Brush Hill section of Fairmont annexed to Hyde Park 1868 and original Neponset River boundary with Dorchester maintained with Boston annex (1870 and 1912). Milton originally in Suffolk County, included as part of Norfolk County 1794.

III. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Affluent suburban town on southern axis of inner metropolitan Boston. Located between Neponset River and Blue Hills with important native fishing site at Unquitynessit Falls (Lower Mills) and reported settlement area of Neponset tribe on Milton Hill. Early English contact along Neponset by native traders before 1630 with settlement from Dorchester at Lower Mills during mid-17th century. Formal town establishment by Late First Period with meeting house on Milton Hill (Adams St), burying ground on Academy Hill and agricultural development along Canton Ave division highway. Some altered late 17th century houses on Brush Hill Rd with authentic First Period examples from Dorchester on Hillside St. Neponset River mill sites developed as primary economic focus during Colonial period at Lower Mills at Mattapan with shift of town center to Canton Ave during early 18th century. Location of early estate district on Milton Hill over Neponset marshes with survival of Hutchinson Field as remnant of mid-18th century landscaping, including original Ha-Ha. Several well-preserved period houses of vernacular plan throughout area with particular examples on Adams St., Brush Hill Rd and Hillside St. Continued agricultural economy through early 19th century with primary economic development at Lower Mills and along Boston turnpikes to Blue Hills with examples of brick-end Federal houses. Establishment of West Quincy granite quarries created early railroad village at East Milton, including survival of mid-19th century cottages along Granite Ave. Commuter rail connections to Lower Mills and Neponset expanded estate district on Milton Hill, Brush Hill with well-preserved Greek Revival and Victorian period houses of substantial architectural quality. Affluent residential development continued through late 19th century around Blue Hills with gentrification of local farmsteads on Hillside St and Canton Ave. Related suburban areas developed between Academy Hill and Lower Mills along Canton Ave with examples of elaborate Shingle Style and Colonial Revival designs, with extensions along Highland St to Wadsworth Hill in brick and stucco styles. Recreational development of Blue Hills Reservation by early 20th century with well preserved park buildings in rustic style and historic concrete observatory tower at Blue Hill summit. Expansion of trolley service from Mattapan created tract housing area along Blue Hill Ave and Brook St with similar pattern around East Milton center. Primary commercial focus remained at Lower Mills with substantial brick business blocks of Romanesque design and related mill complex. Growth of institutional belt around Milton Center and Brush Hill Rd with private schools and associated structures by mid-20th century. At present, development pressures are most evident around East Milton Center with extensive commercial activity along Southeast Expressway and around Blue Hills Reservation and Route 128. Remaining residential areas retain historic period fabric with conscious preservation of structures around Milton Hill and Brush Hill estate districts.

Some evidence of economic change is evident from Mattapan center along Blue Hill Ave and Brook St, while Neponset marshes survive as fragile natural landscape around wildlife reservation.

IV. CONTACT PERIOD (1500-1620)

A. Transportation Routes:

Important N/S corridor from Neponset River over Blue Hills with documented ford sites at Lower Mills, (Adams St). Mattapan (Blue Hill Ave) and Pauls Bridge (Neponset Valley Pkwy.). Primary trail from Boston Harbor to South Shore at Unquitynissett (Lower Mills) reported as Adams St to East Milton with branch to [Mis]squantum peninsula suspected as Squantum St. Route over Blue Hills from Hoosicwhisick (Houghtons) Pond apparently follows Hillside St between Breeze and Houghton Hills down to Pleasant St and over Unquity Brook to Adams St with original course around Pine Tree Brook preserved at Highland-Randolph Ave. Probable connector through Blue Hill gap at Chicatuabut Hill follows axis of Forest St to Hillside. Route over Blue Hill from Punkapoag (Canton) along Neponset valley approximates Brush Hill Rd from Blue Hill Ave to Pauls Bridge and Mattapan fords. Trail link between Mattapan and Lower Mills reported as Ruggles Lane to Brook St with original segment intact along Pine Tree Brook. Suspected trail routes from Hillside Ave. to Neponset fords would seem likely along Pine Tree Brook to Mattapan and around Wadsworth Hill (Highland St) to Churchills Lane over Unquity Brook.

B. Settlement Pattern:

No documented period sites reported although their presence is highly probable. Several sites with Woodland components reported along Neponset River especially in vicinity of Milton Hill, the Wollaston golf course, and Milton Lower Mills. Sites also likely along Unquity and Pine Tree Brooks and around their upland tributary ponds.

C. Subsistence Pattern:

An area with diverse resources: seasonal fish runs in Neponset and its tributaries, with major access point at Milton Lower Falls; broad riverine meadow lands for hunting/gathering; proximity to shellfish and other marine resources in the Neponset estuary; several major lithic quarries in the Blue Hills - notably the Braintree slate and Hornfels quarry. Location near coast also made this a likely area for period trade between natives and Europeans (David Thompson reputed to be trading in Neponset area as early as 1619).

D. Observations:

An area of major native occupation; part of the core area of the Massachusetts group. Strong native presence documented by ethnohistoric reports.

While many sites have likely been destroyed by intensive urban and suburban growth, a high probability that many others remain.

V. FIRST PERIOD (1620-1675)

A. Transportation Routes:

Native trails improved as regional highways with main road to Plymouth (Adams St) from Lower Mills bridge (1633). Dorchester-Milton division (1660) preserved as Canton Ave connecting road from burying ground. (Centre-Canton Sts) to meeting house (Adams St) as Churchills Lane.

B. Population:

Earliest settlement c. 1634. Thirty years later town had estimated population of 200-250 people with about 40 houses.

C. Settlement Pattern:

Reported occupation by English traders along Neponset at Unquitynessit (Lower Mills) during 1620s. Establishment of mill and bridge (1633) on Plymouth highway (Adams St) from Dorchester creates Lower Mills village by mid-17th century. Establishment of Milton meeting house (1671) on Milton Hill (Adams St-Churchills Lane) creates town center around Unquity Brook.

D. Economic Base:

Primarily agricultural town with barley, rye, Indian corn principal crops. Bridge across Neponset to Stoughton's mill at Lower Falls established early. Some shipbuilding activity on Gulliver's Creek by mid 17th century. Powder mill at Upper Falls built 1674, reputedly earliest built in Colonies; operated by Walter Everden. Later involved in similar operation at Canton (?). Tanning begun by 1662 by Pitcher family on Unquity Brook at Milton Center.

E. Architecture:

Residential: Only one documented First Period house original to Milton survives in the town: the Robert Tucker House on Brush Hill Road, moved c. 1880 from its original site, also on Brush Hill Road, and modernized as a Queen Anne cottage. The Bernard Capen House (c.1659) on Hillside Street, moved from Dorchester in 1909, retains a particularly well-preserved interior detailing and exhibits transitional framing techniques combining East Anglian and west of England elements.

VI. COLONIAL PERIOD (1675-1775)

A. Transportation Routes:

Highways remained intact from mid-17th century with primary road to Plymouth-South Shore as Adams St. Relocation of meeting house to Milton Center during early 18th century results in radial connectors along Canton Ave axis as Thacher, Highland, Robbins, and Voses Sts. Bridge improvements at Mattapan and Pauls Bridge made by mid-18th century.

B. Population:

By 1700, population a little under 400 persons living in some 60 houses. By 1770 population has reached 900-1000 in about 125 structures (Hamilton). Prosperous Bostonians move into Milton during much of period, of which Governor Hutchinson one of the more prominent.

C. Settlement Pattern:

Expansion of agricultural economy during late-17th century with axis of development along Canton Ave and Hillside St to Great Blue Hill. Continued expansion of water power sites at Lower Mills and establishment of bridge and mill site at Mattapan by early 18th century. Subsequent shift of town center to Academy Hill (Canton Ave) with second meeting house (1727), and conversion of Milton Hill town site to estate district along Adams St. with Gov. Hutchinson farm (1743), with Hutchinson Field surviving to Neponset.

D. Economic Base:

Period saw the development of Milton as a large and prosperous town, mostly agricultural but with important industrial developments at Upper and Lower Falls. This was largely accomplished with the aid of Boston capital -- as in the manufacture of gunpowder (1674), establishment of an iron slitting mill at the Upper Falls (1710), and a paper mill at the Lower (1728). At the Lower Falls a sawmill erected in 1706 was expanded in 1728 to include the manufacture of paper, the first such activity in New England. This mill, and its Federal Period successor -- were responsible for training many of the later paper manufacturers including James Boies, Edmund Tileston, and Stephen Crane. Manufacture of chocolate initiated here in 1764 under guidance of Irish immigrant James Hannon. The construction of the mill for grinding cocoa beans was financed by James Baker, who not long after went into business for himself.

Because of its position at the head of tidewater, Milton Village developed as a thriving commercial center. The center of trading, Teele reported, was Daniel Vose's "immense wholesale and retail store" [... wholesale and retail trade?] where goods from the interior were received in exchange for West Indian goods and other commodities.

E. Architecture:

Residential: Milton retains a number of Colonial houses including vernacular and highstyle examples as well as two late First Period houses. Both houses are dated 1707 and both are center chimney structures although one appears to have been enlarged from an end chimney structure. While center chimney houses predominate, center hall and rear wall chimney plan houses are known as early as c. 1740. The Governor Hutchinson House (1745, no longer standing), a center hall cottage with a steeply-pitched hip roof, and the Daniel Vose (or Suffolk Resolves) House (1740), a center hall house with Georgian detailing, demonstrate that the town had achieved sufficient status by the 1740s to allow for highstyle construction. More modest center chimney farmhouses were constructed along Brush Hill Road and Canton Avenue.

VII. FEDERAL PERIOD (1775-1830)

A. Transportation Routes:

Improvement of Blue Hill-Neponset corridor from Boston with turnpikes at Blue Hill and Randolph Aves from Mattapan and Lower Mills. Tramroad from Bunker Hill Monument quarries to Neponset River constructed as Quincy Granite Railway (1826) as important early American railroad with original Route through East Milton now Southeast Expressway (Route 3).

B. Population:

Virtually stagnant growth during this period. In 1790, Milton had a population of 1,039. Forty years later the number had risen by only five hundred -- a growth of about 10-15 people a year.

C. Settlement Pattern:

Continued development of Neponset mill sites at Mattapan and Lower Mills with turnpike connections from Boston over Blue Hills. Town center adjusted west to Thatcher St. with market farms along Canton Ave. axis to Hillside St. Estate District remained stable on Adams St while initial construction of granite railway creates village at East Milton crossing by 1830.

D. Economic Base:

Period characterized by strong commercial activity at Milton Village led by Vose store at landing and continuing small-scale industrial activity -- primarily in chocolate and paper -- at Upper and Lower Falls. Number of bakeries established early in century, led by Josiah Bent (1801), whose water biscuits (hard tack), reputed the earliest manufactured in the country (Teele, p. 386), may have been prompted by Milton Village's extensive coastwise trade. Navigation on the river reached its peak in 1833 when 74 vessels sailed up the river to unload cargoes at Lower Mills landing. Active shipbuilding by Pembroke man, Daniel Briggs on Neponset meadows at site of 17th-century yard. The last ship from his yard, well over 300 tons, was the Milton, in 1815.

Boston capital and excellent waterpower attracted inventive mechanics, of which Benjamin Crehore was one of the most prominent. His small-scale manufacture of pianos beginning in 1800 is believed to have been the first in New England, and through his apprentices and employees -- Lewis Babcock and the Bents -- was largely responsible for the piano business which developed soon after in Boston.

Though the technology employed was still primitive, paper mills continued to expand. About 1808 Edmund Tileston who had been trained at the Lower Falls paper mill, and Mark Hollingsworth purchased the Upper Falls privilege, beginning an important association that was to last over a century. Two years later Isaac Sanderson of Watertown purchased the 1728 mill at the Lower Falls and in 1817 installed an iron tubwheel in a new mill about where the present grist mill stands. Teele claims that this was the earliest wrought-iron tubwheel in the country. (Curiously, Sanderson had been preceded twelve years before by Edmund Parker who installed a wooden tubwheel -- also "the first" according to Teele -- in his new chocolate mill on the Dorchester side of the river.) Isaac Sanderson was also responsible for developing a cylindrical paper machine about this time, for which he received a patent in 1829, and a process for producing brown paper from sand grass (1838).

In the same year that Sanderson installed the iron wheel, another mechanic entrepreneur, Francis Brimley installed a veneer saw in his new drug and dyestuffs mill at the upper dam (above Adams St.), held by Teele to have been the first waterpowered veneer saw.

As early as 1798 the Great Blue Hill had been a point of more than local interest. A tavern at the foot of the hill supported the construction that year of a wooden observation tower. In 1809 the town supported the first organized community health drive in the country in conducting a smallpox vaccination campaign.

E. Architecture:

Residential: Substantial and well-detailed post-Colonial and Federal style houses, with at least a few highstyle late Georgian and Federal examples were built in the period and many survive. Center hall plan houses predominate with perhaps a half dozen brick end wall chimney Federal houses known. Highstyle examples include the late Georgian, hip-roofed Governor Belcher House and Federal style Amos Holbrook House on Adams Street, but other houses in town are known to incorporate high quality period detailing, thus indicating an overall sophistication for the period. Cottages and rear wall chimney houses are less common.

Institutional: The present First Parish Church, a gable-roofed structure with a projecting pedimented bay and two-stage tower with an open belfry, was built in 1788. The Town Farm was established during the period as was the Milton Academy (). The only surviving municipal structure is the brick, pyramidal-roofed Powder House (1812).

Commercial: A few Federal period shops survive at Lower Mills; in addition, at least two taverns survive, on Randolph and Canton Avenues. A number of houses along Randolph and Hillside Avenues are said to have incorporated bakeries, operating either from cellars or outbuildings on the property.

Industrial: Although several paper, saw, and cotton mills operated along the Neponset during the period, no structures are known to survive. Portions of a granite forge (pre-1825) are recorded on Adams Street.

VIII. EARLY INDUSTRIAL (1830-1870)

A. Transportation Routes:

Turnpikes and railroads intact from early 19th century with connection from Dorchester to East Milton as Granite Avenue (1837) along Granite Ave. Pauls Bridge rebuilt (1849) as three-arch stone span, still intact as Neponset Valley Pkwy. to Readville. Milton-Mattapan Branch Railroad (1847) constructed along Neponset River through Lower Mills (now MBTA High Speed Trolley).

B. Population:

Town grew by just over 1100 people in 40 years, rising from 1,576 in 1830 to 2,683 in 1870 -- a very slow growth rate (about 27 people per year) in comparison with other Boston-area towns. The town's greatest rise occurred in the five years 1850-55 when growth reached 83/year, though it fell to negligible numbers in the succeeding years.

In 1865, 22 percent of the population were foreign born, of which three-quarters were Irish. A number of the Irish were attracted by the granite business in East Milton, though most of the granite workers lived and worked in Quincy.

C. Settlement Pattern:

Further development of East Milton railroad village on Granite Ave during mid-19th century. Opening of commuter depots at Lower Mills and Mattapan stimulates expansion of suburban estate district on Milton Hill (Adams St) and on Brush Hill (Brush Hill Rd). Town center remained on Canton Ave with worker's district on backslope of Pine Tree Brook, and continued stability of marker farms around Blue Hills (Hillside St). Industrial activity is maintained at Lower Mills with similar growth at Mattapan along Neponset River.

D. Economic Base:

Establishment of "Railway Village" -- now East Milton -- a granite working village and terminus of the Granite Railway (Gulliver's Creek Wharf). Although stone for the Bunker Hill monument was quarried in Quincy, it was finished in granite sheds in East Milton. Cars for the railway were constructed at Willard Felt's granite forge and shop at Adams and W. Squantum. Employment in the granite business in East Milton appears to have peaked about 1845 with 150 men working in quarrying and finishing.

Several industries established in the preceding periods peaked in this period and then declined in the face of new technologies or transportation improvements -- among them, chair and cabinetmaking, tanning, and wool pulling. The wool pulling establishment produced \$220,000 worth of boot and shoe linings in 1855, the highest product value of any Milton industry in this period. In 1865, Moses Whitney's tan yard produced \$175,000 worth of hides and leather. Both paper and chocolate, which would dominate in the succeeding period, were relatively small affairs at this time. Statistics from the chocolate mill were not recorded until 1855 (14 men produced \$64,000 worth in 1865), and only in 1865 did Tileston & Hollingsworth's upper falls paper mill show significant strength (50 hands producing \$110,000 worth).

Despite this relatively varied industrial base, the town's economy remained predominantly agricultural. In 1865, there were 125 farms producing crops and vegetables worth \$1,090,670.

The first triangulation of the state (and the nation's earliest state sponsored survey) took place in 1830-40 under the direction of Borden, and the "Borden Station" on Great Blue Hill was a key landmark for the first baselines.

About 1837, Harvard University constructed a stone tower here to mark a meridian with their observatory at Cambridge.

E. Architecture:

Residential: Comparatively few houses were built in the Early Industrial period. East Milton experienced the greatest development with a number of modest but well-detailed Greek Revival cottages, some with Doric verandas, built along Mechanic, Pierce, and Adams Streets after the construction of Granite Railway in 1826. A few Greek Revival cottages with Gothic Revival lancet windows were also built at East Milton with a single example on Highland Avenue and several others on Canton Avenue. A number of more modest Greek Revival cottages, many of them retaining very simple Federal detailing, were also built, but these tend to be located in the southwestern section of town and seem to be related to agricultural rather than industrial activity. Very few Greek Revival houses are known; most of these tend to retain the traditional five-bay, center entrance plan of the preceding Georgian and Federal periods. Only one highstyle Greek Revival house is known and that is the R.B. Forbes House (1833 Isaiah Rogers) on Adams Street, a monumental monitor-roofed structure with flush-board siding and wide pilasters. Few Italianate structures were built with a very few towered or cross-gabled examples (on Adams Street and Brook Road). Again, most of the Italianate houses tend to retain the well-established five-bay center-entrance configuration, an indication of mid-19th century conservatism. At least two granite Greek Revival cottages are known.

IX. LATE INDUSTRIAL (1870-1915)

A. Transportation Routes:

Railroads and highways remain from mid-19th century. Expansion of suburban trolley system from Dorchester by early 20th century with interurban routes over Blue Hills from Mattapan as Brook-Reedsdale-Randolph Aves with Central Ave connector to Lower Mills and over Blue Hill Ave to Canton with Milton St. branch to Readeville. Link to East Milton and Quincy followed Granite Ave - Edge Hill - Pleasant Sts to Randolph Ave junction around Adams St estate district.

B. Population:

Growth rate increased in Milton to an average of 155 people a year in 1880-1915. Notable peak in the decade 1890-1900 when this rate increased to 230. Between 1870 and 1915 population tripled, reaching 8,600 in the latter year. Foreign-born population remained fairly constant at 27-28 percent, though the Irish part of this immigration declined from a little over half in 1865 to about a third in 1905.

Nova Scotia (16%) and Scotland (10%) provided the bulk of the remaining immigrant population in the latter year.

C. Settlement Pattern:

Rapid expansion of residential development during late 19th century with elaboration of suburban estate district from Milton Hill to Academy and Wadsworth Hills along Canton and Highland Sts from Lower Mills depot with extension to farmsteads on Hillside St. Similar growth from Mattapan on Brush Hill Rd. to upper Canton Ave creates estate district around Blue Hills. Extension of trolley service from Mattapan and Lower Mills prompts speculative housing developments along Blue Hill Ave-Brook Rd and Central Ave by early 20th century, with similar pattern around East Milton on Forge Hill-Pleasant Sts. Lower Mills becomes primary commercial and industrial center with urban business blocks around Neponset bridge.

D. Economic Base:

Milton during this period developed as a wealthy Boston suburb with a streetcar system and sharply declining industrial activity. Remaining industries were chocolate at Milton Village, paper at the Upper Falls, and in a new factory on Elliott Street, Bent's biscuits. After the Boston fire of 1872, fewer and fewer buildings were constructed of granite, and by WWI, most of the granite business was limited to tombstone production. Much attention was given to market gardening including the cultivation of fruit trees, raising greenhouse plants, currants, grapes, and strawberries.

Water, sewerage, and electrical systems were all constructed 1889-90. In 1891, the town became part of the metropolitan water system, and two years later further affiliated with the city by surrendering a large portion of the Blue Hills to the Metropolitan Park Commission for a reservation. Here A.L. Rotch in 1884 had built an important meteorological observatory.

E. Architecture:

Residential: The majority of the highstyle, architect-designed country estates and houses for which Milton is noted were built in this period. These include houses by a number of important Boston firms with an especially extensive group of houses designed by William Ralph Emerson. Colonial and Georgian Revival designs predominate with a number of well-detailed Queen Anne and Shingle Style houses also built. The majority of the most ambitious houses are located along Adams St, Brush Hill Road, and Canton and Randolph Avenues.

In many instances, older farm houses were remodelled and enlarged as country estates. The same streets filled in with somewhat more modest Queen Anne, Shingle Style, and Colonial Revival houses. Similar suburban construction took place along Thacher, Central, and Highland Streets. Few Stick Style or Second Empire houses were built and at least a few Second Empire were later Colonial Revivalized. Toward the end of this period, stuccoed houses with Craftsman-derived massing began to be built but most of these are modest structures with conservative Colonial Revival detailing and few highstyle or progressive designs are known. A few Colonial Revival two-family houses (c. 1910) were built along Brook Road with limited modest Queen Anne and Colonial Revival housing built at East Milton about the same time.

Institutional: Institutional construction concentrated at East Milton Square with several churches, including St. Agatha's, a granite, Gothic Revival design with a projecting square tower, and stuccoed Craftsman First Baptist Church, constructed around the turn of the century. Most institutional structures date after 1900, such as the Beaux Arts Public Library (c. 1910) and Colonial Revival Junior High School (c. 1912). Expansion took place at the Milton Academy, with the earliest building now standing, a Romanesque Revival structure, built 1885. A number of structures at the Blue Hills Reservation date from the period including the Weather Observatory (1885, A. Lawrence Rotch?), a crenellated tower of reinforced concrete (a notably early use of the material), Shingle Style stables (1908) and rustic Chalet restrooms (1904).

Commercial: A few one and two-story commercial buildings in brick and frame were built at East Milton Square along with a very few cornerstores (Pleasant St; Brook Road). More pretentious two and three-story Romanesque and Queen Anne brick buildings were constructed at Lower Mills (Telephone Company, 19__).

X. EARLY MODERN (1915-1940)

A. Transportation Routes:

Abandonment of local streetcar routes and conversion of Milton Branch Railroad to electric trolley (1927) intact as MBTA Mattapan-Ashmont line with original snowplows and postwar (1951) streetcars. Local roads improved as suburban auto highways with Neponset Blue Hills corridor from Mattapan as Route 138 (Blue Hill Ave) and Route 28 (Brook-Reedsdale-Randolph Aves). Original Route 135 (Milton-Canton-Centre Sts.) linked East Milton and Hyde Park, with Brook Road parkway around Lower Mills. Metropolitan District Commission roads of the period include Neponset Valley Pkwy., Unquity, and Chicatuabut Rds. Original Route 128 (1931) followed Blue Hill River Rd. around Houghtons Pond.

B. Population:

Between 1915 and 1940 Milton doubled her population, reaching 18,708 in the latter year. Much of this growth occurred in the 1920s when Milton grew by an average of 710 people a year. Since then, until 1965, it continued to grow, though erratically, its two boom periods being during the Second World War and in the decade 1950-60.

C. Settlement Pattern:

Continued development of affluent residential areas around Milton Center on Reedsdale Rd, Highland St, and Canton Ave to Milton Hill and Lower Mills. Similar expansion of estate district around Great Blue Hill on Hillside St and upper Canton Ave. to Brush Hill Rd. with intermediate institutional belt along Blue Hill Ave. Modest residential housing expanded on Brook and Thatcher Sts from Mattapan to back slope of Milton Center, with similar pattern from East Milton along Forge Hill Road and Granite Ave, primarily industrial complex, while East Milton emerged as important commercial center. Institutional expansion evident along Brook Rd axis between Academy and Milton Hills to town center, with highway commercial development limited to Robbins St junction at Canton Ave and Pleasant St at Randolph Ave. Recreational focus created at Blue Hills Reservation during mid-20th century with extension to Houghtons Pond and Pine Tree Brook camp sites.

D. Economic Base:

With the arrival of the 1920s, Milton entered a period of suburban growth previously unprecedented in the town. After 1929, many large estates were broken up for subdivisions, and in the same year, the steam railroad was replaced by the electric surface car of the Boston Elevated.

The chocolate business continued unabated (in 1927 Walter Baker and Company was sold to the Postum Co. -- now General Foods), but the town's remaining paper mill and National Biscuit's Elliott Street plant (formerly Bent) were closed.

E. Architecture:

Residential: Extensive residential construction took place during the period with a great many modest two-family Craftsman and Colonial Revival houses built along Thatcher and Pleasant Streets, Blue Hill Avenue, and Parkway, Edge Hill, and Brook Roads. Also constructed were a number of suburban single family houses with Colonial Revival and Dutch Colonial designs predominating.

Brick construction is rare, probably in historicist reference to the ubiquity of wooden construction throughout the town as well as to the modest circumstances of the owners. Comparatively few highstyle or ambitious houses were built although at least a few Colonial Revival and Craftsman houses of some pretention were built in the affluent neighborhoods in the southeastern section of town. At least one restrained Moderne house is known on Adams Street.

Institutional: Most of Milton's schools, private and public, date from this period. These include brick Colonial and Georgian Revival public schools as well as additions to the Milton Academy and Fontbonne Academy. Neoclassical concession stands (c.1920) and a slate and granite observatory (1929) were built on the Blue Hills Reservation.

Commercial: Modest one and two-story Colonial Revival and Moderne commercial blocks in concrete and brick were built in the 1920s at East Milton Square and at a very few neighborhood corners (Randolph Avenue).

XI. SURVEY OBSERVATIONS

The existing survey, apparently based on Teele's map of Milton, is thorough and well-researched and adequately defines pre-1830 resources, but it completely overlooks the town's most significant architectural resource, its late 19th-century country houses and estates, as well as a large portion of the early 19th century worker's housing at East Milton and almost all of the town's institutional buildings. Future survey work should concentrate on these areas with particularly careful research by a professional architectural historian on the development of high-status residential areas. Potential historic districts along Hillside Street, Brush Hill Road, upper Canton Avenue, Randolph Street, Adams Street at Churchill Lane, and in East Milton Square and Lower Mills.

XII. SOURCES

Dorchester Antiquarian and Historical Society, History of the Town of Dorchester, Massachusetts (Boston 1859) [Neponset River Industries].

Hamilton, Edward P., History of Milton (Milton, 1957).

Teele, Albert Kendall, The History of Milton, Massachusetts, 1640-1887 (Boston, 1887).