
National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory
2015



Meriam's Corner
Minute Man National Historical Park

Table of Contents

Inventory Unit Summary & Site Plan

Concurrence Status

Geographic Information and Location Map

Management Information

National Register Information

Chronology & Physical History

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Condition

Treatment

Bibliography & Supplemental Information

Inventory Unit Summary & Site Plan

Inventory Summary

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory Overview:

CLI General Information:

Purpose and Goals of the CLI

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI) is an evaluated inventory of all significant landscapes in units of the national park system in which the National Park Service has, or plans to acquire any enforceable legal interest. Landscapes documented through the CLI are those that individually meet criteria set forth in the National Register of Historic Places such as historic sites, historic designed landscapes, and historic vernacular landscapes or those that are contributing elements of properties that meet the criteria. In addition, landscapes that are managed as cultural resources because of law, policy, or decisions reached through the park planning process even though they do not meet the National Register criteria, are also included in the CLI.

The CLI serves three major purposes. First, it provides the means to describe cultural landscapes on an individual or collective basis at the park, regional, or service-wide level. Secondly, it provides a platform to share information about cultural landscapes across programmatic areas and concerns and to integrate related data about these resources into park management. Thirdly, it provides an analytical tool to judge accomplishment and accountability.

The legislative, regulatory, and policy direction for conducting the CLI include:

National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 USC 470h-2(a)(1)). Each Federal agency shall establish...a preservation program for the identification, evaluation, and nomination to the National Register of Historic Places...of historic properties...

Executive Order 13287: Preserve America, 2003. Sec. 3(a)...Each agency with real property management responsibilities shall prepare an assessment of the current status of its inventory of historic properties required by section 110(a)(2) of the NHPA...No later than September 30, 2004, each covered agency shall complete a report of the assessment and make it available to the Chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Secretary of the Interior... (c) Each agency with real property management responsibilities shall, by September 30, 2005, and every third year thereafter, prepare a report on its progress in identifying... historic properties in its ownership and make the report available to the Council and the Secretary...

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Federal Agency Historic Preservation Programs Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act, 1998. Standard 2: An agency provides for the timely identification and evaluation of historic properties under agency jurisdiction or control and/or subject to effect by agency actions (Sec. 110 (a)(2)(A))

Management Policies 2006. 5.1.3.1 Inventories: The Park Service will (1) maintain and expand the following inventories...about cultural resources in units of the national park system... Cultural Landscape Inventory of historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes,... and historic sites...

Cultural Resource Management Guideline, 1997, Release No. 5, page 22 issued pursuant to Director's Order #28. As cultural resources are identified and evaluated, they should also be listed in the appropriate Service-wide inventories of cultural resources.

Responding to the Call to Action:

The year 2016 marks the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. A five-year action plan entitled, "*A Call to Action: Preparing for a Second Century of Stewardship and Engagement*" charts a path toward that second century vision by asking Service employees and partners to commit to concrete actions that advance the agency's mission. The heart of the plan includes four broad themes supported by specific goals and measurable actions. These themes are: Connecting People to Parks, Advancing the NPS Education Mission, Preserving America's Special Places, and Enhancing Professional and Organizational Excellence. The Cultural Landscape Inventory relates to three of these themes:

Connect People to Parks. Help communities protect what is special to them, highlight their history, and retain or rebuild their economic and environmental sustainability.

Advance the Education Mission. Strengthen the National Park Service's role as an educational force based on core American values, historical and scientific scholarship, and unbiased translation of the complexities of the American experience.

Preserve America's Special Places. Be a leader in extending the benefits of conservation across physical, social, political, and international boundaries in partnership with others.

The national CLI effort directly relates to #3, Preserve America's Special Places, and specifically to Action #28, "Park Pulse." Each CLI documents the existing condition of park resources and identifies impacts, threats, and measures to improve condition. This information can be used to improve park priority setting and communicate complex park condition information to the public.

Responding to the Cultural Resources Challenge:

The Cultural Resources Challenge (CRC) is a NPS strategic plan that identifies our most critical priorities. The primary objective is to "*Achieve a standard of excellence for the stewardship of the resources that form the historical and cultural foundations of the nation, commit at all levels to a common set of goals, and articulate a common vision for the next century.*" The CLI contributes to the fulfillment of all five goals of the CRC:

- 1) *Provide leadership support, and advocacy for the stewardship, protection, interpretation, and management of the nation's heritage through scholarly research, science and effective management;*
- 2) *Recommit to the spirit and letter of the landmark legislation underpinning the NPS*

3) *Connect all Americans to their heritage resources in a manner that resonates with their lives, legacies, and dreams, and tells the stories that make up America's diverse national identity;*

4) *Integrate the values of heritage stewardship into major initiatives and issues such as renewable energy, climate change, community assistance and revitalization, and sustainability, while cultivating excellence in science and technical preservation as a foundation for resource protection, management, and rehabilitation; and*

5) *Attract, support, and retain a highly skilled and diverse workforce, and support the development of leadership and expertise within the National Park Service.*

Scope of the CLI

CLI data is gathered from existing secondary sources found in park libraries, archives and at NPS regional offices and centers, as well as through on-site reconnaissance. The baseline information describes the historical development and significance of the landscape, placing it in the context of the landscape's overall significance. Documentation and analysis of the existing landscape identifies character-defining characteristics and features, and allows for an evaluation of the landscape's overall integrity and an assessment of the landscape's overall condition. The CLI also provides an illustrative site plan that indicates major features within the inventory unit and generates spatial data for Geographic Information Systems (GIS). The CLI also identifies stabilization needs to prevent further deterioration of the landscape and provides data for the Facility Management Software System

Inventory Unit Description:

The Meriam's Corner component landscape is part of Minute Man National Historical Park (NHP), located in Middlesex County, sixteen miles northwest of Boston, Massachusetts. Established in 1959, the park preserves the sites of the Battle of Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775 and the "shot heard round the world" that began the Revolutionary War. Four discontinuous management units of Minute Man NHP (Battle Road, North Bridge, Wayside, and Barrett's Farm) comprise an area of approximately 1,040 acres of land in the towns of Concord, Lincoln, and Lexington. The largest of the units, the 800-acre Battle Road Unit, preserves part of the route along which British Regulars retreated to Boston under colonial fire. The Battle Road is the primary organizing feature of the unit running in a linear route along present-day Lexington Road (Concord), North Great Road (Lincoln), and Massachusetts Avenue (Lexington), parts of which are also designated as State Route 2A. The Battle Road is set within a landscape of farmhouses, barns, stone walls, fields, woodlands, and hedgerows, all remnants of the area's agricultural past. While there are some areas of post-historic development associated with private residences and park operations within the boundaries of the Battle Road Unit, it nonetheless retains much of its historic low-density, agricultural appearance. This contrasts with areas immediately surrounding the unit that have been heavily developed, such as Hanscom Air Force Base just to the north and its associated military housing areas.

The Meriam's Corner area is the westernmost component landscape of the Battle Road Unit. It marks the location where the British troops, slowing in their retreat to cross a narrow bridge, were engaged by the colonial militias. During the ensuing fighting, two British soldiers were killed and a number were wounded before the British column moved out of range. The name, Meriam's Corner, is derived from

Meriam's Corner

Minute Man National Historical Park

the junction of the road from Concord to Lexington and the road to Billerica (today Lexington Road and Old Bedford Road). The land around this junction, a little over a mile east of the center of Concord, was originally settled by John Meriam in the 17th century, and over the next 200 years was home to five subsequent generations of the Meriam family.

Today, Meriam's Corner comprises 94 acres of farm fields, meadows, forests, and residential lots. The Meriam House, constructed in 1705, is one of the oldest structures in the park and an excellent example of a colonial farm house. Other historic buildings include the Gowing-Clark House (c.1836), the Burke House (1904), and the (Second) East Quarter Schoolhouse (1853, converted to a residence in 1904). Utilitarian structures include the Burke Garage (1941) and two farm structures associated with Palumbo Farm (1950s). In addition to these buildings, contributing features include a stone culvert, stone foundation of a former barn, and stone walls.

Meriam's Corner is managed primarily for interpretive and recreational use by park visitors. The Meriam House, restored by the park to its colonial condition, is open at select times for guided tours. Visitors are also encouraged to explore the area via the Battle Road Trail, a pedestrian and bicycle trail that begins at the Meriam House and winds its way through the Battle Road Unit. The Burke House and the Gowing-Clark house are leased by the park as private residences, although both are currently vacant, while the schoolhouse has been occupied since the 1920s by the Palumbo Family. Several of the fields within Meriam's Corner are farmed through special agreement with the park. The historic structures, open meadows, active farm fields, and a relative lack of non-historic development create a distinctly rural, agricultural character.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Early Land Use and Colonial Settlement:

For at least one thousand years prior to European settlement, Algonquian people planted crops, fished, and hunted along the Musketequid River (Concord River) in what would become known as the Concord Plantation, a portion of which now comprises the Battle Road Unit of Minute Man National Historical Park. By the 1630s, diseases introduced by early European explorers had decimated the Native American population within the present-day Battle Road Unit.

Colonial settlement began in 1635 when Puritan families ventured inland to settle within the newly established Concord Plantation, and in the following year house lots were allocated along an east-west ridgeline as part of Concord's First Division. In 1640 the town of Cambridge extended west to the Concord Plantation's eastern border, and the newly settled land was known as Cambridge Farms. The farms would separate from Cambridge in 1713, becoming the town of Lexington. The town of Lincoln formed in 1754, its boundaries including portions of Concord and Lexington. (Cultural Landscape Report--hereafter CLR--2005: 9)

Settlement within the present-day Battle Road Unit occurred along the primary east-west road paralleling the ridgeline and connecting the Concord Plantation and Cambridge Farms (later the towns of Concord, Lincoln, and Lexington) to Boston. The road then was called by other names including the

Meriam's Corner

Minute Man National Historical Park

Bay Road and Country Road, and is now known as the Battle Road or the North Great Road. On both sides of the road were agricultural fields, which in the early to mid-17th century were commonly held in large tracts a distance from the farmhouses. Farm production was subsistence based, each family producing enough food for personal consumption and perhaps a small amount for local trade. As the century progressed, the common field system dissolved and agricultural fields were clustered closer to the farmsteads. By 1775 tilled fields, pastures, and meadows divided by fences and stone walls occupied most of the acreage along the Battle Road. Intermixed were small woodlots, orchards, farm buildings, taverns, and a number of small home-based businesses. Additional roads were constructed throughout the 18th century. (CLR 2005: 9)

Settlement and Initial Development of Meriam's Corner:

John Meriam (1641-1724), the son of English immigrants Joseph and Sarah Meriam, was married to Mary Cooper in 1663. By 1666 he was established at Meriam's Corner with a house lot, tillage, and meadow land on both sides of Old Bedford Road, as well as portions of common fields and meadows scattered around Concord for a total of around 80 acres. John built a house about the time of his marriage on the east side of Old Bedford Road very near the junction with the road to Lexington. For the next 60 years, John and Mary farmed the land and raised their family in the small house. (Donovan 1994: 14-16)

John accumulated enough land to comfortably establish his five sons with farms of their own. Two sons, Samuel and Nathan, were given land north of Meriam's Corner in what would later become Bedford. His other three sons, John, Ebenezer, and Joseph, received Meriam's Corner acreage. While Ebenezer continued to reside in his parents' house, John and Joseph each constructed a new house of their own, Joseph's just north of the 1663 house and John's to the west across Old Bedford Road. Joseph's house, constructed in 1705, is the extant Meriam House. The land around the road junction and along Old Bedford Road was divided into lots ranging from single-acre house lots to seven or eight-acre fields and distributed among the three brothers. (Donovan 1994: 16-17)

In 1732 Ebenezer moved to a new home on Battle Road just west of the road junction, where he lived until the age of 102. When John moved to Littleton in 1737, much of his land was acquired by Joseph or by his sons Samuel, Josiah, and Nathan. Samuel acquired John's house and land in 1737, and by 1747, Josiah and Nathan were also established at Meriam's Corner. Josiah lived in the original 1663 house, while Nathan had his father's 1705 house. By mid-century when Joseph died, Meriam's Corner was again farmed by three Meriam brothers. (Donovan 1994: 19)

Battle of Lexington and Concord:

On April 19, 1775, colonists fought British Regulars, engaging in what would become the first battle of the American Revolution. From Meriam's Corner, the Battle of Lexington and Concord progressed east as British soldiers retreated along the Battle Road. After the skirmish at the North Bridge, the running battle began as colonial militias fired on the British soldiers as they passed over a small bridge at Meriam's Corner. The colonists reportedly took cover behind stone walls and a barn on the north side of Nathan Meriam's house (the extant Meriam House). At the time of the battle, the farms of Meriam's Corner were occupied by Nathan and his brother Josiah. Samuel had died in 1767, and his land was

Meriam's Corner

Minute Man National Historical Park

owned by his son John, who in 1778 purchased 91 acres from Daniel Taylor, including a house lot on the northwest corner of the Meriam's Corner road junction. About this time the 1691 house built by John's great-uncle John was torn down. Nathan Meriam died in 1782, leaving his land and home to his sons Amos and Ephraim, although Amos soon sold his interest to Ephraim. Ephraim continued to farm the Meriam's Corner land for the next 21 years until his death in 1803. (Donovan 1994: 26)

Rural Economy:

Between 1802 and 1806, portions of the Battle Road were straightened, by-passing historic sites in the Hartwell and Nelson Farm areas. At Meriam's Corner, the Battle Road was not significantly altered, but it was incorporated into the new route called the North Great Road. Meriam's Corner remained an important junction between the North Great Road and the road to Bedford. Farmers could more efficiently carry goods to market on the improved road, fueling the change from subsistence to commercial economy. Introduction of railroad lines in the mid-19th century also compelled Battle Road farmers to specialize in perishable products easily transported to regional urban markets, which were in need of farm goods to sustain a growing workforce in textile mills and factories. Tracts of vegetable gardens and dairy herds were plentiful along the Battle Road during this time. As drinking habits changed in the early 19th century, fancy fruit orchards also replaced apple orchards used for cider production. (CLR 2005: 10, 49-50, 53)

In 1799 the town of Concord built a new schoolhouse at Meriam's Corner on land owned by Ephraim Meriam on the north side of Battle Road, just east of the road junction. While the town owned the building, Ephraim retained ownership of the land beneath it. This structure was replaced in 1853 by a new schoolhouse, constructed on the lot just east of the original building. This time, the town purchased the land on which the school was built. The original schoolhouse remained for a period of time, enough to be recorded on a survey conducted in 1855 by Henry David Thorough, but was removed sometime in the second half of the 19th century. (Yocum 2004: 30)

John Meriam died in 1804, leaving his heirs nearly 200 acres of land and substantial debt. His estate was managed first by his son John Jr. and then by another son Tarrant, who mortgaged the land several times. By the 1820s Tarrant was bankrupt and the land was sold to pay his creditors. A portion of the land remained for a few years in Meriam ownership, as the lot on the northwest corner of the road junction was purchased by Tarrant's second cousin Ephraim Jr., but by 1836 this land was purchased by Jabez Gowing, who built a new home on the lot. (Donovan 1994: 29)

Ephraim Meriam died young in 1803, and as his oldest son was just eight years old, his land went to his widow Mary and her new husband William Swan. For the next two decades, William continued to farm the land and raise Ephraim's children. Upon his death in 1822, the land was once again in Meriam hands, as Ephraim's son Rufus assumed ownership. Rufus, the last Meriam to farm at Meriam's Corner, died in 1871 (Donovan 1994: 29, 32).

Thomas Burke purchased Rufus's land and farmed at Meriam's Corner for the next 50 years. The property he acquired included the 1705 Meriam House and considerable land on the south side of Battle Road and on the west side of Old Bedford Road. In 1893, he added to this the schoolhouse, which had

Meriam's Corner

Minute Man National Historical Park

ceased operation by then. Around the turn of the century, Thomas established two of his sons at Meriam's Corner, converting the schoolhouse into a residence for his son James in 1903 and building a new home on the west side of Old Bedford Road for his son and daughter-in-law Thomas J. and Ellen Dee Burke in 1904. (Donovan 1994: 33)

By the 1880s, most descendants of the earliest Battle Road settlers had left their ancestral farms, many leaving for the promise of more fertile land in the west. While some farms reverted to woodland, others were cultivated by European immigrant farmers. Transportation to Boston was enhanced in the 1890s when large portions of the Battle Road were improved and incorporated into Massachusetts's first state highway system. The improvements allowed for use by bicycles and motor cars. (CLR 2005: 10)

20th Century Landscape:

The train and the motor car eventually brought tourists and increasing numbers of commuters to the Battle Road countryside. With the new residents came new homes, businesses, and residential roads. While a number of farms remained under cultivation, many more reverted to woodland. At Meriam's Corner, much of the land continued to be farmed by the Burke Family and the Palumbo Family, who purchased the schoolhouse and land south of Battle Road in 1926.

The lot of land east of the schoolhouse was in the Burke family ownership, and in 1928, Ellen Burke placed a farm stand on the lot and converted it to a clam bake house. The structure was enlarged in 1934 as a lunch stand and again in 1946, when it was sold to Ross and Emily Ranson and converted to a restaurant and bar called the Willow Pond Kitchen. In 1951, the Meriam House was purchased from Ellen Burke by James and Margaret Ingraham. The Ingrahams were not farmers, and the house and its yard assumed a residential character during their ownership, with an increase in ornamental vegetation around the house.

Early Preservation Efforts and Minute Man National Historical Park:

New residential and commercial development in the Battle Road area compelled people to begin focusing on preservation of the historic properties of the area. The first concerted effort occurred in 1924, when a commission appointed by the governor of Massachusetts proposed acquisition of land along the Battle Road as part of a proposed memorial in honor of the 150th anniversary of the opening day of the American Revolution. The memorial was never established, and suburbanization of the historic agricultural fields proceeded at a rapid rate, especially after World War II. Adding to the suburban congestion was activity associated with the Hanscom Air Field, an Air Force base and high-tech research center constructed in 1941 just north of the Hartwell and Nelson Farm areas. This development brought both needed services and more traffic to the Battle Road Unit. (CLR 2005: 11, 89)

Public Law 86-321 established Minute Man National Historical Park on September 21, 1959. The law resulted from the efforts of the Boston National Historic Sites Commission, appointed in 1955 by the federal government to investigate the possibility of establishing a coordinated program between federal, state, and local governments to preserve the most important colonial properties in and around Boston. Following its authorization, the park began the long process of acquiring land through a combination of purchases and condemnations. Many of the residents were granted life leases, allowing them to remain

in their homes for the remainder of their lives.

The park purchased the Palumbo Farm, including the 1853 schoolhouse, in 1966. Frank Palumbo, the owner at the time, retained life tenancy and continued to live in the house and farm the land until his death in the 1990s. Today his brother Joe lives in the house.

At the Burke property, Ellen Burke died in 1963, leaving the house and land to her children, two of whom, Thomas Jr. and Katharine, still lived in the house. Thomas continued to farm the Burke land until his death in the mid or late 1960s, at which time the remaining children deeded the house to Katharine. Katharine sold to the park service in 1974, retaining a life tenancy until her death in 1989. (Interview with Gerard J. Burke by Renee Garrelick, Concord Oral History Program)

The National Park Service acquired the Meriam House and land through condemnation in 1987. The aging Ingrahams retained a life estate, but Margaret died the following year. James Ingraham remarried and moved from the house in 1990, leaving the house vacant for a year and a half. When he died at the end of 1991, the park assumed full responsibility of the Meriam House.

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

Minute Man National Historical Park (NHP) is nationally significant under National Register of Historic Places criteria A, B, and D in the areas of Military History, Commemoration, and Literature. Its primary significance is as the site of the 1775 Battle of Lexington and Concord, which marked the beginning of the American Revolutionary War and ranks among the most significant events in American history. Among the extant properties relating to the battle are the Lexington and Concord Battlefield, thirteen buildings present at the time of the battle, and a number of historical archaeological sites that constitute the remains of homes of people or events associated with the fight. The importance of the battle to the creation of the United States was recognized during the early years of the republic, and the area subsequently became one of the first hallowed places in the new nation. The placement of monuments and plaques to formally commemorate the event began with the construction of the Battle Monument in 1836, and over the course of the ensuing century a number of other objects designed to mark the site of important aspects of the battle were erected. The significance of the place in the area of commemoration culminated with the creation of Minute Man NHP in 1959. Two properties in the park, the Wayside and Old Manse, also possess national significance for their association with prominent literary figures of the 19th and 20th centuries. Both properties have been designated as National Historic Landmarks. The Literary significance of the district extends from 1834 when Ralph Waldo Emerson began his short residence at the Old Manse, to 1924 when Harriet Lothrop left the Wayside. (National Register 2002 Section 8:1).

The park also possesses local significance under National Register criteria A, C, and D in the areas of Agriculture, Architecture, and Archaeology. The history of the district is inextricably tied to agriculture, which was the primary economic activity carried on there through the 17th through 19th centuries. The period of significance for Agriculture begins in c.1635 when plantation period settlement and agricultural land use in Concord began to 1951 to encompass farm properties in Concord that were involved in

market gardening and dairying during the early and mid-20th century. Architecturally, the district embodies a collection of dwellings that are representative of local building trends from the early 18th century through the mid-20th century. The period of significance for Architecture extends from c.1705 when the Meriam House was constructed to 1946 when the Beatteay House was completed. (Note: The c.1705 date is from the 2002 National Register documentation. Future revisions and updates to the documentation should revisit this date because the William Smith House dates to c.1693). Numerous historical archaeological sites have been investigated at the park and have yielded or are likely to yield significant information pertaining to early settlement in the area and further information relating to the appearance of the area at the time of the battle on April 19, 1775. The period of significance for Archaeology extends from c.1665 when the John Meriam House was constructed to 1951. (National Register 2002, Section 8:1-2)

There are two overall periods of significance that encompass the park's resources: 7,500 to 500 years ago, and c.1635 to 1959. The first period acknowledges archeological resources, which are beyond the scope of this CLI and are therefore not addressed beyond information provided in National Register documentation. The second period begins with the settlement and agricultural development of the area and ends when the park was established.

Meriam's Corner is within the Battle Road Unit, the largest of the park's four discontinuous units, and contains part of the historical Battle Road along which colonial militia pursued and attacked the retreating British during the Battle of Lexington and Concord. Numerous historic buildings, structures, stone walls, monuments, and over 800 acres of former farm land contribute to the military, commemorative, agricultural, architectural, and archeological significance of the Battle Road Unit under National Register criteria A, C, and D.

ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION SUMMARY AND CONDITION

Through the landscape's long period of significance, covering 324 years from 1635 to 1959, the Battle Road Unit has changed considerably, from the first colonial farms and woodlands to a suburban thoroughfare with residential houses. The changes, however, have generally been gradual, with extended periods of continuity and stasis. Long periods of ownership of houses and farmland over multiple generations, stable agricultural land use, and limited resources available for drastic changes have ensured that the landscape evolved slowly to meet modern needs while retaining its rural, agricultural character.

The Meriam's Corner landscape retains a number of historic buildings and other resources, dating as far back as 1705. Some of these features were standing at the time of the 1775 battle, while others reflect the ongoing agricultural uses of the land. Key among these is the Meriam House, built in 1705 and present in 1775. The Meriam House was owned by only three families before being acquired by the National Park Service, including the Meriam family, which retained ownership for nearly 170 years. Other historic houses include the 1836 Gowing-Clark House, the 1904 Burke House, and the Second East Quarter Schoolhouse, built in 1853 and converted to a residential house in 1904. Buildings constructed for utilitarian function include the Burke Garage constructed around 1941, and the Palumbo

Meriam's Corner

Minute Man National Historical Park

Farm metal shed and enclosed garage constructed in the 1950s.

Small-scale features include a stone culvert through which Mill Brook crosses under Lexington Road which dates at least to the 19th century and perhaps even earlier. The culvert marks the approximate location of the 1775 bridge over which the British soldiers had to pass when they were engaged by the colonists. A system of dry-stacked stone walls still demark roadsides, fields, and property lines. The existing walls comprise a combination of historic and reconstructed sections. The stone wall at the corner of Lexington Road contains the stone monument erected in 1885 to commemorate the fighting at Meriam's Corner. Amongst these features are the remnants and traces of former features: foundations, walls, and house sites that bear record of the landscape as it used to be.

Though the landscape has not returned completely to its Revolutionary War appearance, it retains a rural and agricultural character. As such, Meriam's Corner retains overall integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Today, the landscape of Meriam's Corner is in good condition. There is no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Site Plan

Meriam's Corner
Minute Man National Historical Park



Site Plan showing the existing conditions of Meriam's Corner.

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name:	Meriam's Corner
Property Level:	Component Landscape
CLI Identification Number:	650038
Parent Landscape:	650037

Park Information

Park Name and Alpha Code:	Minute Man National Historical Park -MIMA
Park Organization Code:	1820
Park Administrative Unit:	Minute Man National Historical Park

CLI Hierarchy Description

Minute Man National Historical Park contains three cultural landscapes: Battle Road, Wayside, and North Bridge. Meriam's Corner is one of six component landscapes that compose the Battle Road landscape, the balance of which are Jones/Stow Farm, Brooks Farm, Hartwell Area, Nelson Farm Area, and Fiske Hill.

Concurrence Status

Inventory Status: Complete

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

A draft Level II CLI was completed in 1995 for the Battle Road Unit of Minute Man National Historical Park. The draft was revised and entered into the CLI database during FY2000.

This CLI is based in part on the Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) for Battle Road Unit: Minute Man National Historical Park, completed in 2005 by Deborah Dietrich-Smith. The CLR was produced through extensive research of primary and secondary source materials, including town meeting reports, historic structures reports, and various photographic collections. Information specific to Meriam's Corner was extracted primarily from the Meriam House Historic Structure Report completed by Barbara A Yocum in 1994 and published in 2004, and from a draft Cultural Landscape Report for Meriam's Corner prepared in 1994 by Brian Donahue and Heidi Hohmann. In September 2014, Historical Landscape Architect John Hammond conducted site visits to update existing condition maps and revise the analysis and evaluation narratives. The park contact for the CLI is Nancy Nelson, who may be reached by telephone at (978) 318-7811 or by email at nancy_nelson@nps.gov.

Concurrence Status:

Park Superintendent Concurrence:	Yes
Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence:	09/24/2015
National Register Concurrence:	Eligible -- Keeper
Date of Concurrence Determination:	12/02/2002

Concurrence Graphic Information:

CULTURAL LANDSCAPES INVENTORY
CONCURRENCE FORM

Meriam's Corner
Minute Man National Historical Park

Minute Man National Historical Park concurs with the findings of the Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) for Meriam's Corner including the following specific components:

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: Must Be Preserved and Maintained

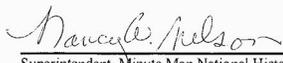
CONDITION ASSESSMENT: Good

Good: indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the character defining elements will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

The Cultural Landscape Inventory for Meriam's Corner is hereby approved and accepted.



Superintendent, Minute Man National Historical Park Date: 9.24.2015

Park concurrence on the findings of this report was received on September 24, 2015.

Geographic Information & Location Map

Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

Meriam's Corner is the westernmost component landscape of the Battle Road cultural landscape. Its boundary follows the park boundary on the north, west, and south sides, and follows parcel boundaries on the east side. The eastern boundary of the Meriam's Corner component landscape coincides with the western boundary of the Jones/Stowe Farm component landscape. The total area enclosed by the boundary is 94 acres.

Meriam's Corner
Minute Man National Historical Park

State and County:

State: MA

County: Middlesex County

Size (Acres): 94.00

Boundary Coordinates:

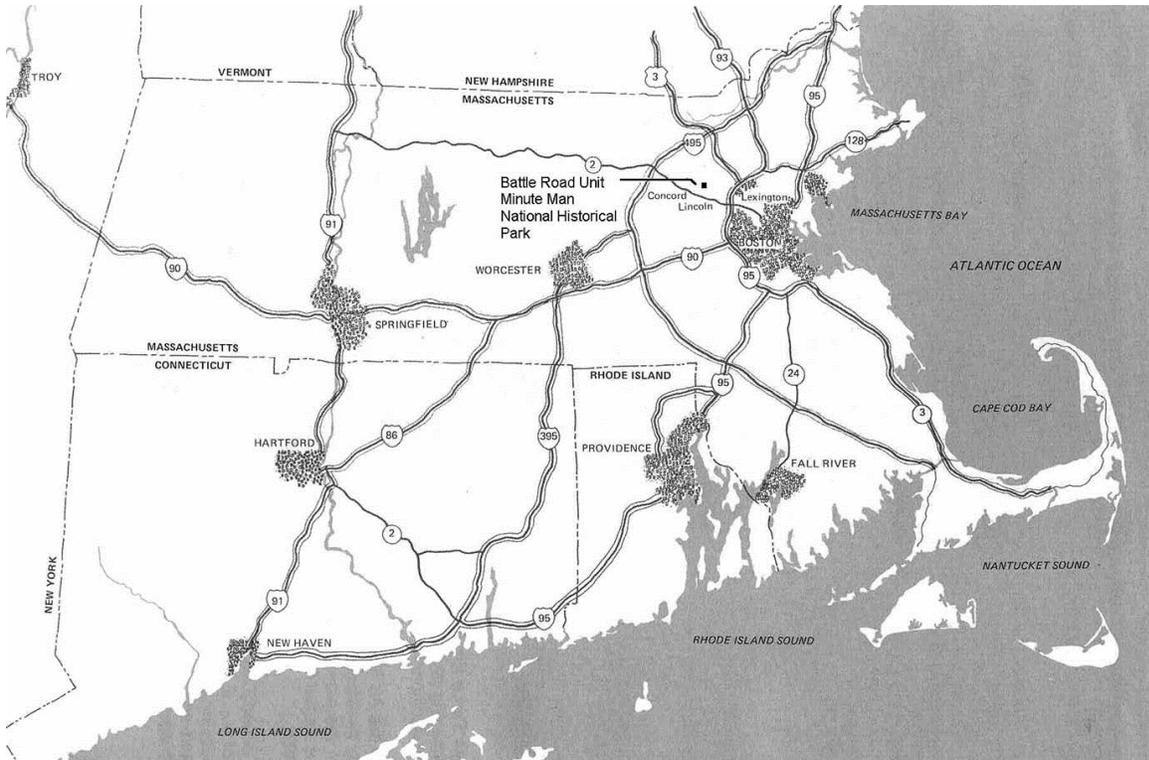
Boundary Source Narrative:	MassGIS Data – USGS Color Ortho Imagery (2013)
Type of Point:	Area
Latitude:	42.4593504800
Longitude:	-71.3271234400
Boundary Source Narrative:	MassGIS Data – USGS Color Ortho Imagery (2013)
Type of Point:	Area
Latitude:	42.4593609300
Longitude:	-71.3256941000
Boundary Source Narrative:	MassGIS Data – USGS Color Ortho Imagery (2013)
Type of Point:	Area
Latitude:	42.4602308500
Longitude:	-71.3257741900
Boundary Source Narrative:	MassGIS Data – USGS Color Ortho Imagery (2013)
Type of Point:	Area
Latitude:	42.4616919400
Longitude:	-71.3250200500
Boundary Source Narrative:	MassGIS Data – USGS Color Ortho Imagery (2013)
Type of Point:	Area
Latitude:	42.4604578400
Longitude:	-71.3213071200
Boundary Source Narrative:	MassGIS Data – USGS Color Ortho Imagery (2013)
Type of Point:	Area
Latitude:	42.4614395500
Longitude:	-71.3201125700

Boundary Source Narrative:	MassGIS Data – USGS Color Ortho Imagery (2013)
Type of Point:	Area
Latitude:	42.4618043000
Longitude:	-71.3187568300
Boundary Source Narrative:	MassGIS Data – USGS Color Ortho Imagery (2013)
Type of Point:	Area
Latitude:	42.4604332500
Longitude:	-71.3182798500
Boundary Source Narrative:	MassGIS Data – USGS Color Ortho Imagery (2013)
Type of Point:	Area
Latitude:	42.4576757800
Longitude:	-71.3198937700
Boundary Source Narrative:	MassGIS Data – USGS Color Ortho Imagery (2013)
Type of Point:	Area
Latitude:	42.4574615400
Longitude:	-71.3183045600
Boundary Source Narrative:	MassGIS Data – USGS Color Ortho Imagery (2013)
Type of Point:	Area
Latitude:	42.4547902500
Longitude:	-71.3198450100
Boundary Source Narrative:	MassGIS Data – USGS Color Ortho Imagery (2013)
Type of Point:	Area
Latitude:	42.4559996300
Longitude:	-71.3238255200
Boundary Source Narrative:	MassGIS Data – USGS Color Ortho Imagery (2013)
Type of Point:	Area

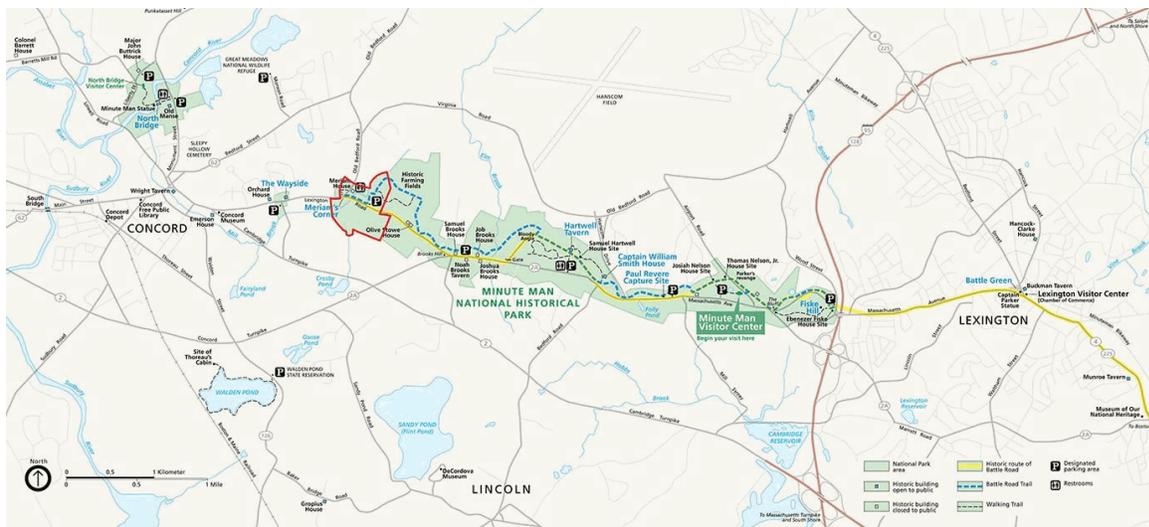
Latitude:	42.4554679800
Longitude:	-71.3238653400
Boundary Source Narrative:	MassGIS Data – USGS Color Ortho Imagery (2013)
Type of Point:	Area
Latitude:	42.4554028800
Longitude:	-71.3247267600
Boundary Source Narrative:	MassGIS Data – USGS Color Ortho Imagery (2013)
Type of Point:	Area
Latitude:	42.4557418500
Longitude:	-71.3248253500
Boundary Source Narrative:	MassGIS Data – USGS Color Ortho Imagery (2013)
Type of Point:	Area
Latitude:	42.4573761100
Longitude:	-71.3268785800

Meriam's Corner
Minute Man National Historical Park

Location Map:



Location Map Information. Map of Minute Man National Historical Park location. (Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation--hereafter OCLP)



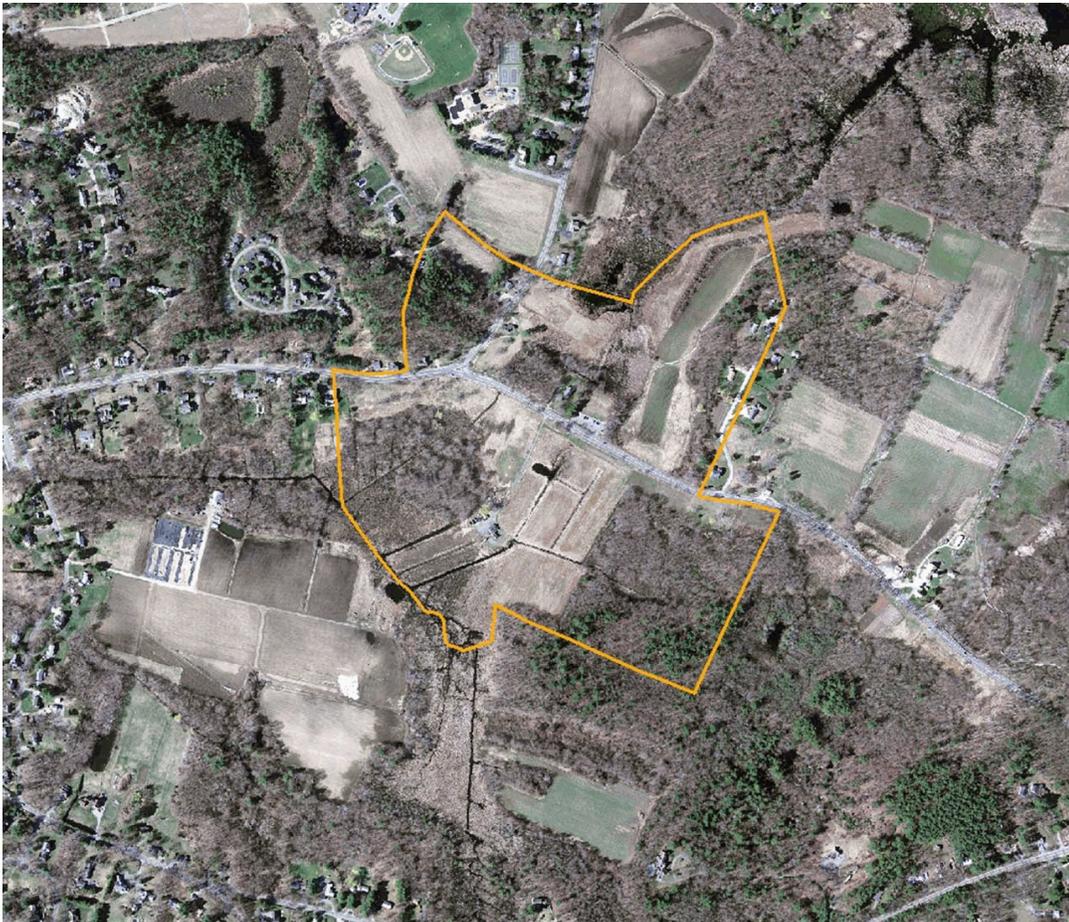
Location Map Information. Map of the park and surrounding context showing Meriam's Corner outlined in red. (Harpers Ferry Center, adapted by OCLP)

Regional Context:

Type of Context: Cultural

Description:

Throughout much of the historic period, the character of Meriam's Corner was rural, with patches of farmland, uncultivated meadows and pastures, wooded areas, and wetlands. Homesteads consisted of informal clusters of houses with their associated barns and outbuildings, arranged along the roads. During the 20th century, the area became more suburban, with smaller lots, residential houses and landscaping, and commercial establishments. Since creation of the park, much of this transition has been reversed, as many of the non-historic structures have been removed. Beyond its boundaries, the park remains within a context of suburban development, residential neighborhoods, and the town of Concord.



Regional Landscape Context. Aerial view of Meriam's Corner (outlined in orange) showing the context of forests, wetlands, agricultural fields, and suburban residential development, 2012. (MASS GIS/OCLP)

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

Meriam's Corner is located on an alluvial plain within a glacial landscape of plains, rolling hills, ridges, and kettle ponds (see Regional Landscape Context graphic). The flat terrain of the alluvial plains causes the small brooks that cross the area to meander, braid, and spread out to form extensive wetlands and marshes. Meriam's Corner is located at a divide between Elm Brook, which drains to the north toward the Shawsheen River, and Mill Brook, which drains to the south into the Concord River. A low, steep ridge approximately 50 feet above the adjacent landscape extends west to east for about a mile between Concord town center and the western edge of Meriam's Corner. Another small hill is located on the eastern edge of the component landscape. Aside from these hills, the terrain of Meriam's Corner is primarily flat.

Type of Context: Political

Description:

Meriam's Corner is located within Minute Man National Historical Park, a unit of the National Park Service. Meriam's Corner is also located within Concord, Massachusetts in Middlesex County. The original Battle Road is now part of the Lexington Road, or Route 2A, which runs through the southern portion of Meriam's Corner.

Management Unit: Battle Road Unit

Tract Numbers: The Meriam's Corner component landscape comprises 21 land tracts, three of which are public land (state and town roads): 01-115 (public road), 04-103, 04-104, 04-105, 04-106, 04-107, 04-109, 04-110 (public road), 04-111 (public road), 04-115, 04-119, 04-120, 04-122, 04-123, 04-124, 04-125, 04-127, 04-128, 04-133, 04-134, 04-137 .

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Must be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 09/24/2015

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

Meriam's Corner falls under the same management category as the Battle Road Unit, which meets several criteria for the "Must Be Preserved and Maintained" management category. The preservation of the site is specifically legislated; the site is related to the park's legislated significance; and the site serves as the setting for a nationally significant structure or object.

The 1959 enabling legislation for Minute Man NHP stated that the park was established to "preserve, selectively restore, and interpret portions of the Lexington-Concord Battle Road, as well as its associated structures, properties and sites so that the visitor may better appreciate and understand the beginning of the American Revolution..." Congress expanded that initial mission in 1992 to include more than interpretation of specific events associated with April 19, 1775: "the purposes of the Park shall include the preservation and interpretation of (1) the historic landscape along the road between Lexington and Concord, [and] (2) sites associated with the causes and consequences of the American Revolution." ("Environmental Assessment for 'Save Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes'" 1999: 2)

NPS Legal Interest:

Type of Interest: Fee Simple

Explanatory Narrative:

Excluding public roads, all tracts in Meriam's Corner are owned fee simple by the National Park Service. Several tracts are occupied under leases.

Public Access:

Type of Access: Other Restrictions

Explanatory Narrative:

The park grounds are open sunrise to sunset. Some properties are not open to the public.

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? No

National Register Information

Existing National Register Status

National Register Landscape Documentation:

Entered Documented

National Register Explanatory Narrative:

Meriam's Corner is within the boundaries of Minute Man National Historical Park (NHP), which was established in 1959. On December 29, 1962, two properties within the park boundaries were designated as National Historic Landmarks: the Wayside and Old Manse. On October 15, 1966, the entire park was administratively listed without documentation in the National Register of Historic Places with the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act.

In 1996-1997, consultations between the National Park Service and the Massachusetts Historical Commission (SHPO) identified numerous contributing and non-contributing resources in the park. Within Meriam's Corner, contributing resources included the Meriam House, Meriam's Corner Monument, Daniel Taylor House (now Gowing-Clark House), Daniel Taylor retaining walls, and the East Quarter Schoolhouse. Non-contributing resources included the Meriam House Shed #1, Meriam House Shed #2 with Porch, Meriam House Toolshed, and the Meriam House flagpole (none of which are extant). The SHPO determined that additional research was needed on several features before they could determine a status: Burke House, Burke House Garage, Daniel Taylor Barn Foundation (now Gowing-Clark Barn Foundation), Daniel Taylor Unidentified Foundation, Meriam House Well (not extant), Meriam's Corner Area Stone Culvert, Palumbo Farm Metal Shed, Palumbo Farm Open Shed (not extant), Palumbo Farm Outhouse (not extant), Palumbo Farm Wood Shed, Palumbo Farm Enclosed Garage, and the Palumbo Farm stone walls. Additionally, the SHPO recommended the need to develop documentation of the park's resources in the National Register and that a period of significance should extend "well into the 20th century to reflect the continued significance of this site as an important reflection of our nation's founding and how we commemorate, venerate, and interpret it."

On November 29, 2002, the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places accepted documentation of the park as a historic district, which addressed many recommendations from the SHPO. Significance was identified under criteria A, B, C, and D and Criteria Considerations B (Moved Properties), F (Commemorative Properties), and G (Significance Within the Last Fifty Years). The park is nationally significant in the areas of military, literature, and other (commemoration), and locally significant in the areas of agriculture, archeology, and architecture. The period of significance was listed on the cover sheet as 1655 to 1959, dates that correspond to the expansion of the town of Concord and settlement of Fiske Hill, and the establishment of the Minute Man NHP, respectively. Contributing features described in the documentation for Meriam's Corner included the Gowing-Clark House (National Register map no. 35), Gowing-Clark Barn Foundation (36), Burke House (37), Burke House Garage (38), Meriam House (39), Meriam's Corner Monument (41), Meriam's Corner Area Stone Culvert (42), (Second) East Quarter Schoolhouse (44), Palumbo Farm Open Shed (46, not extant), Palumbo Farm Wood Shed (47, not extant), Palumbo Farm Metal Shed (48), and Palumbo Farm Enclosed Garage (49). Portions of other contributing features that spanned all four park units—the Battle Road, system of stone walls, and system of fields—were also identified in Meriam's Corner. Two contributing archeological sites were also described: John Meriam/Joseph Meriam House Sites

Meriam's Corner
Minute Man National Historical Park

(40) (now named Josiah Meriam House Site), and the (First) East Quarter Schoolhouse Site (43). Along with portions of the Battle Road Trail, non-contributing features included houses at 65 Manuel Drive (54) and 95 Manuel Drive (57), as well as a Garage at 95 Manuel Drive (58).

On December 2, 2002, the Keeper accepted a Supplementary Listing Record for the National Register documentation that amended the archeological area of significance to “Archeology: Prehistoric” and “Archeology: Historic-Non-Aboriginal,” and added “7,500 to 500 years ago” to the period of significance. On October 25, 2006, the Keeper accepted a resource count change and technical corrections primarily related to building names (noted above), addresses, and dates of construction as well as subsequent research. The changes relevant to Meriam’s Corner include the collapse and subsequent removal of the Palumbo Farm Wood Shed (47) in 2003 and corrections to LCS numbers.

Through a series of emails in January 2009 between the park and the NPS Northeast Region History Program, the beginning date of the period of significance for the district was clarified as being c.1635 due to inconsistencies in the 2002 National Register documentation. On the cover sheet of the documentation, the beginning date was listed as 1655. However, internally in the documentation, c.1635 was identified as the beginning of the agriculture area of significance. Additionally, c.1635 is the date when English settlement began in the area and the town of Concord was established, and the date of several archeological sites in the park: Thomas Flint Site (14), Battle Road/North Bridge (21), and Battle Road/Fiske Hill (130). A Supplementary Listing Record will be submitted to the Keeper in the future to correct the cover sheet.

According to research conducted for this CLI and the categories of National Register documentation outlined in the “CLI Professional Procedures Guide,” the areas and periods of significance for Meriam’s Corner are adequately documented in existing National Register documentation. The existing documentation also adequately describes the site’s numerous historic resources that contribute to its significance. Therefore, for purposes of the CLI, Meriam’s Corner is considered “Entered-Documented.”

Existing NRIS Information:

Name in National Register:	Minute Man National Historical Park (Boundary Increase and Additional Documentation)
NRIS Number:	02001445
Primary Certification Date:	11/29/2002

National Register Eligibility

National Register Concurrence:	Eligible -- Keeper
Contributing/Individual:	Contributing
National Register Classification:	District
Significance Level:	National

- Significance Criteria:** A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history
- Significance Criteria:** C - Embodies distinctive construction, work of master, or high artistic values
- Significance Criteria:** D - Has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important to prehistory or history

Period of Significance:

Time Period:	5498 BCE - CE 1502
Historic Context Theme:	Peopling Places
Subtheme:	Post-Archaic and Prehistoric Developments
Facet:	Eastern Farmers
Time Period:	5498 BCE - CE 1502
Historic Context Theme:	Peopling Places
Subtheme:	Post-Archaic and Prehistoric Developments
Facet:	Hunters and Gatherers
Time Period:	CE 1635 - 1959
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Architecture
Facet:	Colonial (1600-1730)
Time Period:	CE 1635 - 1959
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Architecture
Facet:	Federal (1780-1820)
Time Period:	CE 1635 - 1959
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Architecture
Facet:	Period Revivals (1870-1940)
Time Period:	CE 1635 - 1959
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Architecture
Facet:	Craftsman (1890-1915)
Time Period:	CE 1635 - 1959
Historic Context Theme:	Shaping the Political Landscape
Subtheme:	The American Revolution
Facet:	War in the North

Time Period:	CE 1635 - 1959
Historic Context Theme:	Developing the American Economy
Subtheme:	The Farmer's Frontier
Facet:	Farming the Northeast
Time Period:	CE 1635 - 1959
Historic Context Theme:	Developing the American Economy
Subtheme:	Agriculture
Facet:	Farming For Local Markets (Dairying, Fruits, And Vegetables)
Time Period:	CE 1635 - 1959
Historic Context Theme:	Transforming the Environment
Subtheme:	Historic Preservation
Facet:	Regional Efforts: New England, 1860-1900: Regionalism And Preservation; Private Historical Societies; Society For The Preservation Of New England Antiquities

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category:	Agriculture
Area of Significance Category:	Architecture
Area of Significance Category:	Archeology
Area of Significance Subcategory:	Historic-Non-Aboriginal
Area of Significance Category:	Archeology
Area of Significance Subcategory:	Prehistoric
Area of Significance Category:	Military
Area of Significance Category:	Other
Area of Significance Category Explanatory Narrative:	Commemoration

Statement of Significance:

MINUTE MAN NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

Minute Man National Historical Park (NHP) possesses significance under National Register criteria A, B, C, and D. The park has national significance in the areas of Military History, Commemoration, and Literature. Its primary significance is as the site of the 1775 Battle of Lexington and Concord, which marked the beginning of the American Revolutionary War and ranks among the most significant events in American history. Among the extant properties relating to the battle are the Lexington and Concord Battlefield, thirteen buildings present at the time of the battle, and a number of historical archaeological sites that constitute the remains of homes of people or events associated with the fight. The importance of the battle to the creation of the United States was recognized during the early years of the republic, and the area subsequently became one of the first hallowed places in the new nation. The placement of monuments and plaques to formally commemorate the event began with the construction of the Battle Monument in 1836, and over the course of the ensuing century a number of other objects designed to mark the site of important aspects of the battle were erected. The significance of the place in the area of commemoration culminated with the creation of Minute Man NHP in 1959. Two properties in the park, the Wayside and Old Manse, also possess national significance for their

Meriam's Corner

Minute Man National Historical Park

association with prominent literary figures of the 19th and 20th centuries. Both properties have been designated as National Historic Landmarks. The Literary significance of the district extends from 1834 when Ralph Waldo Emerson began his short residence at the Old Manse, to 1924 when Harriet Lothrop left the Wayside. (National Register 2002, Section 8:1)

The park also possesses local significance under National Register criteria A, C, and D in the areas of Agriculture, Architecture, and Archaeology. The history of the district is inextricably tied to agriculture, which was the primary economic activity carried on there through the 17th through 19th centuries. The period of significance for Agriculture begins in c.1635 when plantation period settlement and agricultural land use in Concord began to 1951 to encompass farm properties in Concord that were involved in market gardening and dairying during the early and mid-20th century. Architecturally, the district embodies a collection of dwellings that are representative of local building trends from the early 18th century through the mid-20th century. The period of significance for Architecture extends from c.1705 when the Meriam House was constructed to 1946 when the Beatteay House was completed. (Note: The c.1705 date is from the 2002 National Register documentation. Future revisions and updates to the documentation should revisit this date because the William Smith House dates to c.1693.) Numerous historical archaeological sites have been investigated at the park and have yielded or are likely to yield significant information pertaining to early settlement in the area and further information relating to the appearance of the area at the time of the battle on April 19, 1775. The period of significance for Archaeology extends from c.1665 when the John Meriam House was constructed to 1951. (National Register 2002, Section 8: 1-2)

There are two overall periods of significance that encompass the park's resources: 7,500 to 500 years ago, and c.1635 to 1959. The first period acknowledges archeological resources, which are beyond the scope of this CLI and are therefore not addressed beyond information provided in National Register documentation. The second period begins with the settlement and agricultural development of the area and ends when the park was established.

THE BATTLE ROAD UNIT / MERIAM'S CORNER

Meriam's Corner is within the Battle Road Unit, the largest of the park's four discontinuous units, which contains part of the historical Battle Road along which Colonial militia pursued and attacked the retreating British during the Battle of Lexington and Concord. Numerous historic buildings, structures, stone walls, monuments, and over 800 acres of former farm land contribute to the military, commemorative, agricultural, architectural, and archeological significance of the Battle Road Unit under the National Register criteria A, C, and D.

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERION A

Military History:

Meriam's Corner is nationally significant for its role in the Battle of Lexington and Concord, which marked the beginning of the American Revolutionary War and ranks as one of the most important events in the history of the United States. Significant resources include the Battle Road used by the

Meriam's Corner

Minute Man National Historical Park

British for both their advance on and retreat from Concord, and numerous stone walls that were often used for cover by the militiamen during the fight. The British retreat along the four-mile stretch of road within the Battle Road Unit was characterized by a series of running engagements during which the British were placed under almost constant fire by the American militia forces. (National Register 2002, Section 8: 3)

Meriam's Corner is part of the Battle of Lexington and Concord Battlefield in April 1775. With the ranks of colonist forces steadily increasing in the Concord area, British Lieutenant Colonel Francis Smith had ordered all troops back to Concord center where preparations were made to start back on the road to Boston. While the British Regulars were regrouping and tending to their wounded, the colonist militia began to move east threatening to cut off the British retreat. On April 19 at about 12:00 p.m., Smith ordered his column forward, and sent out several companies of light infantry to the ridge extending east from Concord center on the north side of the road to guard his flank. Other flankers were sent to the low meadow on the south side of the road opposite Deacon Minot's house (not extant). The move was successful and no fighting occurred until the column reached Meriam's Corner. (National Register 2002, Section 8: 8-9)

The ridge on the north side of the road where the flankers were deployed ends abruptly at Meriam's Corner, where Old Bedford Road intersects with Lexington Road. The place gets its name from the Meriam House, which is located on the northeast corner of the road junction. At the time of the battle, several other country lanes intersected with Lexington Road at this point. Militia from surrounding towns, including Billerica, Tewksbury, Chelmsford, Reading, Framingham, and Sudbury, had been assembling at the crossroads during the morning hours. The Middlesex regiments that had fought at North Bridge advanced the area through the "Great Fields" that lay north of the ridge and took up positions at Meriam's Corner. By this time the militia forces in the field amounted to about 1,200 troops, although only a few were at Meriam's Corner. Those that had been at the bridge were up the road near the foot of Brooks Hill. The only colonial troops at Meriam's Corner were Captain Batchelder's minutemen from Reading who were under the direction of Major John Brooks. Brooks placed his company, numbering about 60 men, around the outbuildings and stone walls at the Meriam House. (National Register 2002, Section 8: 9)

When the British reached Meriam's Corner, the flankers on the north side of the road descended the ridge to join the main force in crossing a small bridge that led over a stream southeast of the Meriam House. A shot, probably fired by one of the militia troops, was fired. It is probable that the British returned fire. In the firing that ensued several Regulars were wounded before the column moved out of range. The colonial militias took cover behind a stone wall at what is thought to be Nathan Meriam's barn, which was just north of the extant Meriam House. After the fight at Meriam's Corner, the British proceeded east along the road to Lexington. (National Register 2002, Section 8: 9)

Surviving resources within the Meriam's Corner area and associated with the battle are the Battle Road, numerous stone walls used for cover by the militiamen during the fight, the Meriam House, and the stone culvert. (National Register 2002, Section 8: 15)

Meriam's Corner

Minute Man National Historical Park

Commemoration:

Meriam's Corner is nationally significant for its role in commemorative activities recognizing the importance of the 1775 battle, which culminated with the establishment of Minute Man NHP by an act of Congress in 1959. Celebrations commemorating the events and participants of the battle of Concord and Lexington began soon after the end of the Revolutionary War. Annual events included speeches, civic parades, and lectures about the battle at the North Bridge. Re-enactments of the battle were performed throughout the 19th century and prefigured the popularity of Civil War re-enactments of the 20th century. Monuments were erected and dedicated throughout the park, beginning with the Battle Monument at the North Bridge in 1836. One of these monuments, the Meriam's Corner Monument, dedicated in 1885 and installed in the stone wall at the road junction, is extant today. (National Register 2002, Section 8: 17-20)

During the early part of the 20th century, visitation to this and other areas began to increase, leading to the erection of roadside stops along the Battle Road, both in and outside of the future park, and the improvement of roads throughout the area. With the creation of the park, the National Park Service began a multi-decade program of "restoring" the character of the park to its 1775 appearance. (National Register 2002, Section 8: 17, 22-23)

Agriculture:

Meriam's Corner is locally significant for its role in agricultural land uses that characterized Concord, and the surrounding areas. By the mid-18th century, these towns were dominated by farmsteads defined by fieldstone walls that marked property boundaries as well as internal divisions based on land use. The systems fields, ditches, and stone walls remain as significant examples of this former agricultural landscape. (National Register 2002, Section 8: 37,41)

In the 18th and 19th centuries, this area supplied agricultural products to both the Boston urban core and local population. Some farms declined due to overgrazing and depletion of soils, while others prospered. Farmers also transitioned from a subsistence system to commercial market opportunities. In the first quarter of the 20th century there was a decrease in agriculture on local farms, but market gardening was still carried out. (National Register 2002, Section 8: 43-44,46)

Following World War I, major marketed crops from the region came under increasing competitive pressure. Refrigerated shipments of produce from other parts of the country began to cut into the local production and distribution of these goods. Dairy shifted to larger, mechanized operations of cheaper land, and the hay market declined with the advent of the automobile. The automobile was also responsible for increased suburban and commercial development of the region, resulting in higher real estate prices. Increased land prices and expanding suburbanization as well as competition from more distant producers led to a decline in the amount of acreage in active agricultural use. For the most part, local farmers could not afford to maintain their farms, and the local agricultural economy shrank, while the landscape became dominated by forests, residences, and roads. The towns of Concord, Lincoln and Lexington became an outer suburb for the Boston metropolitan area and there was an increase in residential development. However, farm stands were in seasonal operation along major roads and

Meriam's Corner
Minute Man National Historical Park

highways in the three towns such as Massachusetts Avenue and Route 2. (National Register 2002, Section 8: 46-47)

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERION C

Architecture:

Meriam's Corner is locally significant for dwellings representative of local building trends from the early 18th century through the mid-20th century. Chief among the architectural resources is the Meriam House, considered one of the earliest and most intact colonial period buildings in Concord. The house was constructed c.1705 and expanded c.1725. The Federal-style Gowing-Clark House, constructed in c.1836, represents early republic house architecture, while the Burke House is an excellent, intact example of the Dutch Colonial Revival style of the early 20th century. Constructed about 1904, the two and a half story Burke House features a side gambrel roof with a prominent shed dormer. (National Register 2002, Section 8: 31,34)

The Second East Quarter Schoolhouse is the only extant building in the district originally constructed for a function other than domestic or agricultural purposes. The building was constructed in 1853 and is one of only a few surviving examples of mid-19th century educational buildings in the Concord, Lincoln, and Lexington area. Typical of other such schoolhouses that survive from the period, the building was converted into a residence in 1904. (National Register 2002, Section 8: 34)

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERION D

Archeology:

The John Meriam House Site (also known as the John and Joseph Meriam House Sites) is within the Meriam's Corner area of the park, an area that contained a sequence of family farmsteads from the 17th century to modern period. The site marks the location of John Meriam's original house constructed in c.1663 and later occupied by, among others, Ebenezer and Josiah Meriam. The house is believed to have been removed around the turn of the 19th century. The core area of the Meriam property was composed of houses, barns, outbuildings, a locksmith and blacksmith shop, cow yards and gardens surrounded by farmland. One section of the core contains about an acre and a half of land east of Bedford Road with two house lots. The John Meriam House Site represents a farmstead complex occupied by five generations of the Meriam family. (National Register 2002, Section 8: 66-67)

The other site in the Meriam's Corner area is the First East Quarter School House Site, which marks the location of the school as built on Josiah Meriam's land in 1799. The site contains a fieldstone foundation or footing. (National Register 2002, Section 8: 67)

State Register Information

Identification Number: LIN.F and LIN.G
Date Listed: 10/16/1966
Name: Minute Man National Historical Park

Chronology & Physical History

Cultural Landscape Type and Use

Cultural Landscape Type: Vernacular
Historic Site

Current and Historic Use/Function:

Primary Historic Function:	Battle Site
Primary Current Use:	Outdoor Recreation
Other Use/Function	Other Type of Use or Function
Single Family House	Both Current And Historic
Agricultural Field	Both Current And Historic
Barn	Both Current And Historic
Woodlot/Forest (Managed)	Both Current And Historic
Interpretive Trail	Current

Current and Historic Names:

Name	Type of Name
Meriam's Corner	Both Current And Historic
Battle Road	Both Current And Historic
Battle Road Unit	Current

Ethnographic Study Conducted: No Survey Conducted

Ethnographic Significance Description:

In 1996, a research report for the National Park Service Ethnographic Program entitled "In Praise of Sweet Corn: Contemporary Farming at Minute Man National Historical Park" was completed by Steven Parish.

Chronology:

Year	Event	Annotation
10000 BCE	Farmed/Harvested	Human habitation begins in the region 12,000 years ago.

Meriam's Corner
Minute Man National Historical Park

CE 600 - 1630	Farmed/Harvested	Algonquian people inhabit the area, planting crops and constructing fishing weirs along the Musketequid River (Concord River).
CE 1635	Established	Puritans establish the Concord Plantation along the Concord River. This marks the beginning of European development.
CE 1636	Land Transfer	By 1636, Concord Plantation begins allocating house lots along the base of an east-west ridgeline (known today as Revolutionary Ridge). This initial apportionment of land in Concord became known as the First Division.
	Developed	By 1636, a four-rod (66') wide road runs parallel to the east-west ridgeline, bisecting the First Division house lots.
CE 1638	Settled	Joseph Meriam migrates to Massachusetts in 1638, settling in Concord with his wife and children by 1639.
CE 1640	Expanded	In the early 1640s, Cambridge extends its western border to the eastern edge of the Concord Plantation. The extended area is known as Cambridge Farms.
CE 1641	Land Transfer	Joseph Meriam dies and transfers his land to his wife, who remarries Joseph Wheeler in 1641 or 1642.
CE 1652 - 1663	Land Transfer	Between 1652 and 1663, Concord Plantation distributes additional acreage during the town's Second Division of land. When completed, house lots extend throughout the entire plantation, including within the present-day Battle Road Unit.
CE 1663	Land Transfer	John Meriam, Joseph's son, marries and establishes himself at Meriam's Corner with 80 acres, including a house lot, tillage, and meadow land.
CE 1663 - 1700	Farmed/Harvested	John Meriam farms the land at Meriam's Corner, plus 91 acres in what would become Bedford.
CE 1663	Built	John Meriam builds a house at the corner of Old Bedford Road and Battle Road.

Meriam's Corner
Minute Man National Historical Park

CE 1666	Developed	By 1666, the road bisecting the First Division house lots is extended west through the entire length of the present-day Battle Road Unit. The Bay Road (as it is known during early colonial times) is the primary route between Concord and Boston.
CE 1691 - 1702	Land Transfer	Around the turn of the 18th century, John Meriam begins distributing his land to his sons. The Meriam's Corner land is divided between his sons John, Ebenezer, and Joseph.
CE 1691	Built	John Meriam Jr. builds a house at Meriam's Corner on the west side of Old Bedford Road sometime around 1691.
CE 1695	Excavated	John Meriam digs ditches within his wet meadows to drain them for the cultivation of hay.
CE 1700	Altered	By 1700, thirty percent of the Concord Plantation forests have been cleared.
CE 1705	Inhabited	Ebenezer Meriam is married and continues to live with his parents in the 1663 house at the Meriam's Corner road junction.
	Built	Joseph Meriam builds a new house just north of his parents' house on Old Bedford Rd. This house is the extant Meriam House.
CE 1716	Platted	A survey of the Battle Road in Concord indicates the width of the road increases east to west from four rods (66') to ten rods (165').
CE 1725	Altered	A second story is added to the west side of the Meriam House by Joseph Meriam.
CE 1732	Inhabited	Ebenezer Meriam moves from the 1663 Meriam house at the corner of Old Bedford Rd. and Battle Road to a house formerly owned by Jacob Taylor Jr. just west of the junction on Battle Road.
CE 1732 - 1743	Inhabited	A series of tenants, including Ebenezer Meriam Jr. live in the original 1663 Meriam House at the road junction.

Meriam's Corner
Minute Man National Historical Park

CE 1737	Land Transfer	John Meriam Jr. moves from Meriam's Corner to Littleton. John's 6-acre house lot on the west side of Bedford Road is acquired by his brother Joseph, and an 8-acre plot on the east side of the road by Joseph's son Samuel.
CE 1738	Platted	A survey of the Battle Road (Country Road then) in Lexington indicates the width of the road varies between four rods (66') and seven rods (116') from the Concord-Lexington town line to the Ebenezer Fiske house (western end of present-day Battle Road Unit).
CE 1743	Altered	Joseph Meriam's son Nathan is married in 1743. The chimney of the Meriam House is rebuilt and a new, one-story kitchen addition is constructed on the back side of the house.
CE 1744	Land Transfer	Ebenezer Meriam sells his 7-acre house lot at the corner of Old Bedford Road and Battle Road to Jonathan Stowe.
CE 1745	Land Transfer	Jonathan Stowe sells the 7-acre Meriam house lot, including the original 1663 Meriam house at the corner of Old Bedford Road and Battle Road to Nathan Meriam.
CE 1747	Land Transfer	Joseph Meriam distributes his Meriam's Corner land to his sons Nathan, Josiah, and Samuel. Nathan receives the largest portion, including the 1705 Meriam House on Old Bedford Road. Josiah receives the half acre house lot at the road junction
CE 1754	Established	The town of Lincoln is established. Included within its boundary are the portions of the Concord Plantation and the town of Lexington within the present-day Battle Road Unit.
CE 1769	Land Transfer	John Meriam inherits half of his father Samuel's land along with his brother Ebenezer.
CE 1770	Developed	About 25 house lots are located along Battle Road. The typical house lot includes a barn, several outbuildings, orchard, and small garden.
CE 1773	Purchased/Sold	The town of Lexington purchases land along the north side of the Battle Road for road realignment.

Meriam's Corner
 Minute Man National Historical Park

CE 1775	Farmed/Harvested	By 1775, all cultivatable land within the present-day Battle Road Unit supports subsistence crops of Indian corn, rye, and other grains.
	Military Operation	On April 19, 1775, colonists engage in battle with British Regulars, starting the American Revolutionary War. Colonial minute men and militia confront the British troops along the entire length of the Battle Road from Concord to Boston.
	Land Transfer	Ebenezer Meriam dies and his brother John inherits Ebenezer's half of their father Samuel's estate.
CE 1778	Land Transfer	John Meriam purchases 91 acres of land from Daniel Taylor, including land in Meriam's Corner.
CE 1790	Inhabited	In the 1790s, Josiah and his youngest son Joseph moved to a new farm on Virginia Road.
CE 1799	Built	Concord builds a one-room schoolhouse for the town's East Quarter on Ephraim Meriam's land on Battle Road east of the original 1663 John Meriam House.
CE 1800	Demolished	In the early years of the 19th century, the half-acre house lot and 1663 house at the corner of Old Bedford Rd. and Battle Road are acquired by John Meriam, son of Josiah's brother Samuel. The house is apparently torn down shortly after.
CE 1802 - 1806	Altered	Between 1802 and c.1806, the towns of Concord, Lincoln, and Lexington realign portions of the Battle Road to provide more efficient travel between Concord and Boston.
CE 1803	Land Transfer	Ephraim Meriam dies, leaving his house and land to his widow Mary. His sons Ephraim Jr. and Rufus are too young to assume ownership.
CE 1806	Developed	The Cambridge Turnpike (known today as Route 2) is built south of the Battle Road (outside the Battle Road Unit).
	Land Transfer	John Meriam dies and leaves his land and house to John Meriam Jr.

Meriam's Corner
 Minute Man National Historical Park

	Land Transfer	Mary Meriam remarries to William Swan, and he assumes ownership of her land.
CE 1810	Altered	Sometime around 1810, a new 1-1/2-story kitchen addition is constructed on the back (north) side of the Meriam House.
CE 1811	Land Transfer	John Meriam Jr.'s house is occupied by his younger brother Tarrant Putnam Meriam.
CE 1820	Farmed/Harvested	Beginning in 1820, pasture clearing and hayfield planting significantly increased along the Battle Road to support larger cattle herds.
	Altered	Interior renovations to the Meriam House, including plaster, woodwork, doors, windows, and stairs, are carried out around 1820.
CE 1822	Land Transfer	William Swan dies in 1822, leaving his house and land to his stepson Ephraim Jr.
CE 1830	Farmed/Harvested	As a result of the temperance movement of the early 1800s, the consumption of hard cider decreases. Farmers within the present-day Battle Road Unit begin to replace cider orchards with fancy fruit orchards.
CE 1834	Land Transfer	Ephraim Meriam Jr. sells the Meriam House and land to his brother Rufus.
CE 1836	Land Transfer	The main part of John Meriam's old farm, including the house on the north side of Battle Road just west of the junction, is acquired by Jabez Gowing.
CE 1850	Farmed/Harvested	By the mid-1800s, only ten percent of forest lands remain.
	Farmed/Harvested	By the 1850s, farmers along the road begin adapting farm buildings, structures, and field configurations to support commercial agricultural production. Crops raised are sold to neighboring industrial towns.
CE 1852 - 1854	Built	The Town of Concord buys a small lot of land from Rufus Meriam just east of the East Quarter Schoolhouse and builds a new schoolhouse.

Meriam's Corner
 Minute Man National Historical Park

CE 1860	Settled	By the 1860s, immigrant families (of Irish descent being the most prevalent) begin purchasing farms along the Battle Road on marginal land or land abandoned by colonial descendants who have relocated to more fertile agricultural land in the Midwest.
CE 1868	Land Transfer	Benjamin Clark purchases Jabez Gowing's house and land, formerly the estate of John Meriam.
CE 1870	Land Transfer	Rufus Meriam dies and leaves his estate to his three surviving siblings: Mary Ball, Marshal Meriam, and Maria Hatch.
CE 1871	Land Transfer	A portion of the late Rufus Meriam's farm is sold in 1871 to Thomas Burke. The total amount of land is 50 acres more or less, which represents about half of the total farm area at this time.
CE 1885	Memorialized	Seven memorial stones are erected in various locations in Concord in 1885, including a stone memorial installed in the stone wall at Meriam's Corner.
CE 1890	Farmed/Harvested	By the late 1800s, woodlands cover approximately forty percent of the western half of the present-day Battle Road Unit. Farm acreage decreased geographically onto better soils, such as the eastern half of the present-day Battle Road Unit.
	Land Transfer	By the late 1800s, middle-income Boston merchants and businessmen begin purchasing agricultural land within the present-day Battle Road Unit for homes.
CE 1893	Land Transfer	Thomas Burke purchases the Second East Quarter Schoolhouse and the land that it is on.
CE 1895	Developed	In the mid-1890s, the Massachusetts Highway Commission (the nation's first state highway commission) prepares layout plans for a state road that extends through the present-day Battle Road Unit.
CE 1898 - 1899	Built	Thomas Burke builds a new barn near the Meriam House.

Meriam's Corner
 Minute Man National Historical Park

CE 1903 - 1904	Built	A new house is erected in 1903-04 on Old Bedford Road, across from the Meriam House, by Thomas J. Burke, the son of Thomas Burke. Stones from the stone wall at Meriam's Corner are removed for use in the new house's foundation.
	Altered	The Second East Quarter Schoolhouse is remodeled as a residence by James Burke, son of Thomas Burke.
CE 1922	Land Transfer	Thomas and Rose Burke both die in 1921, and the following year the Meriam House and land passes to their daughter-in-law Ellen Burke.
CE 1924	Established	Massachusetts Governor Channing H. Cox establishes the nine-person Commission on the One Hundred Fiftieth Anniversary of the American Revolution (The Commission) to recommend a commemorative program for the 150th anniversary of the opening battles of the American Revolution.
	Planned	The Commission recommends establishment of a permanent memorial honoring the 150th anniversary of the American Revolution. In consultation with Landscape Architect Arthur Shurtleff (later known as Arthur Shurcliff), commission members examine sites along the Battle Road for a proposed Memorial Highway.
CE 1925	Planned	In January 1925, Arthur Shurtleff submits a report to The Commission in which he recommends preserving nearly two miles of the original Battle Road that include the two large bends in the road bypassed in the early 1800s. He also recommends acquisition of four hundred feet or more on each side of the road to preserve the character of the rural road. The state does not act upon Shurtleff's recommendations.
CE 1925 - 1951	Inhabited	While Thomas J. and Ellen Burke live in the Burke house west of Old Bedford Road, they rent the Meriam House to a series of tenants.
CE 1925 - 1926	Land Transfer	The Palumbo family purchases the Second East Quarter Schoolhouse as well as land across the road from it.
CE 1928	Moved	Ellen Burke moves a small produce stand that was in front of the schoolhouse eastward and operates it as a clam-bake house.

Meriam's Corner
Minute Man National Historical Park

CE 1930 - 1940	Altered	Middlesex County realigns a significant section of the Battle Road at Fiske Hill to provide safer passage for auto users, and additional roads are constructed in the area by 1940.
CE 1930	Farmed/Harvested	In comparison to the 1880s U.S. Census, the 1930 census includes a more ethnically diverse immigrant population. Family nationalities include Irish, Canadian, German, Italian, Swedish, Portuguese, Russian, Polish, Armenian, and Dutch. Many of these families operate farms and roadside produce stands.
CE 1933 - 1935	Developed	A by-pass road diverting traffic from North Great Road (known today as State Route 2A) to the Concord Turnpike (Route 2) is built just west of Brooks Road.
CE 1934	Land Transfer	In 1934, the clam-bake house and its land are purchased by James McManus, who enlarges or replaces the structures with an ice cream parlor and lunch counter.
CE 1940 - 1941	Built	In 1940 or 1941, the Burke Barn on the west side of Old Bedford Road is removed and replaced with a smaller structure. Around the same time, a new garage is built just south of the Burke House.
CE 1941	Built	Construction of the Laurence G. Hanscom Airfield starts. The airfield borders the northern boundary of the present-day Battle Road Unit.
CE 1947	Land Transfer	The ice cream parlor and lunch counter is purchased by Ross and Emily Ranson. The Ransons convert the business to a bar and restaurant called the Willow Pond Kitchen.
CE 1950	Built	In the early 1950s, the federal government completes construction of Interstate 128, the first limited access highway in Massachusetts. Easy access to the highway from Route 2A promotes residential development within the present-day Battle Road Unit.
CE 1951	Land Transfer	Ellen T. Burke conveys a small portion of the Meriam-Burke farm, including the Meriam House, to James W. and Margaret Ingraham.

Meriam's Corner
 Minute Man National Historical Park

CE 1955	Established	The federal government establishes the Boston National Historic Sites Commission (BNHSC) to investigate the possibility of establishing a coordinated program between federal, state, and local governments to preserve the most important colonial properties in and around Boston.
CE 1956	Planned	The BNHSC consults with Landscape Architect Arthur Shurcliff (formerly known as Arthur Shurtleff) regarding their study. In a letter to the BNHSC, Shurcliff recommends preserving a portion of the road from “Fiske Hill towards Concord.”
	Built	A small gardenhouse is built behind the Meriam House.
CE 1958	Planned	The BNHSC completes an interim report to Congress in June 1958. The report recommends establishment of a national park, to be known as “Minute Man.” The proposed park would include four miles of the Battle Road from Meriam’s Corner in Concord to Route 128 in Lexington.
CE 1958 - 1959	Land Transfer	Mary and Peter Sowkow, the daughter and son-in-law of Ross and Emily Ranson, assume ownership and operation of the Willow Pond Kitchen.
CE 1959	Planned	On January 21, 1959, the BNHSC submits the Interim Report.
	Established	On April 19, 1959, the federal government officially designates an eight-acre unit in today’s Nelson Farm Area as a national historical site.
CE 1959 - 1960	Established	On September 21, 1959, Public Law 86-321 establishes Minute Man National Historical Park. The park boundary also includes the eight-acre parcel designated as a national historic site six months earlier, along with the Farwell Jones and Olive Stow properties. The park opens to the public in 1960.
CE 1960	Planned	The first official park boundary study is completed. The report delineates minimum park boundaries within a 750-acre limit specified in the enabling legislation.

Meriam's Corner
Minute Man National Historical Park

CE 1960 - 1980	Established	Between the 1960s and 1970s several colonial properties and structures are researched and documented. The reports serve as a foundation for preparation of the park's first master plan.
CE 1960	Moved	A small building is moved to a site on the east side of the Meriam House in 1960. The building, described as a tool house," measures 10 feet by 16 feet.
CE 1962	Planned	The 1960 boundary study is revised. The study also recommends removing through traffic from the Battle Road and rerouting it south of the park.
CE 1965 - 1966	Planned	The park's first master plan is formally adopted. The plan specifies rehabilitation of the 1775 historic scene. It also proposes relocation of Route 2A.
CE 1966	Land Transfer	The National Park Service acquires the Palumbo family land, including the Second East Quarter Schoolhouse. The family continues to occupy the house and farm the land on a lease from the park.
CE 1968	Planned	The National Park Service Office of Resource Planning prepares a special study that identifies buildings and structures within the park boundary to be retained, removed, or demolished. Although most late-19th century/20th century buildings are removed as recommended in the report, the agricultural structures on the Farwell Jones farm remain. The Stow-Hardy House and the Farwell Jones house are identified for future acquisition. The study also discusses establishment of proposed historic motor trails within the park.
CE 1969	Built	A third outbuilding resembling a small cottage is added to the east yard sometime before 1969, when it is listed in the tax records as a dwelling valued at \$650.
CE 1974	Land Transfer	The National Park Service acquires the Burke House.
CE 1976	Land Transfer	By 1976, the park has acquired 656 acres within the proposed 750 acre park.
CE 1977	Planned	The state transportation secretary declines relocation of Route 2.

Meriam's Corner

Minute Man National Historical Park

CE 1987	Land Transfer	The National Park Service acquires the Meriam House and land through condemnation. The Ingrahams retain life estate. Margaret dies in 1988, and after remarrying, James Ingraham moves from the house in 1990, turning management of the house over to the park.
CE 1992	Land Transfer	The park's boundaries are expanded and new land is acquired.
CE 1995	Built	Construction of the Battle Road Trail begins. Designed by Carol R. Johnson Associates, the trail spans the entire length of the Battle Road Unit from Meriam's Corner to Fiske Hill.
CE 1998	Demolished	The Willow Pond Kitchen closes and the building is removed by the park.
CE 2007	Established	February 7, 2007 the Commonwealth of Massachusetts designates the Battle Road Scenic Byway.

Physical History:

The following section provides information on the physical development and evolution of the site, organized by time periods. Much of the material is excerpted from the 2005 “Cultural Landscape Report for Battle Road Unit: Minute Man National Historical Park.” Information specific to the development of Meriam’s Corner and its landowners is based on research conducted by Brian Donahue and Heidi Hohmann for the 1994 “Cultural Landscape Report for Meriam’s Corner,” and on the Historic Structure Report (HSR) for the Meriam House by Barbara A. Yocum, completed in 1994 and published in 2004.

Road Names:

Since its construction in the 17th century, the Battle Road has been given various names, such as the Bay Road and Country Road. For the purposes of this document, the term “Battle Road” is used when describing the road as it existed in the 17th and 18th centuries. For the 20th century and existing conditions, the road is referred to by its current name, Lexington Road. All other roads are called by their present-day names.

PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD, to 1634

Between 15,000 and 18,000 years ago, the last glacier to cover New England created the topography managed by Native Americans and settled by English Puritans. The western portion of the present-day Battle Road Unit lies within the nutrient-rich geologic depression of glacial Lake Concord. Less fertile uplands composed of glacial till characterize the eastern half of the Battle Road Unit. (Cultural Landscape Report--hereafter CLR--2005: 13)

Human habitation in the region dates back 12,000 years when people hunted animals grazing among open spruce forests. The forests evolved as the earth’s atmosphere warmed, and, about 8,000 years ago, oak forests dominated a productive landscape that provided early Native Americans with deer, squirrel, turkey, and a variety of tree nuts. Five thousand years later, a cooler climate led to declining productivity and a sparser Native American population. Native Americans gradually learned to exploit their environment, however, and those in southern New England traveled between seasonal hunting, fishing, gathering, and agricultural grounds. (CLR 2005: 13-14)

By the early 17th century, Algonquian people had inhabited the area along the Musketequid River, today’s Concord River, for about a thousand years. Native Americans cleared forest land by fire, and the women planted corn seeds among the dead trees, which were removed from the fields as they fell. Native American men fished in the spring, and people gathered tubers, wild rice, and cranberries from the wet grassy meadows along the river to supplement their diets. In autumn, the men hunted in forests that covered ninety percent of the future Concord Plantation. The thick-canopied forests included species of oak, hickory, chestnut, maple, ash, and probably pine, beech, birch, and hemlock. (CLR 2005: 14, 16-17)

Like European settlers who would inhabit the land along the Musketequid River in the early 1600s, Native Americans manipulated and reshaped the landscape to increase food production. Pre-colonial Native American settlement along the Musketequid River ended in the 1630s, as

European-introduced disease decimated the Native American population and European settlers moved into their former hunting, fishing, gathering and agricultural grounds. (CLR 2005: 17)

COLONIAL PERIOD, 1635 - 1783

Battle Road Area Development, 1635-1699:

Colonial settlement in North America is generally defined as the period between the settlement in Jamestown, Virginia in 1607 and the conclusion of the Revolutionary War. In Massachusetts, this period began with the arrival of English settlers in 1620. (CLR 2005: 19)

Inland settlement began when the Puritans established the six-mile-square Concord Plantation on the Musketequid River (Concord River) in 1635. The Concord Plantation included portions of present-day Concord and Lincoln townships within the present-day Battle Road Unit. In the early 1640s, Cambridge extended its western border to the eastern edge of the Concord Plantation. Known as Cambridge Farms, the land began near the center of present-day Lexington and continued northwest to the Concord and Merrimack Rivers. Cambridge Farms included parts of Lincoln and Lexington within the Battle Road Unit. (CLR 2005: 19)

By 1636, Concord Plantation, or simply Concord, allocated house lots along the base of an east-west ridgeline (known today as Revolutionary Ridge) about a mile south of the Concord River and extending to the western edge of the present-day Battle Road Unit. This apportionment of land was called the First Division, and settlers received both six- to eight-acre house lots and 30- to 50-acre agricultural lots within commonly held wet meadows, tillage fields, and special pastures. The remaining acreage within the plantation, known as the “commons,” was primarily forested and mostly served as communal pasture for livestock, which foraged through the forest consuming the understory. A road ‘four Rodes [rods]’ (66 feet) wide paralleled the ridge line, bisecting the First Division house lots. This section of road would later be incorporated into what is now known as the Battle Road, which was fully laid out by 1666. (CLR 2005: 19, 21-22, 24)

During the Second Division (1652 to 1663), commonly held land was distributed to individuals, and three sections – the North, South, and East Quarters – were formed to facilitate distribution. In contrast to the “commons,” privately owned pastures were generally clear-cut and enclosed by walls or fences. The number of stone walls within the Battle Road Unit increased primarily due to clear-cutting, which reduced the insulating value of the topsoil and promoted frost heaving that pushed stones to the surface. As stones accumulated, they were often stacked to preserve space. (CLR 2005: 25-26)

Throughout the early Colonial period, farm production in the Battle Road area was subsistence based, each family producing enough food for personal consumption and perhaps a small amount for local trade. By the mid-1600s, cultivated varieties of English grasses began to replace native grasses. By 1700, thirty percent of Concord’s forests had been cleared, and only two expanses of woodland have been identified along the Battle Road at that time. During the 18th century, Colonial settlement would continue to alter the landscape of the Battle Road and Meriam’s Corner. (CLR 2005: 9, 25)

Meriam's Corner Development, 1635-1699:

Joseph Meriam migrated to Massachusetts in 1638, settling in Concord with his wife Sarah and children by 1639. He established himself somewhere within the town with a house lot and other land, although the location and arrangement of his lands are not recorded. His house lot would likely have been near the center of town, as a General Court order dated 1635 decreed that "no new building should be built more than half a mile from the meeting-house in any new plantation." Joseph Meriam did not live long in the New World, dying in 1641, less than two years after coming to Concord. In his will, he left his land to Sarah with provisions for the raising of their children, including their unborn son John. Sarah quickly remarried to Joseph Wheeler in 1641 or 1642, at which point two-thirds of Joseph Meriam's estate passed to his sons in accordance with his will. In 1667, Meriam's three surviving sons, William, Joseph, and John, conveyed their shares in the estate to their step-father. (Yocum 2004: 13)

John Meriam (1641-1724) was married to Mary Cooper in 1663, and by 1666, he was established at Meriam's Corner with a house lot, tillage, and meadow land on both sides of Old Bedford Road, as well as portions of common fields and meadows scattered around Concord for a total of around 80 acres. By 1672, this had grown to 171 acres with the addition of 91 acres at Shawshine Corner in what would become Bedford. Although details of the layout of the lands are not known, some information can be surmised by common practices of the time and the patterns of later development of the Meriam's Corner lands. John's house lot probably included a small strip of garden and tillage land running north of his house along Old Bedford Road. The house itself (not extant today) was likely built in 1663 when he married. The bulk of the house lot east of this toward Mill Brook was probably meadow, and the 20-acre strip of upland on the west side of the Meriam's Corner junction was probably largely brought into cultivation during this period. These 20 acres would constitute the core tillage land for the next few generations of Meriams. A small piece of this, on the hill south of the lane to the Cranefield area, was planted with an orchard by 1685. (Donahue 1994: 14-15)

It was during John Meriam's time that much of the wet meadow areas of Concord were ditched and drained for the cultivation of hay. By 1695 the lowlands east of Meriam's Corner had been ditched to the point that part of the flow of Elm Brook at the east end could be diverted west, to flow into the Mill Brook that ran by John Meriam's house. (Donahue 1994: 15)

Battle Road Area Development, 1700-1774:

During the 18th century, new house lots developed along the Battle Road, and old house lots passed to fourth and fifth generations. Through inheritance, large 17th-century properties were gradually subdivided, and as more land became privatized, fields and pastures were consolidated around house lots. Political boundaries also changed. In 1713, Cambridge Farms separated from Cambridge and incorporated as the town of Lexington. The town of Lincoln was established in 1754, its boundary including portions of Concord and Lexington located within the present-day Battle Road Unit. (CLR 2005: 26)

By the 1770s, about 25 house lots were located along Battle Road. A typical house lot averaged 60 to 80 acres, significantly larger than the six to eight-acre house lots of Concord's

First Division. In addition to a barn and several outbuildings, house lots often included a small garden and an orchard. At least 15 orchards were located along the Battle Road in the 1770s, the large number probably due to the popularity of hard cider in the 18th century. Fruit trees could grow on the marginal upland soil that was less suited for grain, making hard cider less expensive to produce than beer. According to Historical Landscape Architect Susan Dolan in her 2009 publication, *A Fruitful Legacy*, cider was the beverage of subsistence before potable water. (CLR 2005: 26, 28; Dolan 2009: 17)

While the communities remained subsistence oriented, a complex system of local exchange and several commercial enterprises began to develop. Towns along the Battle Road had reached an integrated system of land use by the mid-1700s. Local trades along the Battle Road included the Brooks Tannery, several blacksmith and locksmith shops, and a cider mill on the Jacob Whittemore farm. Taverns began to replace Puritan churches as centers of civic influence. Local colonists and travelers visited taverns to rest, drink, and discuss politics. Four taverns were located along the Battle Road. (CLR 2005: 26, 35)

Existing roads were altered and improved throughout the 1700s to provide better transportation to neighboring towns, to market, to agricultural land, and between house lots. A 1716 Concord survey indicates that the Battle Road was widened substantially towards its eastern end, from 66 feet wide west of Meriam's Corner to 165 feet wide at today's Bloody Angle. In 1720 Concord men order the layout of a two-rod (33feet) road running from the southeast corner of John Jones's house lot (on the west side of Nathaniel Stow's property at the Battle Road) north and easterly to the Brickiln field. In 1773 the town of Lexington shifted the roadbed north where it ran near Fiske Hill (the eastern end of the Battle Road Unit). (CLR 2005: 29, 34; OSHSR 2003:13)

Meriam's Corner Development, 1700-1774:

Around the turn of the 18th century, John Meriam began to apportion his land to his five sons. Nathaniel and Samuel were provided with John's land at Shawshine Corner in 1696 and 1702 respectively, while his Meriam's Corner land was divided between John, Ebenezer, and Joseph. The transfers of the Meriam's Corner deeds were not recorded, but the general arrangement of the properties can be surmised from later deeds and from descriptions in abutting land.

Lt. John Meriam (1666-1748) married in 1691 and built a house about that time. It is believed that the house was located on the west side of Old Bedford Road just north of the road junction. He lived there with his family until he moved to Littleton around 1737. By then, his land at Meriam's Corner included the 6-acre house lot with a house and barn, 2 acres of plow land further up the road, and another 8 acres of pasture across the road from the plow land to the east. He also owned a number of parcels of pasture, meadow, and woodland scattered about Concord for a total of 54 acres. When John Jr. left Concord in 1737, his Meriam's Corner land was acquired by his brother Joseph's son Samuel.

Upon his marriage in 1705, Joseph built a new house on the east side of Old Bedford Road near its intersection with Battle Road. This house is the Meriam House that is extant today. The architectural investigation of the Meriam House determined that the original house was two

stories high on the east side and one story on the west side. It was of post-and-beam construction, with raised sills visible in the rooms of the first story. The framing of the ceiling was also visible, with the summer beams and chimney girts finished with decorative chamfering. Wide-board wood paneling appears to have finished the walls, and the undersides of floorboards formed the ceiling above. Typical of this time period would have been large fireplace openings, with a bake oven tucked in the back corner on one side of the cooking fireplace. (Yocum 2004: 18)

The interior room configuration consisted of two large rooms in the first story connected by a small stair hall, and one large room in the second story off the stair hall. The two first- and second-story rooms on the east side of the house were the largest, each measuring about 18 1/2 feet square. The single-story room on the west side was smaller, measuring only about 12 1/2 feet wide by 18 1/2 feet long. This room may have functioned as the kitchen because of its access to the stairway leading to the cellar under the west side of the house. The stairway in the small stair hall rose in front of the chimney. A ghosted outline of the stairway (beneath the existing stairway, on the east-wall paneling) indicates that it ascended from east to west, as it does today, thus allowing headroom in the cellar stairway below. (Yocum 2004: 18)

Sometime after the house was constructed circa 1705, a second story was added on the west side. This may have occurred sometime between 1724 and 1728, when Joseph Meriam's tax valuation rose from 22 to 36 pounds. An approximate date of "circa 1725" has been assigned to this improvement. Joseph and Dorothy Meriam's family had expanded by 1725 to include five children: Dorothy (1706-1791); Mary (1707-?); Joseph (1709-1797); Samuel (1712-1767), and Nathan (1720-1782). One last child, Josiah (1726-1809), was born the following year. The Meriam household therefore could have used the additional space that a new second-story room would have provided. (Yocum 2004: 18-19)

The architectural investigation of the Meriam House found that post-and-beam construction was also used in building the new second story. Like the rest of the house, the ceiling framing was exposed and painted (as can be seen in the attic today). The new room probably had a fireplace, which would have been added to the west side of the existing chimney. The new gable roof was continuous with the roof on the east side of the house, making the house appear as one large structure with a large center chimney. (Yocum 2004: 19)

For about 30 years, Meriam's Corner was farmed by the three brothers John, Ebenezer, and Joseph. John lived in the house that he had built in 1791 on the west side of Old Bedford Road, Ebenezer lived with his parents in the original 1663 Meriam House at the corner, and Joseph lived in the house he built just north of that in 1705, the extant Meriam House. Together they farmed some 70 acres of land along Old Bedford Road at Meriam's Corner. (Donahue 1994: 19)

Ebenezer is believed to have lived in the old homestead on Battle Road with his parents until their deaths in 1724 (John) and 1730 (Mary). Two years after his mother's death, Ebenezer moved to the house lot that had belonged to Jacob Taylor Jr. located on Battle Road just west of the Meriam's Corner junction. After he moved, the 1663 house was occupied by a series of

tenants, including his son Ebenezer Jr. from 1741 to 1743. In 1743 he divided his land with his son Ebenezer Jr., who died young in 1751. The 7-acre house lot was sold to a neighbor Jonathan Stow in 1744, who in turn sold it to Ebenezer's nephew Nathan in 1745. Ebenezer lived to be 102 years of age, surviving his two grown sons by a quarter century and at least four of his five wives. In his later days he was cared for by his granddaughter Sarah and her husband, a cooper named John Champney, who ended up owning some of Ebenezer's land west of the road junction. (Donahue 1994: 19)

In 1737, John Meriam moved to Littleton and his 1691 house and six acres of tillage land on the west side of Old Bedford Road was acquired by Joseph's son Samuel Meriam. Samuel also acquired several larger parcels of tillage and meadow land along Old Bedford Road, as well as other assorted land in Concord. Like his father Joseph and his brother Josiah, Samuel learned the blacksmith and locksmith trades, working with them in the family shop. Samuel died in 1769, leaving his land, including the 1691 house, to his two sons Ebenezer and John. Ebenezer died six years later, leaving John alone to farm his father's lands. (Donahue 1994: 21)

Josiah Meriam, Joseph's youngest son, was established by his father in 1747, a year after his marriage. Joseph provided Josiah with Ebenezer Meriam's 1663 house and barn on a half-acre lot right at the northeast corner of Old Bedford Road and Battle Road, along with a modest selection of farm land, and the tools of the locksmith trade. Josiah did not acquire much if any land through most of his life, and in fact he eventually sold several of the small pieces given to him by his father. He probably earned his living primarily as a smith. His farm consisted of his house lot at the corner plus about 32 acres of assorted land in Meriam's Corner and elsewhere. (Donahue 1994: 21)

Joseph conveyed his house lot with the 1705 house to his son Nathan Meriam (1720-1782) in 1747. It appears that Nathan and his wife Abigail had been living in half of the house with his parents in the other half for some time. Joseph died in 1750, only three years after conveying the house to Nathan, and Nathan's mother Dorothy likely moved out of the house when she remarried the following year to John Hunt of Concord. Nathan and Abigail had 11 children between the years 1744 and 1764. They included five boys and six girls, nine of whom lived to maturity. They were Joseph (1744-1826); Abigail (1745, married Nathan Stow 1780); Dorothy (1747-1766); Lucy (1749, married Amos Hosmer in 1776); Nathan (1751-?); Mehitable (1753-54); David (1754-55); Mary (1756, married Joseph Wright in 1776); Hepzibah (1758, married Aaron Wright in 1788); Amos (1760-1804); and Ephraim (1764-1803).

The Revolutionary War, 1775-1783:

By 1775, there were three households at Meriam's Corner. Josiah lived on Battle Road at the junction with Old Bedford Road in the house built by his grandfather John Meriam in 1663. Nathan lived in the extant Meriam House on Old Bedford Road that his father Joseph built in 1705, and Nathan and Josiah's nephew John lived in the house on the west side of Old Bedford Road built by John Meriam Jr. in about 1691. Each of these houses had an associated barn behind it, as well as various privies, woodsheds, and other outbuildings. Josiah's locksmith shop is also believed to have been on Battle Road somewhere near his house. These three homesteads and their associated structures created a relatively tight cluster of buildings around

the road junction. Around the houses were kitchen gardens, small orchards, tilled fields, and meadows, all delineated by a network of fences and stone walls. The wet meadows in the vicinity had been drained in the late 17th century and were crossed by a system of ditches and brooks. Battle Road, 66 feet wide where it passed the Meriams' houses in 1775, crossed Mill Brook over a narrow wooden bridge about 250 feet east of the junction with Old Bedford Road. (Yocum 2004: 26-27)

The war that would result in independence of the American colonies from Great Britain began as a series of skirmishes in Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775. On a mission to capture and destroy military supplies that were reportedly stored by the Massachusetts militia in Concord, about 700 British Army regulars under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Francis Smith set off from Boston before daybreak. Alerted to their advance, minute men and militias from numerous towns north and west of Boston mobilized and met them first at Lexington and then at the North Bridge in Concord.

The British first passed through Meriam's Corner early in the morning of April 19 on their way to Concord after their encounter with colonists on the Lexington common. John McKinstry Merriam, the great-grandson of Josiah Meriam, claims that the British soldiers entered Josiah's house on Battle Road on their way westward that morning and took food and other supplies. Josiah and his oldest son Josiah Jr., having been alerted to the advancing British, had mustered with their company of minute men and were awaiting the troops in Concord. (Yocum 2004: 26)

Following the skirmish at the North Bridge in Concord, the British returned to Boston along the same road later in the day on April 19, which once again took them through Meriam's Corner. As the body of the British forces marched along Battle Road out of Concord, flankers were sent to the left to follow a ridge along the north side of the road. The ridge ended at Meriam's Corner, where the road crossed the bridge over Mill Brook before continuing east. To cross the narrow bridge, the British troops needed to draw in the flankers and close rank to three soldiers abreast. Meanwhile, minute man and militia companies from Concord, Reading, and other towns had converged on the crossroads. A minute man company from Reading had approached from Bedford on Old Bedford Road and halted just short of the junction just as the ridge flankers were closing rank. As the British crossed the bridge, fire was exchanged between them and the minute men, and two British soldiers were killed and a number were wounded. The minute men took shelter behind a barn and the stone walls around it during the skirmish, likely Nathan Meriam's barn on the north side of the existing Meriam House (Figure 1). (Yocum 2004: 25-26) The construction of the bridge is not known, or when the bridge may have been replaced with a culvert. Elements of the present culvert structure may have been part of the bridge present in 1775.

After the skirmish at Meriam's Corner, the British continued east on Battle Road. Along the way, colonial militias from several towns took up positions on hills, in forests, and behind walls, houses, and other structures and attacked the British column whenever they had the opportunity. The British had to defend themselves from colonial fire all the way back to Charlestown. The war that was sparked by the events of that day continued for eight years until the Treaty of Paris was signed in 1783, with men from the Battle Road area towns

participating in numerous campaigns. Concord, Lincoln, and Lexington all supplied specific quotas of men and requested goods to the colonial army, bringing financial hardship to these local economies. Money paid to soldiers and for the purchase of army supplies necessitated higher taxes, and extensive wartime printing of paper money resulted in inflated prices. (CLR 2005: 10, 46)



Figure 1. Sketch of the April 19, 1775 skirmish at Meriam's Corner. Nathan Meriam house in the Background. (Historic Fields and Mansions of Middlesex, 1874; reproduced in CLR 2005)

RURAL ECONOMIC PERIOD, 1784 - 1899

Battle Road Area Development, 1784-1870:

Economic hardships persisted for a brief period after the war, but Massachusetts's economy recovered in the 1790s when high tariffs imposed on British goods prompted the growth of domestic industries such as textile mills, tanneries, and shoe factories. A number of small industries were located in Concord, Lincoln, and Lexington. New England farmers also benefited from industrialization, as they raised sheep for use in textile mills and livestock to sell in emerging urban centers. Beginning in 1820, woodland clearing for pastures and meadows significantly increased along the Battle Road to support larger cattle herds. By the mid-1800s only ten percent of local woodlands remained. Farmers along the road began adapting farm buildings, structures, and field configurations to support commercial agricultural production, and crops raised were sold to neighboring industrial towns. (CLR 2005: 47-48)

While secondary roads remained in poor condition, larger roads were improved and new roads were constructed to support vehicle traffic and livestock drives. The Battle Road was greatly altered between 1802 and 1806, as the towns of Concord, Lincoln, and Lexington realigned portions of the road to provide more efficient travel between Concord and Boston. Also in 1806, the Cambridge Turnpike (today's Route 2) was constructed south of the Battle Road. Although not within the bounds of the present-day Battle Road Unit, the presence of the turnpike altered traffic flow along the Battle Road by the mid-1800s, and a 20th-century

realignment of the turnpike influenced early planning of the present-day Minute Man National Historical Park. (CLR 2005: 48, 55)

The improvement of the Battle Road and construction of new roads did not bolster area industry for long. The small towns did not have sufficient water flow necessary to support large-scale industry and could not compete with locations such as Lowell at the confluence of the Concord and Merrimac Rivers. Battle Road area taverns also went out of business by the 1840s. While consuming large quantities of alcohol during the Colonial Period was acceptable, by the early 1800s drinking was perceived as a social problem. Additionally, the construction of the Cambridge Turnpike undoubtedly diverted clientele away from the taverns along the Battle Road and North Great Road. By the 1830s farmers along the Battle Road began to replace their cider orchards with dessert fruit orchards. (CLR 2005: 53-54)

The 1840s landscape along the Battle Road included many similar features typically found in the colonial landscape – stone walls, fences, pastures and fields, orchards, houses, and barns – although their configuration was undoubtedly different. A view of the 19th-century roadside would include larger pastures, barns, and outbuildings necessary to support commercial dairy production, a mix of cider and fancy fruit trees as farmers responded to the declining cider consumption, and the absence of local trade and tavern establishments. (CLR 2005: 55)

Meriam's Corner Development, 1784-1870:

The war years marked another generational transition period for the farms at Meriam's Corner. John Meriam had already acquired a house and farm land with the deaths of his father Samuel in 1769 and his brother Ebenezer in 1775. In 1780, he picked up a few small lots that had been owned by his great-uncle Ebenezer, who had died in 1777. At the young age of 22, John was the owner of a sizeable estate. (Donahue 1994: 26)

Nathan Meriam died in 1782, leaving the 1705 house to his two youngest sons Ephraim (age 22) and Amos (age 18), with provisions for his wife to continue living there. Amos sold his share to his brother six years later in 1888, but may have continued to live for a few years in the house with his family. At this point Ephraim still had no family of his own, so there was plenty of room in the house for Amos's family, but by 1792 Ephraim had married Mary Brooks and over the next nine years the two had five children: Mary (1793), Ephraim (1795), Nathan (1798), and twin sons Rufus and Marshall (1801). Ephraim and Amos's mother died in 1796, and somewhere around this time Amos moved to Princeton, leaving Ephraim and his growing family in the Meriam House. (Yocum 2004: 30)

In 1797, the town of Concord determined to build seven new school buildings, one of which was to be located in the east district at or near Meriam's Corner. The location of the Meriam's Corner schoolhouse was controversial, as some families within the district would have to travel a long distance to reach it. Among these families were those of Josiah Meriam and his son Joseph, who had by then moved northeast to Virginia Road. The location was finally settled in 1799 and the schoolhouse was built on Ephraim Meriam's land on Battle Road just east of the road junction. The one-room schoolhouse was 25 feet by 20 feet and had a porch on the south side. (Yocum 2004: 30)

Ephraim and John Meriam died within a year of each other, initiating another transition of the Meriam's Corner farms. Ephraim died without a will in 1803 at the age of 39, so an inventory was made of his property and belongings for the probate. The inventory included the house (extant Meriam House), barn, and 12-acre house lot, plus 93 acres of land scattered around Concord. Among these lands was a 3-acre lot "west of the Road nigh the house," which may have been the orchard lot at the base of the road to the Crane Fields. (Yocum 2004: 33)

Ephraim's sons were still children at the time of his death, so his lands went to his widow Mary, who remarried in 1806 to William Swan. That same year, William Swan was listed for the first time in the Concord tax books as owner of "Eph. Meriam's farm." William and Mary continued to raise Mary's five children from her marriage to Ephraim in the 1705 house until William's death in 1822. (Yocum 2004: 39)

John Meriam appears to have been a somewhat more ambitious businessman than his neighbor relatives. Although he was always described as a yeoman (farmer), by the time he died in 1806, he had acquired nearly 200 acres and a considerable amount of debt. It is likely that he had engaged in a wider variety of business and investment dealings, which caused his estate to be over-leveraged. After his death, his estate was administered by his son John Meriam Jr., who by the age of 26 was described as a "trader." In 1807, the land was auctioned off for debts to John Sprague of Bedford, but by 1810 it was back in John Jr.'s ownership. John Jr.'s younger brother Tarrant Putnam Meriam had been occupying the farm since 1807, and by 1811 Tarrant owned it outright. Tarrant was involved in a wide range of land dealings and mortgaged the property to several parties, including Harvard College. By the late 1820s, Tarrant Meriam was bankrupt, and the farm was divided and sold to creditors. Several parcels were acquired by his second cousin Ephraim Meriam Jr. In 1836, the main part of John Meriam's old farm was acquired by Jabez Gowing, and in 1868 it passed to Benjamin Clark. The Clark family ran a large dairy farm in the neighborhood into the 20th century. (Donahue 1994: 28)

After William Swan died in 1822, the 1705 Meriam House passed to Ephraim Meriam Jr. Although he lived at Meriam's Corner with his mother and brother for much of his life, Ephraim was not a farmer. At age 21 he went into business with his cousins Nathan and Cyrus Stow, running a small butchering and candle-making establishment, and by 1826 he was already styled a "gentleman." The firm expanded and relocated to Concord center, becoming a large slaughterhouse and tannery. Management of the farm after William Swan's death fell to Ephraim's younger brother Rufus Meriam. In 1834 Rufus purchased Ephraim's interest in the family farmstead to become the last Meriam to farm at Meriam's Corner. (Donahue 1994: 29; Yocum 2004: 45)

By about 1850, Concord began to update its aging schoolhouses. The first East Quarter Schoolhouse had stood on Meriam land for over fifty years, but now the town planned to purchase a lot from Rufus Meriam to hold the new school. The new school was built in 1853 on a half-acre lot just east of the first schoolhouse, which stood for at least a couple of years after that. In 1855, Henry David Thoreau surveyed Lexington Road at Meriam's Corner and recorded both the original and the new schoolhouse. Features shown on the plan include the

“Road to Concord,” the “Road to Bedford,” an “Elm” at the intersection of the roads, the south perimeter of “Rufus Meriam's Land,” the “Site of School House,” and the “Brook” to the west side of the schoolhouse. Both the location and size of the schoolhouse, with its front “porch” and side “shed,” strongly suggest that this is the old schoolhouse built in 1799. The approximate location of the new schoolhouse built in 1853 may be seen on the plan dated November 9, which has a penciled note in the far left margin that reads “School House.” (Yocum 2004: 46)

Rufus Meriam died a bachelor on March 3, 1870, just before his 69th birthday. He left an estate worth \$46,223.79 to his three surviving siblings: Mary Ball, his widowed sister; Marshall Meriam, his twin brother of New Hampshire; and Maria Hatch, his half-sister. A schedule of Rufus's personal and real estate holdings indicates that he had invested most of his wealth in railroads and banking institutions. None of the surviving Meriam family members appear to have been interested in maintaining the old family farm, and it was sold the following year, on April 29, 1871. What use was made of the house in the interim period, from March 1870 through April 1871, is not known. Most likely the house was either leased or left vacant. (Yocum 2004: 49)

Battle Road Area Development, 1870-1899:

Advances in agricultural technology, western migration, and the advent of the railroad brought additional changes to the agricultural landscape. The expanding number of colonial descendants found it increasingly difficult to farm the limited agricultural space in the rocky uplands bordering the Battle Road. New agricultural implements, designed for the rolling, fertile soils of the Midwest, were less efficient in the stone strewn New England soils. Many left to establish farms in the Midwest, and after the advent of the railroad, the flow of settlers traveling west was matched by train loads of inexpensive meat and grain traveling along the rail lines to eastern cities. Unable to compete with Midwest products, local farmers adapted production, specializing in perishable produce (milk, apples, cucumbers, etc.) transported by local rail to the growing urban markets. (CLR 2005: 55)

Farmers adapted structures and field configurations to support increasingly commercialized operations. Stone walls were often dismantled, for instance, to enlarge fields upon which mechanized farming equipment would be used. Local farmers also relied more heavily on wage laborers. Filling this need was a growing population of European immigrants arriving in Boston, of which the Irish were among the most prevalent in the mid-1800s. By the 1860s, immigrant families begin purchasing farms along the Battle Road, generally on marginal land or land abandoned by colonial descendants who had relocated to more fertile agricultural land in the Midwest. (CLR 2005: 55-58)

With the influx of inexpensive hay and grains from the Midwest, local farm acreage contracted geographically onto better soils, and worn out land reverted to woodland. A declining need for firewood also contributed to the rejuvenation of local forests as efficient Rumford fireplaces and Franklin stoves increasingly replaced colonial fireplaces, and coal replaced wood. By the late 1800s, woodlands covered approximately forty percent of the western half of the present-day Battle Road Unit. The eastern half remained open. (CLR 2005: 59-60)

By the late 1800s, the open, agricultural landscape of the Battle Road had changed. Farms were much more condensed, and four monuments commemorating the April 1775 battles had been placed along the Battle Road. These monuments and the battle sites and witness structures drew an increasing number of tourists to the area. By the 1870s, wealthy Bostonians had purchased agricultural fields and pastures within the towns bordering the Battle Road, converting those properties into large summer estates. By the late 1800s, middle-income Boston merchants and businessmen purchased agricultural land within the present-day Battle Road Unit for smaller, permanent residences. Men from these families commuted daily to and from Boston, primarily by train. The North Great Road was converted into a highway in the 1890s, and its sophisticated construction of compacted stone provided more efficient travel to and from Boston and allowed for pleasurable use. The highway would primarily serve farmers hauling produce to market, tourists in carriages and omnibuses, and bicyclists. (CLR 2005: 65, 69, 71)

Meriam's Corner Development, 1870-1899:

Thomas Burke bought the core fifty acres of the Meriam farm in 1871, including the 1705 Meriam House. For the next fifty years he ran a small dairy farm and sold milk and eggs in Concord. The majority of the farm was maintained as pasture for the cows, but he also grew hay and potatoes, which he likely rotated around the farm (Figure 2). (Donahue 1994: 33)

Seven memorial tablets were erected in various locations in Concord in 1885, in celebration of the 250th anniversary of the settlement of the town. One of these was located in the stone wall at the northeast corner of the road intersection at Meriam's Corner. The memorial is a large boulder, with its south-facing side recessed, smooth-planed, and chiseled with the following inscription:

MERIAM'S CORNER/THE BRITISH TROOPS/RETREATING FROM THE/OLD NORTH BRIDGE WERE HERE ATTACKED IN FLANK/BY THE MEN OF CONCORD/AND NEIGHBORING TOWNS AND DRIVEN UNDER A HOT FIRE/TO CHARLESTOWN

The house at Meriam's Corner became a popular subject for photographers after the installation of the memorial stone. The most common view shows the stone in the foreground and the Meriam House in the background (Figure 3). (Yocum 2004:58)

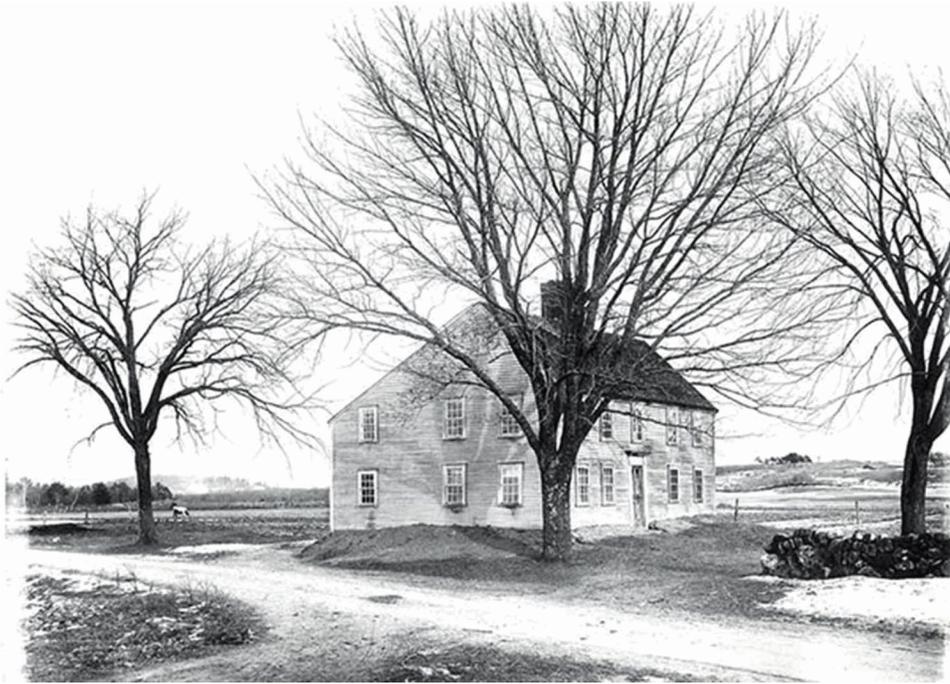


Figure 2. Meriam House in the late 19th century when it was owned by Thomas Burke. (MIMA Archives)



Figure 3. Meriam's Corner monument in the late 19th century, probably shortly after its installation. The Meriam House is in the background, surrounded by large trees. The stone wall continues almost to the house along Old Bedford Road. (MIMA Archives)

SUBURBANIZATION OF THE BATTLEGROUND LANDSCAPE, 1900 - 1958

Battle Road Area Development, 1900-1958:

Dramatic landscape changes occurred during the early- and mid-1900s. In 1880 almost 100% of landowners in the present-day Battle Road Unit were farmers, and only Irish and Canadian immigrants were listed in the census. By 1930, however, only 67% operated farms, and families came from Ireland, Canada, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Portugal, and numerous other countries. Twice as many non-agricultural households existed in the Battle Road area by that time, though Meriam's Corner still retained its overall agricultural character. (CLR 2005: 77-79)

The state highway (Route 2A), which included a significant portion of the 19th-century North Great Road and a large portion of the colonial Battle Road, remained the major east-west route connecting Concord to the Massachusetts Bay. The by-passed section of road around Fiske Hill was significantly altered by 1930, and additional roads were also constructed by 1940. The highway and new roads supported ever increasing tourism. (CLR 2005: 79-82)

As modern improvements replaced historic homes and obstructed historic sites, a preservation movement emerged. In 1924, Massachusetts Governor Channing H. Cox established a nine-person commission to recommend a commemorative program for the 150th Anniversary of the American Revolution. In consultation with Landscape Architect Arthur Shurcliff (known then as Arthur Shurtleff), commission members examined sites along the Battle Road for a proposed Memorial Highway. In January 1925, Shurcliff submitted a report to the commission in which he recommended preserving nearly two miles of the original Battle Road, prominently including the two large bends in the road (Hartwell and Nelson areas) bypassed in the early 1800s. He also recommended acquisition of at least 400 feet on each side of the road to preserve its rural character. The state did not act upon Shurcliff's recommendations. (CLR 2005: 83-84)

In 1941, just prior to America's entry into World War II, construction of the Laurence G. Hanscom Airfield began north of the Hartwell Tavern. The airport soon served as a training ground for Army Air Force squadrons during the war, and became a research center for military electronics after the war. While farming continued, the growing workforce at the Hanscom Airfield and a regional need for suburban housing accelerated the transformation of Battle Road agricultural fields into residential lots with groomed lawns, ornamental plantings, and expanding woodlands. New commercial businesses came with parking lots, sidewalks, signs, and gas pumps. In the early 1950s, the federal government completed construction of Interstate 128, the first limited access highway in Massachusetts. Easy access from the interstate to Route 2A promoted traffic congestion along the highway and residential development within Battle Road area. (CLR 2005: 89-95)

In 1955 the federal government established the Boston National Historic Sites Commission (BNHSC) for the purpose of exploring how to preserve the most important colonial properties in and around Boston. The BNHSC identified the entire Battle Road from Boston to Concord as significant. However, Route 128, which severed the Battle Road just east of Fiske Hill, was seen as 'the dividing line between the retrievable and irretrievable past,' and the commission only considered land west of I-128 as worthy of preservation. (BNHSC as cited in CLR 2005: 95)

In 1956, the BNHSC consulted with Arthur Shurcliff regarding their study. In a letter to the BNHSC, Shurcliff recommended preserving a portion of the road from 'Fiske Hill toward Concord,' and he made specific recommendations for features to remove, preserve, and construct. In January 1957 a conflict arose between the BNHSC and U.S. Air Force, as the Air Force was constructing a large military housing project near the Josiah Nelson farmstead. The BNHSC requested preservation of an eight-acre parcel including the Nelson home and a witness boulder. In May 1957, the Air Force reduced the housing project size, and the Under-Secretary of the Department of the Interior (DOI) requested that the parcel be transferred to the DOI. In 1958, the BNHSC completed an interim report for submission to Congress the following year. The report recommended establishment of a national historical park that would include the eight-acre parcel and four miles of the Battle Road from Meriam's Corner in Concord to Route 128 in Lexington. The park would be known as "Minute Man," and the National Park Service gained possession of the eight-acre parcel on December 8, 1958. (Shurcliff to BNHSC as cited in CLR 2005: 96-100)

Meriam's Corner Development, 1900-1958:

Thomas and Rose Burke raised their family and lived out their lives on the old Meriam farm. Their eldest son, John H., died in 1901 in Boston at the age of 32. Annie W., who never married, taught in the public schools and lived at home for most of her life. James E. renovated and occupied the abandoned schoolhouse on the property in 1903, but lived there for only a short time (Figure 4).

In 1904 Thomas Burke sold three acres of land on the west side of Old Bedford Road to his son Thomas J. Burke, who built a new house on the lot. The house had not yet been built (or at least completed) by the time of the tax valuation of May 1, 1903, in which no listing appears for Thomas J. Burke. Construction was certainly underway, however, by April 1, 1904, when the senior Burkes conveyed the land "with buildings" to their son. The house appears to have been completed by May 1, 1904, when the tax assessment for that year listed Thomas J. Burke as having a house valued at \$1,500, on a three-acre lot valued at \$300. A substantial portion of the stone wall along the east side of Old Bedford Road from the Meriam's Corner monument north to the Meriam House was removed and used in the foundation of the new Burke House (Figure 5). (Yocum 2004: 60)

Thomas J. and Ellen Burke raised their five children there: Katherine A. (born 1905), John H. (1907), Mary Alice (1909), Thomas J., Jr. (1914), and Gerard J. (1916). The style of the two-and-a-half-story house is Dutch Colonial, having a gambrel roof, shed dormers, and a large front porch. The shingle siding was originally stained green. When Thomas and Rose died in 1921-Thomas on March 10 at the age of 80, and Rose on April 15 at the age of 86-the farm and 1705 house were purchased by their daughter-in-law Ellen Burke. Between 1921 and 1951 the old Meriam house was rented to a succession of tenants. The Burke family continued to farm some of the old Meriam farm into the 1960s. (Yocum 2004: 57-60)

In 1926, Antonio and Francesca Palumbo, immigrants from Sicily, purchased the Second East Quarter Schoolhouse and seventeen acres on the south side of Lexington Road. Palumbo

farmed the land with his sons Frank and Joe, growing celery, carrots, and other market vegetables. They improved the drainage of the naturally wet land by cleaning and enlarging existing ditches. After Antonio's death in 1933, Joe and Frank continued to farm the land and live in the former schoolhouse. (Interview with Joe Palumbo: Renee Garrelick Oral History Program Collection, Concord Free Public Library)

In 1928, Ellen Burke moved a farm stand that stood in front of the Second East Quarter Schoolhouse to their property to the east and opened a clam bake stand. By 1934 the clam stand was replaced by a new building operated as an ice cream parlor and lunch counter by James McManus, a local restaurant entrepreneur. McManus ran the ice cream parlor for more than a decade before selling to Ross Ransom in 1946, who enlarged or replaced McManus's building with a new bar and restaurant called the Willow Pond Kitchen (Figure 6). (Yocum 2004: 552)

By the 1930s, the land in and around Meriam's Corner was primarily open and devoted to agriculture. The shift from subsistence to market farming led to a reduction in the amount of land reserved for pasture, meadow, and woodlots, typical uses in a subsistence family farmstead. In their place was cultivated fields growing crops that could be easily transported and sold in local markets.

In 1951, Ellen Burke sold the Meriam House and 1-3/4 acres to James and Margaret Ingraham. The Ingrahams shared an interest in antique furniture, and for a few years after they purchased the Meriam House, they sold antiques from out of their house. They also took great interest in the history of the house itself, and undertook a number of projects to rehabilitate the building. Some of the alterations, such as kitchen improvements, modernized the house for comfort and convenience. Some, however, were attempts to reverse modifications made during the Burke ownership, including the removal of plaster walls and ceiling to expose beams, brickwork, and fireplaces. Other alterations were non-historic additions that were intended to create an antique look, including the installation of reclaimed wide-plank pine paneling and non-historic panel doors.

The Ingrahams were not farmers, but were avid gardeners, and during their ownership the Meriam House and its surroundings acquired a decidedly residential character. They planted ornamental vegetation around the house, including juniper shrubs, ivy, and a line of evergreens along the north side of the house (Figure 7). Three new structures were added to the yard behind the house in the 1950s and 1960s. These included a garden house, possibly ordered from a catalog in 1956, a tool house moved to the east side of the house in 1960, and a small cottage listed as a dwelling in the tax records in 1969.



Figure 4. Meriam's Corner in the early 20th century. The Second East Quarter Schoolhouse is in the background. (MIMA Archives)



Figure 5. An early 20th century postcard showing Meriam's Corner, the Meriam House, and the newly constructed Burke House. The stone wall between the monument and Meriam House has been removed. (MIMA Archives)



Figure 6. Photo from the 1960s showing the Willow Pond Kitchen, with the Second East Quarter Schoolhouse in the background. The Willow Pond Kitchen was removed in 1998. (Concord Public Library)



Figure 7. An undated photo of the Meriam House during the Ingraham ownership, probably taken in the 1970s or 1980s, showing the residential character of the vegetation. (MIMA Archives)

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE PERIOD, 1959 - PRESENT

Battle Road Unit and Meriam's Corner Development, 1959-present:

On January 21, 1959, the BNHSC submitted the Interim Report to Congress. The federal government officially designated the eight-acre Nelson home parcel as a national historic site on April 14, 1959, and established Minute Man National Historical Park on September 21, 1959 through Public Law 86-321. In addition to the Nelson parcel, the enabling legislation encompassed lands along the Battle Road, including Meriam's Corner, and lands around the North Bridge. (CLR 2005: 106)

In the early to mid-1960s, a number of buildings and landscapes were researched and documented to give park staff a basic understanding of the historic properties and to serve as a foundation for preparation of the park's first master plan. Specific goals included establishment of 1775 land ownership and the identification and documentation of historic houses, house sites, and landscape features. The master plan was completed in 1965 and adopted in 1966. The plan specified rehabilitation of the 1775 historic scene, including, stabilization, limited restoration, and selected reconstruction of period structures and related outbuildings, along with other historic features – stone walls, fences, farm paths, and public ways where appropriate (Figures 8 and 9). (CLR 2005: 107; Master Plan 1965)

In 1968, the National Park Service Office of Resource Planning prepared a special study that identified buildings and structures within the park boundary to be retained, removed, or demolished. The report, like the 1965 Master Plan, also recommended that vehicular traffic be eliminated from the Battle Road in the Hartwell area and Fiske Hill, making way for pedestrian traffic only. The blacktopped surface would be removed from these areas. Finally, the study discussed establishment of proposed historic motor trails within the park, which depended on the relocation of Route 2. The state transportation secretary would decline the hotly contested relocation in 1977. (CLR 2005: 108-109)

The park's first General Management Plan (GMP) was completed in 1989 and approved July 10, 1990. Besides addressing traffic problems, the GMP directed a 'selective restoration of the 18th-century environment [to] provide a flavor of the physical conditions on April 19, 1775 without requiring detailed replication of the entire landscape.' The GMP opposed a proposition to widen Route 2A and supported closing to traffic and restoring sections of the Battle Road to their 18th-century appearance. (CLR 2005: 110; Administrative History 2010: 255, 264)

Implementation of the GMP goals began in the early 1990s and continues today. In 1992, the park's boundaries were expanded and new land acquired. Construction of the Battle Road Trail began in 1995. The foot trail, designed by Carol R. Johnson Associates, includes segments of the historic Battle Road closed to automobile traffic. Additional landscape development included orchard and field restoration, removal of non-historic buildings and structures, and construction of visitor parking lots along Route 2A. (CLR 2005: 112; Battle Road Cultural Landscapes Inventory 2007: 84)

Meriam's Corner Development, 1959-Present:

After the park was authorized in 1959 it began to acquire property within its legislated boundaries, including the houses and land in Meriam's Corner. These were obtained either through purchase or through condemnation, with many of the inhabitants receiving life tenancy. The Second East Quarter School House and the Palumbo's land on the south side of Lexington Road was purchased in 1966 for a total of \$88,000. Frank Palumbo accepted a lifetime tenancy and lived in the house until his death in the 1990s. Frank's brother Joe continues to live in the house today. (Interviews with Frank and Joe Palumbo by Renee Garrelick, Concord Oral History Program)

Ellen Burke died in 1963, leaving the house and land to her children, two of whom, Thomas Jr. and Katharine, still lived in the house. Thomas continued to farm the Burke land until his death in the mid or late 1960s, at which time the remaining children deeded the house to Katharine. Katharine sold to the National Park Service in 1974, retaining a life tenancy until her death in 1989. (Interview with Gerard J. Burke by Renee Garrelick, Concord Oral History Program)

The National Park Service acquired the Meriam House and land through condemnation in 1987. The aging Ingrahams retained a life estate, but Margaret died the following year. James Ingraham quickly remarried and moved from the house in 1990, leaving the house vacant for a year and a half. When he died at the end of 1991, the full responsibility of the Meriam House became the park's (Figure 10).

By the time the park assumed management of the house, maintenance had been deferred for a number of years and the house and grounds were in poor condition. The park had no immediate plans to utilize the house, so it was mothballed. Water was drained from all the plumbing fixtures and the water meter was removed from the cellar. Ventilation and other alterations provided protection for the house during winters with no heat, and white curtains hung in the windows screened the vacant appearance of the house.

Recently, the park undertook a major restoration effort on the Meriam House. Work included new siding of quarter-sawn clapboard, restoration of windows and window frames, and interior repairs and restorations to the wainscoting, floors, and woodwork. Non-historic alterations included the installation of heating, security and smoke alarms, and a fire-suppression sprinkler system. A new comfort station was incorporated into the rear of the garage. Historic fabric was used when possible, supplemented by period material (such as recycled period glass for windows) and replica materials (such as replica cut nails). Today the house is used for interpretive purposes and is open to the public periodically for guided tours.



Figure 8. An undated photo showing the condition of the Meriam House and yard in the late 20th century. Some of the outbuildings that have since been removed are visible in the background. (MIMA Archives)



Figure 9. An undated photo showing the condition of the Meriam House and yard, as well as Old Bedford Road, in the late 20th century. The stone wall has not yet been restored. (MIMA Archives)



Figure 10. The Meriam House after the park assumed management but before restoration, ca. 1990s. (MIMA Archives)

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

As part of the Battle Road cultural landscape, the Meriam's Corner component landscape is significant for its association with the events of April 19, 1775 and the start of the Revolutionary War, for the commemoration of those events; for its association with colonial and American agriculture from 1635 through the early 20th century, and for the architectural characteristics of its 18th and 19th century buildings. Through the landscape's long period of significance, covering 324 years from 1635 to 1959, it has changed considerably, from the first colonial farms and woodlands to a suburban thoroughfare with residential houses. The changes, however, have generally been gradual, with extended periods of continuity and stasis. Long periods of ownership of houses and farmland over multiple generations, stable agricultural land use, and limited resources available for drastic changes have ensured that the landscape evolved slowly to meet modern needs while retaining its rural, agricultural character. Recent efforts by the park have reversed much of the non-historic changes to the landscape.

The key organizing feature of Meriam's Corner is the eponymous junction of Lexington Road and Old Bedford Road. These roads retain the same alignment as the historic roads present since before the time of the battle. Lexington Road, also known as Battle Road, was the route the British Soldiers took as they advanced and then retreated between Concord and Boston, and was the site of some of the fighting between them and the colonial militias. While the surface and width of the roads have changed since the historic period, the alignment and spatial layout of the intersection, including the Y-shaped junction and the traffic island, have not changed since at least the late 19th century.

Meriam's Corner landscape retains a number of historic buildings and other resources, dating as far back as 1705. Some of these features were standing at the time of the 1775 battle, while others reflect the ongoing agricultural uses of the land. Key among these is the Meriam House, built in 1705 and present in 1775. The Meriam House was owned by only three families before being acquired by the National Park Service, including the Meriam family, which retained ownership for nearly 170 years. Other historic houses include the 1836 Gowing-Clark House, the 1904 Burke House, and the Second East Quarter Schoolhouse, built in 1853 and converted to a residential house in 1904. Buildings constructed for utilitarian function include the Burke Garage, constructed around 1941 and the Palumbo Farm Metal Shed and Enclosed Garage, constructed in the 1950s.

Small-scale features include a stone culvert through which Mill Brook crosses under Lexington Road which dates at least to the 19th century and perhaps even earlier. The culvert marks the approximate location of the 1775 bridge over which the British soldiers had to pass when they were engaged by the colonists. A system of dry-stacked stone walls still demark roadsides, fields, and property lines throughout the area. The existing walls comprise a combination of historic and reconstructed sections. The stone wall at the corner of Lexington Road contains the stone monument erected in 1885 to commemorate the fighting at Meriam's Corner. Amongst these features are the remnants and traces of former features: foundations, walls, and house sites that bear record of the landscape as it used to be.

Meriam's Corner

Minute Man National Historical Park

These buildings and structures and small-scale features are set within contributing landscape patterns of natural systems and features, spatial organization, land use, topography, vegetation, circulation, views and vistas, constructed water features, and archeological resources, that together convey the significance of the landscape.

INTEGRITY

Location:

Meriam's Corner is the location of some of the fighting that took place on April 19, 1775. The colonial militias and British troops exchanged fire as the British crossed a bridge over Mill Brook just east of the Meriam's Corner road junction. It is believed that the militias took cover behind a barn and stone walls located on the north side of Nathan Meriam's house. While the barn is no longer extant, the house remains, as does a culvert over Mill Brook that was either present as part of the bridge, or was built in the same location as the bridge that the British crossed. The spatial relationships of the brook crossing, the road junction, and the Meriam House are intact, and are vital to the understanding of the battle's important events.

The location of the contributing features within Meriam's Corner and their spatial relationships to the surrounding roads, fields, houses, and natural terrain not only convey the significance of the battle events, but also convey the character, arrangement, and composition of a rural, agricultural landscape as it evolved from colonial settlement period, through subsistence farming of the 18th and 19th centuries, to the market farming of the early 20th century.

Design:

As a rural, vernacular landscape, Meriam's Corner was not the product of conscious design or a coordinated plan. The historic homes were constructed by their owners or by local tradesmen in the vernacular style common to their area and time. Roads followed the easiest lines between destinations, accommodating for terrain. Property lines followed natural features, changes in vegetation or soil moisture, or existing roads, and lots were distributed in smaller portions to provide land to each farmer across a variety of farm uses, such as tillage, pasture, meadow, and woodlot. The result was an irregular arrangement of lots of varying size and shape, houses that were not aligned to roads or property lines, and roads that curved gently through the landscape.

The elements of design, both in the architecture of the vernacular buildings and the patterns of spatial relationships, remain evident today in the landscape of Meriam's Corner. The main roads still follow their historic alignment, and the irregular arrangement of the houses, farm structures, and barn foundations still attest to the organic processes of landscape development. Historic property lines and field delineation are evident in current vegetation patterns, stone walls, and drainage ditches. While these historic patterns do not result from a predetermined plan, they do reveal the utilitarian evolution and the expression of cultural traditions that characterized the development of the landscape. Furthermore, the design characteristics that are evident in Meriam's Corner contrast noticeably from the small lots and regular arrangement of areas that were developed later in accordance with town planning.

Setting:

The setting around Meriam's Corner has changed considerably since the historic period. The area that was once dominated by open agricultural land is today characterized by suburban residential development. Much of the agricultural land has either reverted to forest or has been converted to residential subdivisions. Highways, including Route 2, Route 2A, and Route 62 carry large amounts of traffic around and through the area, serving Boston and its metropolitan area. Hanscom Air Force Base/Hanscom Field, a joint-use military base/civil airport adjoining the north boundary of the Battle Road unit, contributes noise, congestion, and development pressures to the area.

Despite these changes, Meriam's Corner and the rest of the Battle Road unit retain a predominantly rural and agricultural character. Many of the fields have either been retained or restored through recent clearing, and much of the non-historic development within the park boundary has been reversed. This character within the park, and the relatively low-density development immediately around the park, mitigate the negative impacts of the landscape's setting.

Materials:

Materials used in the construction and development of buildings and other features in Meriam's Corner were generally not meant to last for long periods. Houses and other structures were predominantly constructed of wood, which deteriorated over time. Despite regular maintenance, most of the buildings eventually succumbed to time and were removed. Out of necessity, materials that were still serviceable were recycled into new structures. Buildings that did survive through the generations were modified and repaired periodically. As a result, the extant historic buildings are composed of a combination of materials added at various times throughout the period of significance, as well as non-historic materials from restoration work and repairs done by the park. Despite this, all extant structures contain a significant amount of original material that dates to their initial construction.

The historic buildings notwithstanding, the materials that compose the landscape features are largely non-historic. Exceptions include the stone culvert over Mill Brook, which may date as far back as the 18th century. The site's stone walls contain historic material, but have been repaired and restored since the historic period, and aside from the stone Meriam's Corner monument, it is unknown which portions of the walls might be original. Anecdotal evidence indicates that stones from the wall at the Meriam House were removed and used in the foundation of the Burke House in 1904.

Much of the vegetation present today was present at the end of the period of significance in 1959, however no extant vegetation has been identified as being present at the time of the battle, and none of the specimen vegetation visually prominent in the landscape during the ensuing periods remains.

Workmanship:

Traditional workmanship remains evident in the extant historic structures, including the Meriam House, Gowing-Clark House, Burke House, and Second East Quarter Schoolhouse, with each house displaying workmanship and construction techniques characteristic of its period of construction. Historic workmanship is also evident in the stonework of the Mill Brook culvert and in the vernacular

Meriam's Corner

Minute Man National Historical Park

utilitarian structures of Palumbo Farm. Although many portions of the stone walls have been restored or reconstructed since the historic period, the park employed traditional dry-laid techniques as would have been originally used.

Feeling:

Despite its surrounding suburban context, Meriam's Corner retains its rural, agricultural character. The historic buildings, stone walls, open fields, and lack of modern development create a distinct feeling local agricultural life as it was experienced in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The site's historic feeling is diminished somewhat by the traffic on Lexington Road and by surrounding suburban development, but these are mitigated somewhat by vegetation that visually blocks many of the nearby houses.

Association:

Meriam's Corner is strongly linked to the events of April 19, 1775. The presence of the Meriam House, the Meriam's Corner road junction, and the stone culvert marking the location of the Mill Brook crossing create a direct link to the events of the battle and help visitors understand the site's significance. Furthermore, the houses and fields where the Meriam family and other residents worked and lived represent a direct record of domestic and agricultural life in Concord as it developed from an early colonial settlement to a busy Boston suburb.

Landscape Characteristic:

This section presents an analysis of landscape characteristics and their associated features and corresponding List of Classified Structures names and numbers, if applicable. It also includes an evaluation of whether the feature contributes to the property's National Register eligibility for the historic period (1635-1959), contributes to the property's historic character, or if it is noncontributing, undetermined, or managed as a cultural resource.

Natural Systems and Features

Historic and Existing Conditions:

Concord was settled on a landscape shaped by the advance and retreat of glaciers, the final retreat of which was between 15,000 and 8,000 years ago. The glaciers moved and scraped the earth beneath them, strewing the landscape with large chunks of bedrock known as glacial erratics. The westernmost portion of the Battle Road Unit, including Meriam's Corner, is located on the bed of what was a large glacial lake called Glacial Lake Concord, which deposited fine sediments across the flat lake bed. As the glaciers melted the lake drained, leaving broad plains of fertile soil.

When the first settlers arrived, the area of Concord was predominantly covered in pine and oak forests, with areas of wet meadows along the rivers and brooks. The forests were steadily cleared for farmland, and by the late 18th century, an estimated 80-90% of New England's forests were cleared. The open, agricultural character of the land around Meriam's Corner was stable until the early 20th century, when farming patterns began to change and the area became more suburban. Unused farmland reverted to forest, and residential lots featured

lawns and ornamental vegetation. Since the creation of the park, however, efforts to enhance the historic character included clearing trees and return the area to meadow and fields. Although only a portion of the land within the park today is actively farmed, many areas are maintained as meadow to ensure an open character.

Much of the farm land of Meriam's Corner was established on the alluvial plains of Elm and Mill Brooks. The flat topography caused the brooks to meander, braid, and spread out in wetlands that covered considerable portions of the site. Wet meadows were generally included in the collection of lands granted as part of the towns "divisions," which apportioned farmland to early settlers. The wet meadows were drained with ditches and the brooks were straightened so that hay could be grown and harvested along their banks. The shift to market farming in the 19th and 20th centuries obviated the need to grow hay in these marginal lands, and they reverted to wetlands or forest. Today, the wetlands are managed for ecological objectives, but the system of ditches and their relationship to the field patterns are evident.

The natural topography of Meriam's Corner played an essential part in its historic settlement and land-use patterns as well as in the events of the battle. As retreating British Troops marched eastward along Battle Road after the skirmish at the North Bridge, flankers were deployed to the ridge that followed the road on the north side. These flankers provided protection and cover for the body of the British forces. Where the ridge ended the British column following the broad road had to halt while the flankers were recalled, and then dress their lines to cross the narrow bridge over the brook at Meriam's Corner. The narrow formation made the British vulnerable to attack from the colonists that had arrived at the road junction about that time.

Today, the overall topography, hydrology, and vegetation continue to convey the relationships that impacted historic events, settlement patterns, land use, and development of the site.

Spatial Organization

Historic Condition:

The primary organizing features of the Meriam's Corner landscape were the roads, the farm fields, and the parcel lines. Battle Road, historically called Bay Road, County Road, or simply the road to Boston, followed a gently curving path generally from west to east. At Meriam's Corner, Battle Road intersected with Old Bedford Road, first called the road to Billerica and then Bedford Road, which split from the main way and led north. The road junction was Y-shaped with the inner, acute angle on the east side. It was along both sides of these roads around this junction that the Meriam family established their farms.

The farm parcels were generally irregular-shaped polygons ranging in size from small house lots of a couple of acres or less to larger parcels of ten to twenty acres. The parcels were apportioned to provide a variety of land use, including tillage, grazing, hay production, and woodlots, based on the conditions of soil, moisture, and topography. Individual farmers typically owned several discontinuous parcels in the area.

House lots were typically smaller than the farm parcels and contained a dwelling house, barn,

sheds and outbuildings, kitchen gardens, and yards. The arrangement of the structures was informal, and the houses, although generally very close to the roads, were often not square to the road edge. The Meriam family houses were clustered around the road junction, with a house built around 1663 near the junction between the arms of the Y, a house built in 1705 just north of that on Old Bedford Road, and a house built around 1691 on the west side of Old Bedford Road across from the other two. Other houses were located on the north side of Battle Road west of Meriam's Corner, including homes built by Daniel Taylor and Jacob Taylor. Other buildings constructed throughout the historic period, including the two schoolhouses and the Burke House, were similarly arranged along the roads.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

Despite suburbanization of the area in the 20th century, Meriam's Corner largely retained its open, agricultural character. Several historic structures remain in their original locations today, including the Meriam House, Burke House and Garage, Gowing-Clark House, Second East Quarter Schoolhouse, and several structures associated with the Palumbo Farm. The buildings retain their historic spatial relationship to the road and to the agricultural fields around them, although many of the associated barns and outbuildings do not remain, altering the arrangement of the farm clusters. Delineating structures, such as stone walls and ditches, remain in their historic locations, revealing the historic layout of fields and property lines. New houses that were built on Manuel Drive in the 1940s to 1960s reflect the suburban, residential organization of rectangular lots with the houses near the center, with front and back yards and driveways.

The greatest change in spatial organization of Meriam's Corner is the increase of trees, hedgerows, and wooded lots that reduce the open character of the landscape. Conspicuously, the lot to the east of the Meriam House, which once held the First East Quarter Schoolhouse, has filled in with trees. The west side of Old Bedford Road, south of the Burke House, is also heavily wooded. Trees enclose the Burke House, Second East Quarter Schoolhouse, and the parking lot to its east where the Willow Pond Kitchen once stood. Numerous trees, particularly along the north and northeast side of the Meriam House and along the south side of Battle Road at the road junction, have been removed in recent years, increasing the open character.

Overall, the spatial organization of the road, buildings, fields, and small-scale features continue to convey the significance of the landscape and contribute to the historic character of Meriam's Corner.

Land Use

Historic Condition:

Agriculture was the primary land use at Meriam's Corner throughout the historic period. The various fields were used for tillage, pasture, orchards, meadows, or woodlots according to their topography, soil, moisture, and location. Structures were either dwellings or supported farm operations directly. For much of its history, Meriam's Corner supported primarily subsistence farming, with each farm producing a broad array of products to support a family with less emphasis on producing a marketable surplus. In the 19th and 20th centuries, farm production shifted increasingly toward market farming, with farms producing a more limited number of products that were destined for local markets, such as beets, scallions, celery, sweet chard, and

carrots. As the 20th century progressed, agriculture declined and residential lots began to replace farm fields. At Meriam's Corner, however, families like the Burkes and the Palumbos continued to farm their lands through the end of the historic period.

In addition to agriculture, historic land uses include residential use, educational use of the First and Second East Quarter Schoolhouses, and retail food and beverage service. By virtue of its connection to the military events of April 19, 1775, the area supported recreational and commemoration uses well before the creation of the park in 1959.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

Agriculture has continued within Meriam's Corner since the park's creation in 1959, although at a considerably diminished scale. Today, fields to the north of the Meriam House, to the northwest of the Burke House, and on the south side of Battle Road are under cultivation. Horses are also kept on the Palumbo Farm land. Much of what had been farm fields is now forested or has reverted to unusable wetland.

The primary land uses today are recreation, education, and interpretation related to Minute Man National Historical Park. The Meriam House is open periodically for tours, while the Battle Road Trail provides opportunity for passive recreation and sight-seeing. Several structures, including the Burke house, Gowing-Clark house, and the Second East Quarter Schoolhouse, are private residences operated under leases with the National Park Service. The Burke and Gowing-Clark houses do not currently have lessees and are vacant.

Topography

Historic Condition:

Throughout the history of Meriam's Corner, people have manipulated the topography to accommodate agricultural, domestic, and circulation needs. The earliest houses and barns were constructed on fieldstone foundations with excavated basements, and small variations in topography were leveled for outbuildings, yards, gardens, paths, and cart lanes. Lands were also cleared and leveled for crop cultivation, and drainage ditches were dug to channel the water and dry the land. Farm lanes were typically raised above the level of the fields (Figure 11).

Early road construction generally followed the terrain of the land, avoiding steep inclines and wet areas. Where these were unavoidable, the topography was cut or filled to provide a relatively level travel lane. In 1802, a major project to improve Battle Road included raising the portion of the road east of the Meriam's Corner junction as it passed through the wet areas around Mill Brook. As the road was subsequently improved and updated through the years, the embankment of the road was raised, widened, and reinforced to meet travel needs (Figure 12).

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

Much of the topographic modifications made in Meriam's Corner are still visible today. The flat fields cut with drainage ditches and farm lanes attest to the centuries of modifications and utilization of the land. Level pads, cut basements, and other modifications to accommodate houses, barns, and other structures are still visible. The raised road bed of Lexington Road

illustrates the effort needed to construct a passable road through the wet land.

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 11. The farm lane to the Palumbo Farm shows the typical raised road bed of the area's farm lanes, 2014. (OCLP)



Figure 12. Embankment of Lexington Road near the Meriam House, 2014. The topography of the road bed has been modified since the period of significance, but it is built upon the historic raised road bed that carried the road through wet areas. (OCLP).

Vegetation

Historic Condition:

Vegetation at Meriam's Corner throughout the historic period was composed primarily of agricultural crops, pasture grasses, and natural forest and wetland species. The natural vegetation prior to colonial settlement was typical of New England forests, dominated by oaks, maples, and other hardwoods, along with white pine. By 1775, with the exception of isolated woodlots retained for farm use, the landscape had been largely cleared for agricultural use and orchard planting. At this time, Meriam's Corner contained woodland, meadow, tilled fields, and pasture. Cider orchards were also maintained in the early history of the Battle Road, with at least one located in the vicinity of the base of the hill just west of the Meriam House. Cider orchards were gradually replaced by fancy fruit orchards, as cider drinking became less popular in the early 1800s. The configuration and types of agricultural uses and crops also changed over the years in response to changing markets, but the landscape remained primarily open into the mid- to late-1800s. By the turn of the 20th century, the landscape began to reforest as farmers abandoned fields and suburban households were built throughout the Battle Road Unit.

Photographs give a clearer picture of the vegetation, particularly immediately around the Meriam House in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Prominent in the photographs are four large deciduous trees around the house. By the early 20th century, these trees and others in the area, which likely included elms, oaks, maples, and ash planted in the 19th century for

ornamental or shade reasons, were mature and quite large. The trees, concentrated around the Meriam House and the road junction, included a large elm within the traffic island at the junction. Collectively, these large trees created a much more enclosed character that was notably different from the open, agricultural character that was present throughout the preceding periods. Despite the increase in trees, much of the land remained in some form of agricultural use, including several fields north and east of the road junction.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

As agricultural use continued to decline in the latter half of the 20th century, the vegetation shifted toward a suburban residential character. The open space of agricultural fields decreased and wooded areas increased. Reforested areas include land west of Old Bedford Road, area directly south of the Meriam's Corner road junction, and the area between the Meriam House and the Second East Quarter Schoolhouse (Figure 13). Not all of the land within Meriam's Corner reverted to forest, however, as several fields remained either in active cultivation or as open uncultivated fields.

Vegetation around the houses in the district shifted increasingly toward a residential character. The Ingraham family, who moved into the Meriam House in 1951, planted evergreen trees, shrubs, ivies, and flowering plants. They planted a tall hedgerow along the north side of the house and ornamental trees, including dogwood, magnolia, and crabapple trees, around the house. By the end of the 20th century, the vegetation planted by the Ingrahams was mature and quite large.

In recent years, the park has worked to reduce the non-historic vegetation and return the area to a more open character. The hedgerow on the north side of the Meriam House, as well as other ornamental vegetation around the house, was removed. The large shade trees around the house, visible in 19th century photographs, were removed as they declined and died, but their stumps remain visible. The park has also cleared land that had become reforested, focusing efforts on areas along roads and within important sightlines. Fields are currently maintained either as cultivated fields, through partnerships with local farms, or with periodic mowing (Figures 14 and 15).

Today, there is no individually contributing vegetation within Meriam's Corner. However, the overall pattern of open fields, agricultural crops, and large solitary trees that line the roads and edges of fields contributes to the rural and agricultural character and helps convey the landscape's significance.

Character-defining Features:

- Feature: System of Fields (portions)
- Feature Identification Number: 173928
- Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
- Feature: Ornamental Vegetation

Feature Identification Number: 173926
Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing – compatible
Feature: Vegetable Crops
Feature Identification Number: 173924
Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing – compatible
Feature: Street Trees
Feature Identification Number: 173922
Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing – compatible

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 13. Wooded area near the Gowing-Clark House, 2014. Many of the wooded areas contain naturalized ornamental vegetation such as English ivy (Hedera helix). (OCLP)



Figure 14. Open field north of the Meriam House, 2014. Many of the fields are maintained in meadow species through periodic mowing. (OCLP)



Figure 15. Vegetables growing in a field north of the Meriam House, 2014. Portions of the area's fields are farmed through agreements with local farms. (OCLP)

Circulation

Historic Condition:

As the first colonial settlements moved inland from the coast, roads were established to move people and resources between them. The roads typically followed more-or-less direct routes with accommodations for topography, resulting in long, gently curving alignments that connected town to town. A road would have been established from Concord to Boston as early as Concord's first settlement in 1635. By 1636, a broad road of four rods (66 feet) extended along the south side of the east-west ridge line bisecting the First Division house lots. It is likely that even at that early date, this is the road that continued on to Cambridge and Boston, becoming what was later known as the Bay Road, Country Road, or Road from Concord to Boston.

Old Bedford Road was established in the mid-17th century after the establishment of Billerica. Known then as the Road to Billerica, it would not be named Bedford Road until after Bedford's incorporation in 1729. Old Bedford Road branched off of the Bay Road at the end of the ridgeline and traveled north. The junction of these two roads became Meriam's Corner. Throughout the historic period, the two roads and their junction were the primary circulation features into and through Meriam's Corner. The road was wide, ranging from four to ten rods (66 to 165 feet) to accommodate the movement of livestock and to allow the road to shift as portions of it degraded due to ruts, mud, or other issues. By the mid-18th century, the road right-of-way had been narrowed to a uniform four rods (66 feet).

During the mid- to late-1890s, the Massachusetts Highway Commission laid out the North Great Road from Meriam's Corner eastward through Lincoln. While the establishment of the highway resulted in some alignment changes, particularly in the areas of the Hartwell Tavern and Nelson Farms, the alignment of the road at Meriam's Corner did not change. The right-of-way was standardized to 50 feet with a 15-foot-wide road bed with broken-stone surface and 3-foot gravel shoulders. The grade of the road was also improved, maintaining less than 5% grade and raising the roadbed above the level of wet areas. During the first half of the 20th century the roads were paved and widened to accommodate two-lane automobile traffic.

In addition to the two roads that make up Meriam's Corner, circulation was accommodated by small or transient lanes, paths, and trails. Secondary roads included a lane that lead west from Old Bedford Road up to what were called the Crane Fields. The locations of other lanes and paths are unknown.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

Battle Road, today called Lexington Road, and Old Bedford Road continue to provide the primary circulation through Meriam's Corner. Today the roads are about 32 feet wide and accommodate two-lane, two-way traffic. Traffic volumes, especially on Lexington Road, are moderately high and steady. The road junction of Lexington Road and Old Bedford Road had retained its overall configuration from the historic period, including the gentle Y-shaped intersection and the traffic island. Today the island is smaller than it was historically, and asphalt pavement covers most of the intersection. The traffic island contains a telephone pole, stop signs, and a fire hydrant (Figure 16).

In the 1990s and into the new millennium, the unpaved Battle Road Trail was planned and constructed throughout the Battle Road Unit. The trail begins at the Meriam House, briefly travels south along Old Bedford, and then turns east along Lexington Road. East of the Second East Quarter Schoolhouse the trail turns away from the road going north around the developments on Manuel Drive before passing into the Jones/Stowe Farm area. The trail passes through wooded areas, wetlands, and agricultural fields (Figure 17).

Character-defining Features:

- Feature: Lexington Road (Battle Road)
- Feature Identification Number: 173940
- Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
- IDLCS Number: 919
- LCS Structure Name: Battle Road
- LCS Structure Number: 1-173

- Feature: Old Bedford Road
- Feature Identification Number: 173944

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Meriam's Corner Road Junction

Feature Identification Number: 173942

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Palumbo Farm Lane

Feature Identification Number: 173946

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Battle Road Trail and Footbridges

Feature Identification Number: 173948

Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing – compatible

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 16. Meriam's Corner road junction of Lexington Road (right) and Old Bedford Road (left), 2014. Although the width and surface have changed since the historic period, the junction retains its historic configuration. (OCLP)



Figure 17. A portion of the non-contributing Battle Road Trail showing a wooden foot bridge over Mill Brook, 2014. (OCLP)

Buildings and Structures

Historic Condition:

The earliest buildings at Meriam's Corner were simple dwelling houses, barns, and other farm outbuildings. John Meriam built the first house on the north side of Battle Road east of the road junction in about 1663. The cluster of homesteads at Meriam's Corner grew as John's sons John and Joseph each built a house for their family in about 1691 and 1705 respectively. Of these three, only Joseph's 1705 house, occupied at the time of the April 1775 battle by Nathan Meriam, is extant, and is known today as the Meriam House or the Meriam/Burke House. No other farm structures survive from this period.

In the 18th century, houses were located on the north side of Battle Road west of the road junction, including the houses of Jacob and Daniel Taylor. These houses, subsequently occupied by Ebenezer Meriam and John Meriam respectively, are not extant, but Jabez Gowing's 1836 house, which replaced Daniel Taylor's house, remains today.

During the Meriam family tenure at Meriam's Corner (1639-1871), two schoolhouses existed on the property. The first East Quarter Schoolhouse was built in 1799 on land which was retained in ownership by the Meriam family. This schoolhouse presumably functioned as such until 1853, when a second schoolhouse was built nearby on a lot sold to the town by Rufus Meriam. The original schoolhouse remained standing until at least 1855, because it is last documented in a survey of Lexington Road by Henry David Thoreau dating to that year. Located a few hundred feet northeast of the original schoolhouse, the second school was bought by Thomas Burke in 1893, and was converted into a residence by James Burke in 1903. The Second East Quarter Schoolhouse was purchased by the Palumbo family and is still occupied by Joe Palumbo.

After the Meriam family sold the farm to Thomas and Rose Burke in 1871, the number of buildings at Meriam's Corner once again increased. According to the Historic Structure Report, Thomas Burke demolished the Meriam barn and, most likely, rebuilt it across Bedford Road sometime around 1898. The Burkes also built a new home on the west side of Bedford Road, in 1903-04.

More buildings began to appear on the farm as the Concord area became suburban in character. A restaurant was built on the site in 1928 (later renamed the Willow Pond Kitchen). Around 1940, both a garage and a new, smaller barn were built on the Burke property. Three small outbuildings built by the Ingrahams after they bought the Meriam House in 1951 straddle the end of the period of significance: a garden house (c. 1956), a toolshed (c. 1960), and a small cottage (c. 1969).

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

Meriam's Corner contains six contributing historic buildings: the Meriam House, the Gowing-Clark House, Second East Quarter Schoolhouse, Burke House, and two farm sheds associated with the Palumbo Farm, the Metal Shed and the Enclosed Garage. In addition to these complete buildings, the stone foundation of the Gowing-Clark barn, possibly originating from the earlier ownership of Daniel Taylor, remains tucked into the vegetation at the base of the hill opposite the Meriam House.

The Meriam House was restored to colonial appearance by the park following its acquisition in 1991. The outbuildings - the garden house, toolshed, and small cottage - were removed, as were other non-historic additions and alterations. Today, the exterior, clad in gray wood siding, strongly conveys the character of an 18th century farmhouse (cover photo). Across Old Bedford Road, the Burke House retains its early 20th century residential character (Figures 18

and 19). The gambrel-roofed house is clad in brown shingles and sits on a fieldstone foundation, some of the stones of which were taken from the stone wall on the east side of Old Bedford Road at the time of its construction.

The Gowing-Clark House sits on the north side of Lexington Road just west of the road junction. The two-story side-gable house, clad in tan painted clapboard, retains its 19th century character (Figure 20). North of the Gowing-Clark House is the stone foundation of an 18th century barn owned by Daniel Taylor and later by the Gowing and Clark families. The stone foundation, partially obscured by vegetation, helps convey the location and layout of Meriam's Corner's historic farms.

The Burke House and the Gowing-Clark House are managed by the park and periodically leased to private parties as residences. The leases typically impose restrictions on use, structural changes, and aesthetic conditions to protect the historic character and integrity of the buildings. The Second East Quarter Schoolhouse is occupied today by members of the Palumbo family, as it has been since 1925. Because the park has not had direct management control of the house, it has continued to evolve to meet the residents' domestic needs and aesthetic tastes, and as a result displays a more contemporary residential character. Two of the Palumbo farm structures from the 1950s remain, the enclosed garage and the metal shed. The open shed listed in the National Register nomination is not extant, and has been replaced by a non-historic wooden structure used today as a horse stable (Figure 21). Other non-historic buildings in the Meriam's Corner area include a shed at the Burke House, residences at 65 Manuel Drive and 95 Manuel Drive, and a garage at 95 Manuel Drive. All four non-contributing structures were built after 1960.

Character-defining Features:

Feature:	Meriam House
Feature Identification Number:	173984
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
IDLCS Number:	40243
LCS Structure Name:	Meriam House
LCS Structure Number:	4-106-A
Feature:	Burke House
Feature Identification Number:	173978
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
IDLCS Number:	40234
LCS Structure Name:	Burke House
LCS Structure Number:	4-107-A

Meriam's Corner
Minute Man National Historical Park

Feature: (Second) East Quarter Schoolhouse

Feature Identification Number: 173966

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 40236

LCS Structure Name: (Second) East Quarter Schoolhouse

LCS Structure Number: 4-119-A

Feature: Palumbo Farm Enclosed Garage

Feature Identification Number: 173974

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 280099

LCS Structure Name: Palumbo Farm Enclosed Garage

LCS Structure Number: 4-119-B

Feature: Palumbo Farm Metal Shed

Feature Identification Number: 173976

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 280090

LCS Structure Name: Palumbo Farm Metal Shed

LCS Structure Number: 4-119-D

Feature: Gowing-Clark House

Feature Identification Number: 173986

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 6548

LCS Structure Name: Gowing-Clark House

LCS Structure Number: 4-122-A

Feature: Gowing-Clark Barn Foundation

Feature Identification Number: 173968

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 40256

LCS Structure Name: Gowing-Clark Barn Foundation

LCS Structure Number: 4-122-B

Feature: Palumbo Farm Stable
Feature Identification Number: 173980
Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing – compatible

Feature: House (65 Manuel Drive)
Feature Identification Number: 173970
Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing – compatible

Feature: House (95 Manuel Drive)
Feature Identification Number: 173972
Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing – compatible

Feature: Garage (95 Manuel Drive)
Feature Identification Number: 173982
Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing – compatible

Feature: Burke Shed
Feature Identification Number: 174022
Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing – compatible

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 18. View of the Burke House (1904) looking north, 2014. (OCLP)



Figure 19. View looking west showing the Burke Shed, 2014. (OCLP)



Figure 20. View of the Gowing-Clark House (1836) looking northeast, 2014. (OCLP)



Figure 21. View looking northwest showing the Palumbo Metal Shed (1950) as well as non-contributing storage tent (left) and wooden stable structure (right), 2014. (OCLP)

Views and Vistas

Historic Condition:

Scenic quality was not a motivating factor in shaping the landscape during the historic period. The arrangement of buildings, vegetation, and other features was utilitarian, serving agricultural, circulation, or residential needs. Nonetheless, the open fields, long sightlines, rustic and utilitarian structures, and farm vegetation created a distinct visual quality and rural character that defined the site's historic character. Despite shifts in land use, from subsistence farms to market farms to residential homes, the visual quality of the landscape remained rural, with long, open views of agricultural fields and forests. Due to the general scarcity of large hedgerows and wood lots, the open views were available throughout the landscape.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

Following the historic period, some of the agricultural fields reverted to forest, increasing the sense of enclosure and reducing the distant views in Meriam's Corner. However, much of the land within the site continued to be cultivated for agriculture, managed as open meadow, or reverted to open wetlands, perpetuating the overall open character and agricultural appearance. Recent efforts to reduce the forest cover have been strategic, removing trees that open sight lines from key locations such as the Meriam House and the roads. Remaining trees serve to screen non-historic development that surrounds the park. Today, distant views of rural or agricultural character are available throughout Meriam's Corner (Figure 22).

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 22. View looking south from Lexington Road toward Palumbo Farm, 2014. (OCLP)

Constructed Water Features

Historic Condition:

The flat topography and meandering brooks of Meriam's Corner created extensive wetlands and poorly-drained fields. As early as the late 17th century, farmers dug ditches to drain the fields and increase their usable farmland. (Donahue 1994: 16) The ditches rendered the meadows accessible for cutting hay and carting it to the high ground, and protected low-lying meadows from damaging floods in rainy summers. Drainage also served to convert some rich land on the fringes of meadows into cultivatable tillage. (Garvin 1993: 171) In addition to providing drainage, these ditches often marked the edges of fields or property lines. This practice continued throughout the historic period, with new or improved ditches being dug as late as the early 20th century. (Concord Oral History Program interview with Joe Palumbo)

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

As agriculture declined, so to did maintenance of the drainage ditches. Today, many of the ditches are obscured within vegetation and are little more than low, wet areas, however they are still evident by the linear concentrations of taller vegetation along their edges that is difficult to mow. The widths of the channels vary, but are generally narrow – about two feet. Wetland vegetation, such as purple loosestrife, red maple, and cattails, has grown up in wide swaths around the ditches. Designated as wetlands, the ditches are protected from development and

other incursions by current legislation. The largest and best preserved drainage structures are in the Palumbo Farm area, where ditches and retaining ponds still hold water. The system of drainage ditches, channelized streams, and ponds remain visible in the landscape today, their linear network revealing both the functional role the ditches played in draining the land and the organizational role of delineating fields and property lines (Figure 23).

Character-defining Features:

Feature: System of Drainage Ditches and Ponds

Feature Identification Number: 174026

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 23. View looking south showing one of the drainage ditches in the Palumbo Farm area, 2014. (OCLP)

Small Scale Features

Historic Condition:

While wood fences were initially used to demark property and prevent the movement of livestock, stone walls were eventually constructed throughout the Battle Road Unit and Meriam's Corner area. When trees were cleared to make fields, the insulating value of the topsoil was lost and stones were pushed to the surface by frost cycles, forcing farmers to pile the stones in the middle of fields and pastures. Soon, the farmers moved the stones to the edges of existing wood fences, forming tossed walls. Stone walls both confined livestock and protected orchards and crops from livestock, and also marked property boundaries. During the Battle of Lexington and Concord, militia and minute men used stone walls, boulders, and other

Meriam's Corner

Minute Man National Historical Park

objects as cover from British fire. After the war, as farming evolved and property use changed over the years, stone walls were demolished to enlarge fields and, later, to construct new house foundations. During the 20th century, before park operations were established in the area, many stones along the road were removed by people to be utilized in their own yards in other locations.

Historic photos from the 19th century show a stone wall approximately three feet high on the eastern side of the road junction at Meriam's Corner, enclosing the field in front of the Meriam House. Prior to about 1900, the wall is visible extending along Old Bedford Road nearly to the Meriam House. In 20th century photos, the wall is present at the junction, but the section that extended from the junction to the Meriam House is missing. Members of the Burke family claim that the stones of the wall were removed about that time and at least some of them were used in the foundation of the 1903 Burke House.

At the time of the battle, the British troops are described as passing over a small bridge that spanned a brook at Meriam's Corner. Beyond the description of the battle, there is no evidence revealing the nature of the brook crossing, including what type of bridge might have been present, when the bridge was replaced with a culvert, or when the current culvert was constructed. The current crossing consists of a box culvert constructed of horizontal granite blocks topped with mortared fieldstone. The National Register of Historic Places documentation speculates that elements of the culvert structure may have been part of the bridge present in 1775. Although no work has been done to definitively date the culvert, it dates at least to the 19th century.

Commemoration of the 1775 battle began in 1836 and reached in Meriam's Corner in 1856 with the installation of the Meriam's Corner monument into the stone wall at the road junction. The monument consisted of a large boulder with its south-facing side recessed, smooth-planed, and chiseled with the inscription:

MERIAM'S CORNER
THE BRITISH TROOPS
RETREATING FROM THE
OLD NORTH BRIDGE
WERE HERE ATTACKED IN FLANK
BY THE MEN OF CONCORD
AND NEIGHBORING TOWNS
AND DRIVEN UNDER A HOT FIRE
TO CHARLESTOWN

There is little direct evidence of what other small-scale features might have been present during the historic period, but they would likely have been a mix of impermanent utilitarian items associated with the agricultural and domestic uses.

Post-Historic and Existing Conditions:

Today, the stone walls continue to be the most prominent small-scale feature of the Meriam's Corner landscape, and are currently a combination of historic and rebuilt portions. The stone wall around the field south of the Meriam House, edging the north side of Lexington Road and the east side of Old Bedford Road, remains, the northern section of the wall between the junction and the house having been rebuilt by the park. Today, the wall is lower than it was in the 19th century, and many of the stones have fallen from the wall, resulting in an uneven character. The Meriam's Corner monument remains in its place at the junction (Figure 24). Other wall sections line both the north and south side of Lexington Road in the Palumbo Farm area. The box culvert under Lexington Road remains in the same condition it was in at the end of the historic period (Figure 25). The culvert, Meriam's Corner monument, and the stone walls all continue to contribute to the cultural landscape of Meriam's Corner.

Numerous non-contributing small-scale features are located throughout the site, most related either to visitor services and interpretation or to vehicular travel through the site. These include a monument composed of a brass plaque mounted in a boulder reading "Near Here Is Buried A British Solder, April 19, 1775;" an engraved stone marker marking the location of Josiah Meriam's house, a stone obelisk marker for Meriam's Corner; stone obelisk mile markers for Battle Road indicating the miles from Boston; and benches, footbridges, waysides, and similar landscape features.

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Meriam's Corner Monument

Feature Identification Number: 174028

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 40265

LCS Structure Name: Meriam's Corner Monument

LCS Structure Number: 4-111-A

Feature: Meriam's Corner Area Stone Culvert

Feature Identification Number: 174046

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 40255

LCS Structure Name: Meriam's Corner Area Stone Culvert

LCS Structure Number: 4-105-A

Feature: System of Stone Walls (Meriam's Corner)

Feature Identification Number: 174034

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 40202

Meriam's Corner
Minute Man National Historical Park

LCS Structure Name: System of Stone Walls [Meriam's Corner]
LCS Structure Number: 4-106-H

Feature: System of Stone Walls (Palumbo Farm)
Feature Identification Number: 174042
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 40218

LCS Structure Name: System of Stone Walls [Palumbo Farm]
LCS Structure Number: 4-119-G

Feature: System of Stone Walls (Gowing-Clark Reta)
Feature Identification Number: 174038
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 40223

LCS Structure Name: System of Stone Walls [Gowing-Clark Retaing Walls]
LCS Structure Number: 4-122-D

Feature: Monument to British Soldier
Feature Identification Number: 174032
Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing – compatible

Feature: Josiah Meriam's House Markers
Feature Identification Number: 174044
Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing – compatible

Feature: Stone Battle Road Mile Markers
Feature Identification Number: 174036
Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing – compatible

Feature: Wooden Bench
Feature Identification Number: 174040
Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing – compatible

Feature: Road Signs and Traffic Features
Feature Identification Number: 174030

Type of Feature Contribution: Non contributing – compatible

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Figure 24. View looking northeast showing the Meriam's Corner stone monument and its surrounding stone wall, 2014. (OCLP)



Figure 25. View looking south showing the north inlet of the Meriam's Corner stone culvert, 2014. (OCLP)

Archeological Sites

Historic and Existing Conditions:

As stated in the 2002 National Register documentation, archaeological research has served an important/key role in Minute Man NHP from its initial development in the early 1960s. Investigations have occurred at 23 archaeological sites and portions of historic roadways in seven sections in the park throughout a 23-year period, from 1963 to 1986. These studies located sites occupied in 1775 and a collection of a very large assemblage of artifacts which eventually received appropriate conservation and cataloging during a project begun by the National Park Service in 1983. Most of the sites were farmsteads or residences known or assumed to have been part of the setting for the events of April 19, 1775. Located in a village setting in the town center of Concord, the North Bridge vicinity and outlying rural areas along the Battle Road corridor in Concord, Lincoln, and Lexington, the sites had been occupied by persons involved in the events of April 19, 1775 or were the scene of particular incidents on that day. (National Register 2002, Section 8: 47)

In 1989 and 1990, an intensive level archaeological survey was conducted within Minute Man NHP by The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc. Recent archaeological investigations in Minute Man NHP have been carried out on several historic period sites in compliance with Section 106 review. These surveys were done in advance of proposed construction or other alterations to the settings of these sites from 1994 to 1998. (National Register 2002, Section 8: 54-55)

Two contributing archeological sites have been identified in Meriam's Corner: the Josiah Meriam House Site and the First East Quarter Schoolhouse Site. The Josiah Meriam House Site is the location of what is believed to be the first Meriam house built at Meriam's Corner in 1663 by John Meriam. The house, occupied at the time of the battle by Josiah Meriam, was likely removed in the early 19th century. In the National Register, this site is called the John/Joseph Meriam House Site. Today, the approximate location of the Josiah Meriam House is marked with a stone marker. The First East Quarter School House Site was found to contain a fieldstone foundation or footing. This archaeological feature had been damaged and disturbed by earlier activity, possibly by removal of the school house structure.

Character-defining Features:

Feature:	Josiah Meriam House Site
Feature Identification Number:	174050
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
Feature:	(First) East Quarter Schoolhouse Site
Feature Identification Number:	174052
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing

Condition

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment:	Fair
Assessment Date:	09/30/1998
Condition Assessment:	Good
Assessment Date:	09/24/2015

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

The condition of the Meriam's Corner landscape is "good." There is no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Impacts

Type of Impact:	Flooding
External or Internal:	Internal
Impact Description:	Beaver dams crossing three sections of the creek south of the Palumbo farm have flooded, or saturated to an extent that precludes farming, 95% of the property's formerly farmed 13 acres. This prime agricultural land has been farmed since at least the 1700s, and continually farmed by the Palumbo family since the mid-1920s. The creek defines the southern park boundary in the Meriam's Corner area. If the flooding problem is not addressed, the historic fields will be lost. Within a few years the area will grow into shrubs followed shortly thereafter by forest.
Type of Impact:	Release To Succession
External or Internal:	Internal
Impact Description:	Portions of the Meriam's Corner landscape that were formerly open pasture or agricultural fields have since reverted to forest. The presence of the dense forests alter the sense of spatial organization and diminish the integrity of the site.
Type of Impact:	Other
Other Impact:	Automobile Traffic
External or Internal:	Internal

Impact Description: State Route 2A runs through the center of the linear Battle Road Unit. Route 2A includes large sections of the historic Battle Road. The visual intrusion and noise created by heavy commuter traffic on the road compromises the visitor experience. The steady traffic also prohibits safe pedestrian access from the northern section of the park, which includes the visitor center and the Battle Road Trail, across Route 2A to the southern section of the park. As a result, the area south of Route 2A is underutilized; all visitor amenities and interpretative areas are confined to the area north of Route 2A.

Type of Impact: Other

Other Impact: Airplane Traffic

External or Internal: External

Impact Description: Hanscom Airfield is located just north of the Battle Road Unit. The airport services private planes and small commuter airlines. Noise from overhead planes and from planes taking off and landing at the airfield c hiking along the Battle Road Trail.

Treatment

Treatment

Approved Treatment: Rehabilitation
Approved Treatment Document: General Management Plan
Document Date: 09/01/1989

Approved Treatment Document Explanatory Narrative:

According to the 1999 report, “Environmental Assessment for ‘Save Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes’: Minute Man National Historical Park,” the 1989 General Management Plan (GMP) was developed to accomplish the original goals set out by Congress in the park’s enabling legislation. The GMP included the following management goals and objectives to “Protect, rehabilitate, and selectively preserve 18th- and 19th- century buildings for interpretation, visitor use and adaptive use for park purposes.” This goal was to be accomplished through a program of rehabilitation, restoration, and maintenance of the Battle Road Unit’s historic structures. An additional goal stated in the GMP was to “Protect and restore the historic scene of April 19, 1775, or the landscape and associated cultural resources in selected areas...” (“Environmental Assessment for ‘Save Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes’” 1999: 2)

The 1999 report also specifically described rehabilitation of historic structures and historic landscapes as the preferred treatment alternative:

“The Preferred Alternative...will provide the greatest balance between rehabilitating the park’s historic structures, rehabilitating their associated landscapes, improving interpretation of these resources and accommodating improved visitor access afforded by the Safe Visitor Access Trail (Battle Road Trail) while protecting the Park’s natural and cultural features and providing a safe experience for visitors. Maintaining the fabric of historic structures and the cultural landscape; conservation of natural and archeological resources; and improving interpretive and education opportunities were the primary issues considered during the development and selection of this alternative. (“Environmental Assessment for ‘Save Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes’” 1999: 4)

Approved Treatment Completed: No

Approved Treatment Costs

Cost Date: 09/01/1989

Bibliography and Supplemental Information

Bibliography

- Citation Author:** Dietrich-Smith, Debora
Citation Title: Cultural Landscape Report for Battle Road Unit, Minute Man National Historical Park
Year of Publication: 2005
Citation Publisher: NPS
- Citation Author:** Dolan, Susan
Citation Title: Fruitful Legacy: A Historic Context of Orchards in the United States, with Technical Information for Registering Orchards in the National Register of Historic Places
Year of Publication: 2009
Citation Publisher: NPS
- Citation Author:** Donahue, Brian and Heidi Hohmann
Citation Title: Cultural Landscape Report for Meriam's Corner, Minute Man National Historical Park
Year of Publication: 1994
Citation Publisher: NPS (unpublished report)
- Citation Author:** Harrington, M. K., et al.
Citation Title: National Register of Historic Places Documentation: Minute Man NHP
Year of Publication: 2002
Citation Publisher: NPS
- Citation Author:** Malcolm, Joyce Lee
Citation Title: The Scene of the Battle, 1775: Historic Grounds Report, Minute Man NHP
Year of Publication: 1985
Citation Publisher: NPS

- Citation Author:** National Park Service
Citation Title: Cultural Landscapes Inventory: Battle Road, Minute Man NHP
Year of Publication: 2007
Citation Publisher: NPS
- Citation Author:** National Park Service
Citation Title: Environmental Assessment for “Save Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes”: Minute Man National Historical Park
Year of Publication: 1999
Citation Publisher: NPS
- Citation Author:** Weinbaum, Paul
Citation Title: National Register of Historic Places Supplementary Listing Record: Minute Man NHP
Year of Publication: 2002
Citation Publisher: NPS
- Citation Author:** Wallace, Terrie
Citation Title: National Register of Historic Places Additional Documentation: Minute Man NHP
Year of Publication: 2006
Citation Publisher: NPS
- Citation Author:** Yocum, Barbara A.
Citation Title: The Meriam House Historic Structure Report
Year of Publication: 2004
Citation Publisher: NPS
- Citation Author:** Zenzen, Joan
Citation Title: Bridging the Past: Minute Man NHP Administrative History
Year of Publication: 2010
Citation Publisher: NPS

