

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED FEB 25 1980
DATE ENTERED MAY 22 1980

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

New Hampshire Veterans' Association Historic District

AND/OR COMMON

same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Lakeside Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Laconia

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

New Hampshire

CODE

33

COUNTY

Belknap

CODE

001

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERICAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

New Hampshire Veterans, Inc.

STREET & NUMBER

c/o Thomas E. O'Neill, 53 East Pearl Street

CITY, TOWN

Nashua

VICINITY OF

STATE

New Hampshire, 03060

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Belknap County Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

67 Court Street

CITY, TOWN

Laconia

STATE

New Hampshire, 03246

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The New Hampshire Veterans' Association historic district at Weirs Beach, Laconia, is a tract of 7.73 acres containing 18 buildings and several historical markers or memorials. The group of structures began to grow during the 1870s as Civil War veterans sought to develop a camp at which they could hold annual reunions in August. The New Hampshire Veterans' Association, at first composed almost solely of Civil War veterans (though also extending membership to veterans of the War of 1812 and the Mexican War), eventually included New Hampshire veterans of all branches of the service in all subsequent American wars. The organization is believed to be unique in the United States, and the structures on its property, built to house various regimental groups during their annual sojourns, are certainly unique. The most ambitious of these buildings translate the Queen Anne style into the form of the Victorian camp or lodge; in so doing, these structures utilize the economical materials and construction techniques of camp construction in an imaginative fashion that achieves monumentality and elaboration comparable to the best domestic and institutional examples of the same style. Other buildings of somewhat simpler design preserve the turn-of-the-century camp form as it developed (but is now rarely seen) around New Hampshire's large resort lakes.

The most extraordinary group of camps on the property is the row of five structures (one severely remodelled) which front Lakeside Avenue and command a view of the Weirs docks and beach, with the broad expanse of Lake Winnepesaukee and the Ossipee Mountains beyond. The architectural features represented in this row generally relate to the Queen Anne style, and include steeply-pitched roofs; elaborate towers, cupolas and dormers; broad piazzas which encircle the first stories; and a wide variety of wall-covering materials and wooden ornaments.

1. The northernmost building in the row, at the corner of Lakeside Avenue and an unnamed road, was built about 1880 as the Headquarters or administration building. It retains this use and in addition contains a small auditorium and museum of Veterans' Association memorabilia. It is a clapboarded two-story hip-roofed structure with a hip-roofed tower on the northeast corner and a gable on the southeast end of the roof, facing the lake. The first story is surrounded by a wide porch, and the entire structure is ornamented with brackets, stickwork, wooden ornaments in the form of regimental insignia, and other applied wooden details. Changes to the building include the removal of a balcony that once projected from the tower at the level of the eaves of the main roof, the removal of a wide wooden staircase that descended from the porch to the sidewalk on the east elevation, and the addition of a shed dormer on the north slope of the roof.
2. The building south of the Headquarters was formerly the Third Regiment camp (1885). It has been reduced in size and converted to a now-defunct restaurant, and in its present state constitutes the only intrusion on the entire 8-acre property. The New Hampshire Veterans' Association plans to replace the structure with a museum building of a design which will be compatible with the other buildings on the property.
3. Next south in the Lakeside Avenue row is the Seventh Regiment camp (1885; Otis A. Merrill, architect), a large two-story gable-roofed structure with an open tower at the northeast corner of its roof and a small round turret at the south-

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at the southeast corner. The building is covered with an early form of novelty or drop siding and patterned shingles, and is surrounded by a broad piazza.

4. South of the Seventh Regiment building is the camp built in 1888 and shared by the Ninth and Eleventh Regiments. It is a 1-1/2 story gable-roofed building resembling a large bungalow. The ridge runs north and south and the broad roof sweeps down to cover a porch which extends along the east elevation and returns along the north and south sides of the structure. A small balustraded open porch, covered by a gable roof and flanked by two shed dormers, is set into the broad eastern slope of the roof. The building is covered by a combination of clapboards and random-width beaded ceiling board laid vertically.
5. The southernmost structure in the Lakeside Avenue row, the Cavalry Headquarters, is an imposing 1-1/2 story building with a high hipped roof that affords room for nearly a full second story under its broad expanse. The roof is surmounted by a square hip-roofed cupola or clerestory with decorative stickwork, and is pierced by shed dormers on its north and south slopes and by a gable-roofed dormer with a tiny recessed porch on the east slope. The roof sweeps down to cover a broad piazza. The building is covered by random-width beaded ceiling boards laid diagonally.

The remaining buildings in the district are as follows:

6. Fourteenth Regiment camp, immediately west of the Cavalry Headquarters on a now-disused road. Two stories with gable roof and a one-story porch on the south and east. Covered with vertical random-width beaded ceiling board.
7. Fifteenth Regiment camp (1888), at the northeast corner of the disused road mentioned above and Veterans' Avenue. Two stories with gable roof and a one-story porch encircling the entire structure. Covered with vertical random-width beaded ceiling board.
8. Sixteenth Regiment camp (1887), on Veterans' Avenue opposite its intersection with the disused road mentioned above. Two stories with a hipped roof, having a gabled dormer in the eastern slope of the roof and diagonal towers with high hipped roofs on the northeast and southeast corners of the second floor. Covered with vertical random-width beaded sheathing and wooden shingles. Alterations include the removal of three balustraded platforms on the porch roof, once accessible from doors in the two diagonal towers and from a door in the middle of the second floor facade. Map evidence indicates that this building originally stood east of the Fifteenth Regiment camp, where the Fourteenth Regiment camp stands today. Its present site was formerly occupied by a National Veterans' Association headquarters building.

To the west of Veterans' Avenue is an irregular row of additional buildings. These include:

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9. Twenty-ninth Regiment camp. One story with vertical board and batten siding.
10. Seventeenth Regiment camp (divided into north and south halves). Two-story gable roofed building with one-story porch on north, south and east elevations. Covered with vertical beaded boards averaging 4-1/2 inches in width.
11. Sixth Regiment camp. Small two-story shed-roofed building with one-story porch on east (front) elevation. Covered with vertical flush boarding.
12. Tenth Regiment camp.
13. Third Regiment camp. Similar two-story gable-roofed structures with gable ends facing east and treated as facades with one-story porches. The Tenth Regiment building is covered with vertical beaded boards averaging 4-1/2 inches in width; the Third Regiment building has vertical beaded siding averaging 3-1/2 inches in width.
14. Twenty-eighth Regiment camp. One-story gable-roofed clapboarded building with one-story porch on east and south elevations.
15. Fifth Regiment camp (ca. 1883). Two-story gable-roofed building with dormer in center of eastern slope of roof. One-story porch. Covered with random-width vertical beaded sheathing.
16. Eighteenth Regiment camp. Two-story gable-roofed building with dormer in eastern slope of roof. One-story porch. Covered with wide clapboards. Formerly the Lowell Veterans' Association headquarters.
17. Twentieth Regiment camp (divided into north and south halves). Two-story hip-roofed building with one-story porch on north, south and east elevations. Covered with vertical beaded ceiling board.
18. Auditorium. Diagonally behind (to the southwest of) the Headquarters building and accessible from the unnamed street that extends along the northern edge of the Veterans' Association property between Lakeside Avenue and Veterans' Avenue. One story, covered with novelty siding.

In addition to the eighteen buildings listed above, the Veterans' Association property includes several memorial tablets and one outstanding veterans' monument. This is a memorial stone given in August 1882 by Woodbury Sanborn (1822-1888), an honorary member of the Twelfth New Hampshire Regiment Association. The cast iron fence that surrounds the stone has the form of vertical rows of muskets, with corner posts imitating canon. It was manufactured by D. Arthur Brown of the Concord Axle Company of Fisherville (now Penacook) New Hampshire, and was the gift of the widows, wives and daughters of the original members of the Twelfth Regiment.

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The New Hampshire Veterans' Association was founded in 1875 and incorporated in 1881. After its incorporation, the organization immediately began to receive appropriations from the State of New Hampshire to assist it in establishing a permanent headquarters and in constructing buildings. The organization held its annual reunions at Weirs Beach beginning in 1876, utilizing a tract of land made available first by the Concord and Montreal Railroad and later by the Boston and Maine Railroad when the latter absorbed the Concord and Montreal. The eight acres now owned by the Veterans' Association were conveyed to the Association by the Boston and Maine Railroad in 1924.

Beginning in the mid-1880s the various regimental organizations that constituted the Veterans' Association began to establish themselves officially and to construct the camp buildings described above, together with a number of other structures which have since disappeared. By 1892 most of the buildings presently on the site had been erected, and several others, including two dancing pavilions on Veterans' Avenue, were also part of the group. By 1924, when title to the site was acquired from the Boston and Maine Railroad, there were said to be 35 buildings on the land. While most of the buildings that have since disappeared may have been insubstantial in comparison with those that survive, their former presence suggests that the tract holds considerable archaeological potential.

The Weirs Beach site was chosen for the Veterans' Association headquarters because it offered a potential for easy accessibility by railroad, coupled with scenic beauty and a variety of resort activities. Beginning in the 1870s a nearby tract of land had been occupied for religious camp meetings by various Methodist organizations, and at the same period a number of hotels and boarding houses, all accessible by railroad from the larger metropolitan areas, were built at the Weirs. The Weirs provided a view of, and access to, Lake Winnepesaukee, New Hampshire's largest lake, and was close to Squam Lake, Lake Wentworth, and Winnisquam Lake. These advantages, coupled with the growing resort amenities at the Weirs, have assured the use of the site by the Veterans' Association down to the present day. The land and buildings are now owned by the New Hampshire Veterans, Inc., a real estate holding corporation founded in 1956 within the New Hampshire Veterans' Association.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) (recreation)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1875; 1881

BUILDER/ARCHITECT various; mostly unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The New Hampshire Veterans' Association historic district is an unique assemblage of camp buildings, most dating from the 1880s, which were constructed to house annual August reunions of New Hampshire veterans of the Civil War and were later occupied by veterans of all subsequent wars. The structures are built with the economical materials and construction techniques that characterize camp buildings, yet embody the imaginative and complex design characteristics of the Queen Anne style. The buildings reflect the exuberance and variety of American architecture in the 1880s, the strong sentiments for commemoration and reunion engendered by the Civil War, and the increase of leisure, with its attendant growth of resort areas, in late nineteenth-century America.

Architecture: The New Hampshire Veterans' Association Headquarters building and the various regimental buildings, especially those along Lakeside Avenue, are among the largest, most ambitious, and best-preserved examples of late nineteenth-century camp architecture in New Hampshire. These structures illustrate the methods by which the elaborate effects of the Queen Anne style were achieved at low cost in resort structures of the 1880s and 1890s through the use of balloon framing, drop siding, shingles, ceiling boarding, and turned and sawn ornamentation. The individual structures in the group are of great interest, but the effect of each building is further enhanced by its juxtaposition with others in the group. As a whole, the Veterans' Association historic district is one of the most impressive and best-preserved resort complexes in New Hampshire.

Military: The New Hampshire Veterans' Association was founded in 1875 and incorporated in 1881. Its purposes included the holding of annual reunions during the last full week of August to "renew the ties of fraternity and loyalty, contracted in the camp, the battlefield, the prison and the hospital." The New Hampshire Veterans' Association is believed to be the only organization of its type in the United States. Initially receiving support from the State of New Hampshire and from regional railroad corporations, the Association prospered to a degree that has assured its continuation to the present day. Immediately after World War I, the Association was reinvigorated by new veterans who assumed the duties, previously borne by the thinning ranks of Civil War survivors, of maintaining the buildings on the property. Each new generation of New Hampshire veterans has in turn assumed the care and use of the buildings, and the structures have thus provided the veterans of all wars with the same benefits sought by the founding soldiers of the Civil War era.

Other (Recreation): During the late nineteenth century Lake Winnepesaukee began to emerge as one of the primary resort areas of the Northeast. Newly-constructed railroads provided access to the region from metropolitan areas both in and outside of New Hampshire, and railroad corporations encouraged the growth of the resort industry as a means of increasing traffic on their lines. Even before the New Hampshire Veterans' Association selected Weirs Beach as their permanent home, religious groups and private entrepreneurs had constructed hotels and camps in the area to take advantage of the recreational benefits of the lake and the easy transportation afforded by the railroad. Thus, it is no accident that railroad corporations provided land for the use of the Veterans' Association, and that the yearly influx of veterans was seen as an important part of the tourist economy of central New Hampshire.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Baker, Albert S. "New Hampshire Veterans' Association Meets at the Weirs," The Granite Monthly, September, 1924, pp. 495-499.
- Bartlett, A. W. History of the Twelfth Regiment New Hampshire Volunteers in the War of the Rebellion. Concord, N.H.: Ira C. Evans, 1897.
- Child, William, M.D. A History of the Fifth Regiment New Hampshire Volunteers in the American Civil War, 1861-1865. Bristol, N.H.: R. W. Musgrove, 1893.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED UTM NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 7.73 acres

UTM REFERENCES

E 19 - 30 14 00 483 000 0

A	19	3015010	4830950
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	19	301450	4830700

B	19	301000	4830800
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D	19	301250	4830950

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the intersection of Lakeshore Avenue and an unnamed street north of the New Hampshire Veterans' Association Headquarters building, thence proceeding westerly along said unnamed street to its intersection with Veterans' Avenue, thence proceeding northerly along Veterans' Avenue to the southeast corner of land now or formerly owned by H. Curtis, thence westerly along said land now or formerly of H. Curtis to the southeast corner of said land, thence northerly along said land now or formerly of H. Curtis

(continued)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Thomas E. O'Neill, President

ORGANIZATION

New Hampshire Veterans, Inc.

DATE

November 20, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

53 East Pearl Street

TELEPHONE

(603) 883-3379

CITY OR TOWN

Nashua

STATE

New Hampshire, 03060

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE Commissioner, Dept. of Resources & Economic Development
NH State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE November 20, 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: *Sally G. Oldha*
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 5/22/80
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
DATE 5/13/80

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SIGNIFICANCE:

8. Archaeology--Prehistoric: The tract of land upon which the New Hampshire Veterans' Association historic district is situated has long yielded prehistoric cultural resources. Commencing in the late nineteenth century, area collectors such as Abram Drake, Erastus Jewell, Edgar H. Wilcomb, and Charles P. Wilcomb recovered numerous artifacts from several loci at the rapidly developing Weirs Beach resort area. According to Warren K. Moorehead (1931:49), an archaeologist who himself excavated at the Weirs in 1917 and again in 1930, the latter gentleman "collected in that region for many years" and "was present when most of the bungalows were erected..."

Studies of these and other collections by University of New Hampshire archaeologists, Billee M. Hoornbeek and W. Dennis Chesley (Hoornbeek 1978), indicate the presence of prehistoric cultural components from Early Archaic through the Contact Period. Unfortunately much more of the cultural material has since become dispersed through private sales and museum donations.

At the nearby Weirs Beach Site (NH 26-32), the presence of the cultures noted above were confirmed by archaeological excavations conducted by Charles E. Bolian of the University of New Hampshire (Bolian 1977). The Early Archaic level is radiocarbon-dated at $8,985 \pm 210$ B.P. and is the only known undisturbed Early Archaic level component in New England. Below it is a Paleo-Indian component dated at $9,615 \pm 225$ B.P.. Undisturbed Middle Archaic to Late Woodland components were identified at the adjacent National Register property, the Aquadoctan Site (NH 26-1), in salvage excavations conducted in 1977 by Howard R. Sargent.

While the density and distribution of prehistoric cultural resources within the New Hampshire Veteran's Association historic district have yet to be determined by test excavation, the field work at the nearby sites suggests that similar components will be found upon examination of the area.

8. Archaeology-Historic: In 1924, when title to the site was acquired from the Boston and Maine Railroad, there were said to be 35 buildings on the property. It is expected that the distribution of these cottages, ancillary and support buildings, and associated refuse disposal areas will aid in the interpretation of land use patterns during the growth of the resort area through historical archaeology. these resources offer the potential for comparative archaeological data for similar studies at similar resort areas on the National Register within the region (e.g., Windermere).

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"Weirs Beach: A Preliminary Report of the 1976 Excavations" in The New Hampshire Archaeologist, no. 19: 47-55, 1977.
- Hoornbeek, Billee M.
"Archaeological Survey of the Lakes Region of New Hampshire 1977-1978." Unpublished report from Archaeological Research Services, University of New Hampshire to the New Hampshire Historic Preservation Office, 1978.
- Moorehead, Warren K.
The Merrimack Archaeological Survey: A Preliminary Paper. Salem, Massachusetts: Peabody Museum, 1931.

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(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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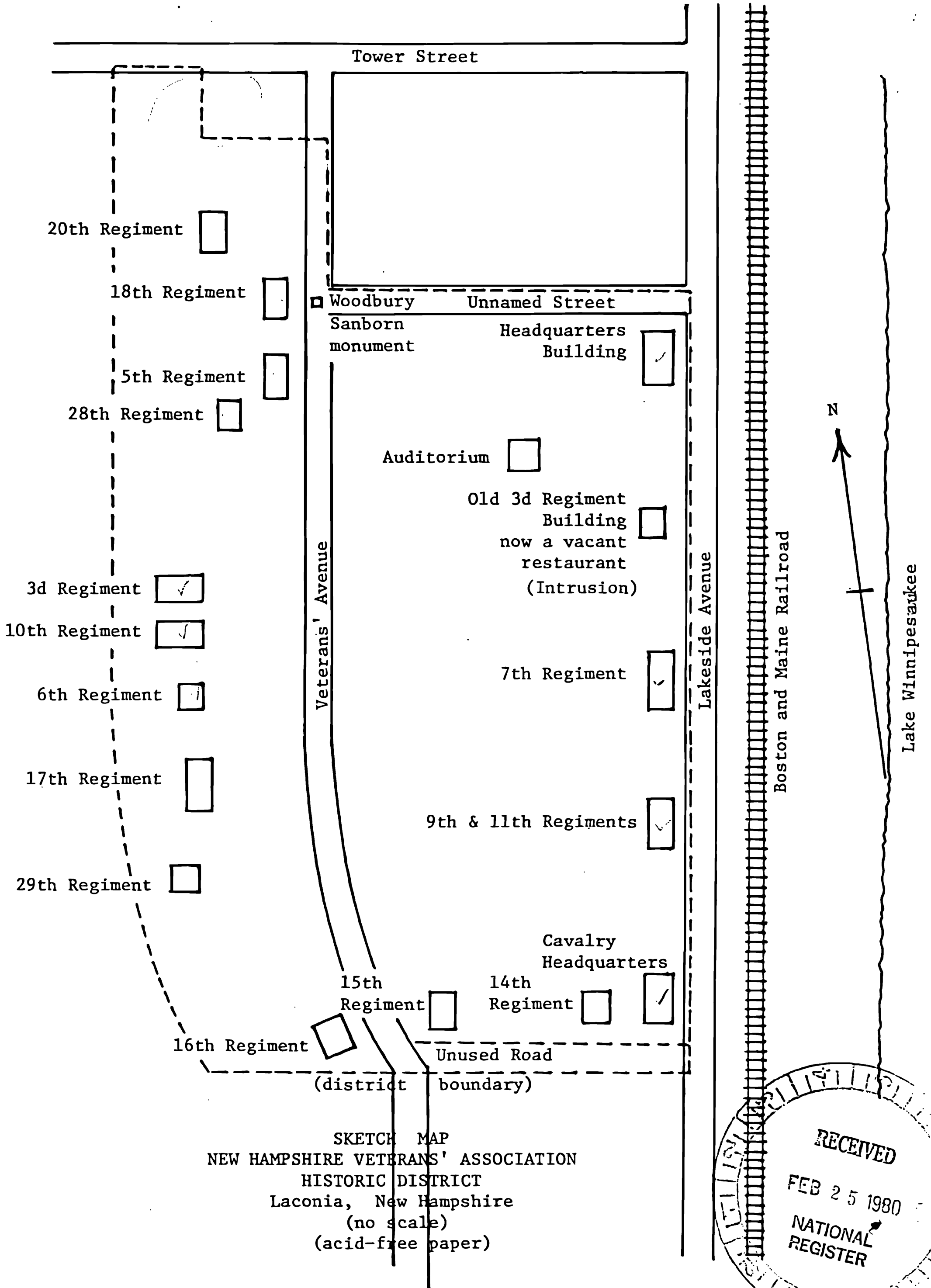
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to Tower Street, thence westerly along Tower Street to a point, thence southerly to another point (being the southwesterly corner of land owned by New Hampshire Veterans, Inc.), thence easterly to the intersection of a now-disused street and Veterans' Avenue, thence along said disused street to its intersection with Lakeside Avenue, thence northerly along Lakeside Avenue to the point begun at.



SKETCH MAP
 NEW HAMPSHIRE VETERANS' ASSOCIATION
 HISTORIC DISTRICT
 Laconia, New Hampshire
 (no scale)
 (acid-free paper)