

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>Maine</b>	
COUNTY: <b>Kennebec</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
**Director's Quarters, Togus Veterans' Administration Center**

AND/OR ALTERNATE:  
**Governor's House, National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers  
(Old Soldiers' Home at Togus)**

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**OFF ME 17**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Togus**

STATE: <b>Maine</b>	CODE	COUNTY: <b>Kennebec</b>	CODE
------------------------	------	----------------------------	------

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
**United States Veterans' Administration**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**810 Vermont Avenue, N.W.**

CITY OR TOWN: <b>Washington</b>	STATE: <b>District of Columbia</b>	CODE
------------------------------------	---------------------------------------	------

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**Kennebec County Courthouse**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: <b>Augusta</b>	STATE: <b>Maine</b>	CODE
---------------------------------	------------------------	------

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
**None**

DATE OF SURVEY:                     Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE
---------------	--------	------

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

164

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

Excellent     Good     Fair     Deteriorated     Ruins     Unexposed

(Check One)

Altered     Unaltered

(Check One)

Moved     Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

A book published 10 years after the completion of the house now designated the Director's Quarters of the Togus V. A. Center (originally, the Governor's House) described it so: "[a] plain, brick edifice, two stories in height, with a mansard roof. The apartments are conveniently arranged, and the walls of the parlors tastefully frescoed. In front of the house is a veranda looking out upon a beautiful parterre of choice flowers, and plenty of rustic work, and commanding a good view of the premises."<sup>1</sup> This house had been changed none in the decade after it was finished, and very little in the century since. It is three bays square, with a two-story wing extending to the rear, and a total of 22 rooms. Replacement of the full-width open veranda with a narrower enclosed porch is the only noteworthy exterior alteration. Otherwise, the appearance remains virtually identical to pictures dating from very shortly after its completion.

While some of the new buildings are to the north of the Director's Quarters, so that the southward-facing front porch no longer commands quite the "good view of the premises" it once did, the immediate surroundings remain much the same and provide an uncluttered setting which comprises a very tangible and distinct aspect of the beauty of the house. To the northeast is a lake, to the northwest and west a large parklike area with a variety of trees. The main road through the grounds passes close to the front of the house, but there are only four other buildings in the immediate vicinity. Each serves as quarters for other officials of the facility. Two of these, once designated the Quartermaster's Quarters and the Commissary of Subsistences House, date from around the turn of the century; but the third, the Treasurer's House, was built in the late 1870s. It is probably contemporary with the Surgeon's House (1879), and perhaps the Engineer and Band Master's House, a duplex. The latter building cannot be dated with certainty, but there is no doubt that these three are the oldest extant buildings at Togus except for the Governor's House.

Along the road running north and south at the rear of the Togus property are ten 7-room cottages built between 1900 and 1912. These were the last wooden buildings erected on the premises, and also the last single-family residences. All hospital and administration facilities are relatively recent. The one remaining building of outstanding historical significance is the Director's Quarters. Although it dates from 3 years after the opening of the facility, all the buildings originally utilized were designed as part of the Togus Springs Resort. One of the first structures built specifically for the National Home, the Director's Quarters is the only one still extant. Fortunately, both its integrity and state of preservation are exceptional.

<sup>1</sup>W. E. S. Whitman, History and Description of the Eastern Branch of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (Augusta, 1879), pp. 33-34.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1869-

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal     | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric    | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy            | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic       | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                        | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture    | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                      | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art            | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                        | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce       | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                 | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation   |   |   |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers at Togus, Maine, was the first Veterans' Home established under an act passed by Congress immediately after the Civil War. It was to serve as an asylum for "Any worthy soldier ... if suffering under such a degree of disability that the privileges and comforts of such a home as this would be convenient to him." Opened on October 6, 1866, the home has been in continuous operation ever since. Domiciliary care ceased in 1944, but hospital facilities are currently maintained for almost 1,000 patients.

Initially, the facilities of a large resort which had gone bankrupt during the war were adapted for use by the Home. This was considered only a temporary measure, however, and following a major fire in 1868, practically the entire plant was rebuilt. Only one of these original structures remains extant, the 22-room Governor's House, or, as it is now called, the Director's Quarters. Architecturally, it typifies the style of the National Home's early buildings, while historically it commemorates the founding of this significant institution, the first of its kind in the United States.

History

At the close of the Civil War, Congress passed an act to establish a National Asylum for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers. As amended in March 1866, this act provided for a Board of Managers, three ex-officio (the President, the Secretary of War, and the Chief Justice), and nine other citizens residing in States "which furnished organized bodies of soldiers to aid in the late war for the suppression of the rebellion." This board was organized under the presidency of the redoubtable Gen. Benjamin Franklin Butler of Massachusetts, and during the next 40 years branch homes were established in Wisconsin, Ohio, Virginia, Kansas, California, Illinois, and South Dakota. But the first veterans to be cared for under this act were received in October 1866 at the "Eastern Branch," located on what was then known as the Togus Springs Estate, 5 miles east of Augusta, Maine.

Eight years previously, a Rockland granite dealer named Horace Beals had purchased this 1,900-acre tract and erected a 134-room hotel surrounded by a race course, bowling alleys, bath house, and other

(Continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Barter, J. Malcolm, "A Century At Togus, 1866-1966" (offprint furnished by V. A. Center, Togus).  
Eastern Branch National Home D. V. S., Togus Maine (Augusta: Pub. by the Eastern Branch, 1906).  
 "Togus V. A. Center, 1866-1966: Historical Highlights" (offprint furnished by V. A. Center, Togus).  
 Whitman, W.E.S., History and Description of the Eastern Branch of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers Near Augusta Me. (Augusta: Sprague, Owen & Nash, 1879).

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		°	'	"
NE	° ' "	° ' "		44	42	08
SE	° ' "	° ' "		69	16	54
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: one acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
Robert C. Post, Survey Historian

ORGANIZATION Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service DATE 8/17/73

STREET AND NUMBER:  
1100 L Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE D.C. CODE

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**      **NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

<p>As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Title _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____                  Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p>_____                  Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date _____</p>
--	---

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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

(Continuation Sheet)

ST.	Togus	
COUNTY	Maine	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER		DATE

(Number all entries)

8. Significance (page 1) Governor's House, (Old Soldiers' Home at Togus)

recreational facilities. His intention was to create "a second Saratoga" (the name "Togus" was derived from the Indian "Warromontogus," meaning mineral water) or, at least, a rival to Maine's most famous resort, Poland Spring. Although Beals spent some \$200,000, in addition to the quarter-million he paid for the land, his enterprise closed after three seasons, going down in local annals as "Beal's Folly." Beals died during the Civil War, and his widow subsequently sold the land with all improvements to the Federal Government for \$50,000. Several other localities had bid to become the site of the Eastern Branch, most of them far less isolated than Togus. Yet, as one early historian of the Eastern Branch wrote:

"When was considered the great moral benefits to be derived from the remoteness of its location from populous centres, and the absolute quiet and freedom from the excitement and temptations of metropolitan life that could be enjoyed; the curative properties of the spring which were regarded as favorable for the health of the men; and moreover the adaptability of the hotel to the purpose required and its readiness for immediate occupance, all objections to the purchase of the property were overcome."<sup>1</sup>

Within a year after its establishment, more than 200 ex-soldiers had been admitted to the hospital and the Board could see that it would soon be filled to capacity. A building program was accordingly launched, which was well under way when, on January 8, 1868, fire broke out in the main building, Beal's old hotel. "Any fire in the State of Maine in mid-winter is always a calamity," and Togus was to suffer more than its share of them over the years. This one seriously damaged or destroyed every major building, making it necessary to rebuild the entire plant. During 1868 and 1869, three large dormitories, an amusement hall, a barn, a workshop, and the Governor's House were completed. All were built of brick and thought to be reasonably fire-proof, but the amusement hall went up in flames after only 2 years, and within a relatively short time every other building from the 1860s had either burned or been demolished--except one, the Governor's House, which stands today, its integrity almost perfectly preserved.

In 1869, when the Governor's House was completed, the total number of veterans under care at the Eastern Branch was 582; a decade later this figure had risen to 1,351. Most had, of course, fought in the Civil War,

<sup>1</sup>Whitman, p. 13.

(Continued)

166

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

ST.	Togus
COUNTY	Maine
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

8. Significance (page 2) Governor's House, (Old Soldiers' Home at Togus)

but there were also Mexican War veterans and even a handful from the War of 1812. A second major building program was begun in the late 1870s, and the other early Togus buildings still extant, three in all, were completed at this time.

Admission was open to "Any worthy soldier ... if suffering under such a degree of disability that the privileges and comforts of such a home as this would be convenient to him." A resident had to sign over his pension to the management, but nothing more was required of him except attention to some homely rules of good behavior which apparently were taken none too seriously. Most were from Maine, Massachusetts, and New York, though a few came from States as far away as Illinois and Iowa. Over half were foreign-born, there being 549 Irish alone.

Although Federal funds were available for support of the home, it enjoyed a large measure of self-sufficiency. There was a 400-acre woodlot, and nearly all provisions were grown or raised on the premises. There was also a bakery, butcher shop, soap works, carpenter's shop, saw-mill, blacksmith shop, boot and shoe factory, harness shop, and retail store. For 20 or 30 years around the turn of the century, Togus also became a popular country resort: Horace Beals, it seems, was simply a man before his time. Beginning in 1890, a narrow-gauge railroad connected Togus and Gardiner, and a few years later it was linked by electric trolley with Augusta. The major tourist attractions included the "Nickel Plate" dining room in the Togus Hotel, a zoo, and a large opera house which often presented Broadway productions and was later converted into a movie theatre.

As the years passed, however, the popularity of Togus as an excursion spot declined. The famous Togus Spring ceased to flow, some say because its sources were disturbed during construction of a new hospital building. The canteen went out of business in 1907, the zoo closed in 1923, the hotel was demolished, and both the steam and electric railroads abandoned. "Taps had sounded for the end of an era,"<sup>2</sup> though on any sunny summer afternoon a few tourists still drive out to enjoy the undiminished natural beauties of the Togus reservation.

Following the passage of legislation in 1930 which created a unified administration for all agencies concerned with veterans' benefits, Togus became a Veterans Administration facility. A major building program was

<sup>2</sup>J. Malcolm Barter, "A Century at Togus, 1866-1966," p. 61.

(Continued)

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

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Togus	
COUNTY	
Maine	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

8. Significance (page 3) Governor's House, (Old Soldiers' Home at Togus)

completed in 1937, including the present GM & S Hospital and the Administration Building. Other important facilities date from 1946, 1959, and 1972. Domiciliary care ceased in 1944, but Togus continues to serve as a regional administrative center, and, of course, as a hospital. In 1966, a century after its opening, it had a staff of 900 and 800 resident patients. Its neuropsychiatric facilities are among the best in the country. The extent of the grounds has shrunk considerably; as recently as the 1950s, the reservation embraced more than 1,300 acres, but since then some 800 acres have been conveyed to the GSA as surplus property. While the surrounding countryside remains little changed from a century ago, only a handful of the older buildings remain, and only one that dates virtually to the beginning--the Governor's House, now the Director's quarters. It appropriately symbolizes the historical significance of the first national home for disabled volunteer soldiers in the United States.