

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received MAR 3 1982

date entered APR 1 1982

1. Name

historic Belcher-Rowe House

and/or common Governor Johnathan Belcher Place

2. Location

street & number 26 Governor Belcher Lane ~~NA~~ not for publicationcity, town Milton ~~NA~~ vicinity of congressional district 11th

state Massachusetts code 025 county Norfolk code 021

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
☐ district	☐ public	☒ occupied	☐ agriculture	☐ museum
☒ building(s)	☒ private	☐ unoccupied	☐ commercial	☐ park
☐ structure	☐ both	☐ work in progress	☐ educational	☒ private residence
☐ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	☐ entertainment	☐ religious
☐ object	☐ in process	☒ yes: restricted	☐ government	☐ scientific
	☐ being considered	☐ yes: unrestricted	☐ industrial	☐ transportation
		☐ no	☐ military	☐ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Emily O. Kenworthy and Roger A. Kentworthy

street & number 26 Governor Belcher Lane

city, town Milton ~~NA~~ vicinity of state Massachusetts 02186

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Norfolk County Registry of Deeds

street & number 650 High Street

city, town Dedham state Massachusetts

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Inventory of the Historic Assets
title of the Commonwealth has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ nodate 1977 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Massachusetts Historical Commission

city, town Boston state Massachusetts 02108

7. Description

MILTON: BELCHER-ROWE HOUSE

Condition
☒ excellent
☐ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one
☒ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one
☒ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Belcher-Rowe House was built by Elizabeth Teale Belcher and Mary Louisa Emilia Teale Belcher in 1776 and 1777. It is a "Federal-style," two-story, clapboard house with twin interior chimneys.

The north and south (long) facades are identical. Centered in each of these five bayed facades are a door and sidelights which are framed by flat pilasters crowned by an entablature with a "Greek Key" molding running below the thin cornice. Below the sidelights is a "Basket Weave" molding used also in the chair rail in the second floor hall. Windows contain 6/6 double hung sash. All of the windows have louvred shutters, except the sidelights where only the hardware remains.

The east and west (short) facades are undecorated except for the "Greek Key" molding that runs completely around the main house below the soffit. The east facade is pierced by eight symmetrically grouped 6/6 windows.

On the first floor 6/6 windows flank the ell.

At 90° from the west facade runs a single-story clapboard ell with gambrel roof and single-flued chimney. Its south facade has an entrance doorway with transom near the main house and four 12/12 windows. The north facade has two doorways: the west one original and the east one installed in 1957. There are four windows: two 12/12, one a six-paned hinged sash, one a small modern window added in 1957. The west facade with over-head garage door was built in 1957 when approximately twenty-five feet of the west end of the ell was removed to make way for Governor Belcher Lane. The louvred shutters were added in 1957 to replace single, window-wide, solid shutters.

Except for the ell, the exterior remains essentially unaltered. In the 19th century porticos were added at the north and south main doorways and a "deck" with balustrade ran the length of the south facade. These were removed in the late 1940's.

The interior is typical of the "Federal" style. The central hall runs the entire width of the house. The entrance doorways are treated with pilasters and entablatures similar to those on the exterior. The hall retains its paneled wainscoting, cornices, and staircase.

Opening from the hall were four squarish rooms. In the 1880's the northeast and southeast rooms were combined to form a "double parlor" and two soapstone mantles were installed in the central chimney. The northwest room, originally the kitchen, retains its cooking fireplace. In the 1880's china cabinets were installed and it served as a dining room. The southwest room was made into a kitchen in 1956, but it retains its paneled fireplace wall with the fireplace surrounded by Delft "Biblical" tiles.

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Continuation sheet

Item number

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1

The second floor hall has its original chair rail with "Basket Weave" motif. At the north and south ends of the hall are two small rooms. Additionally, from the hall open four larger rooms. The northwest room retains its original woodwork and mantel with a second set of Delft "Biblical" tiles. The northeast room has original chair rails and other woodwork, but was always without a fireplace. There are only three flues in the east chimney. The most elaborate room is the southeast chamber. It retains its chair rails, cornices, and mantel. The mantel frames the fireplace with paneled pilasters and an entablature. These are decorated with molded composition ornaments which develop a general theme of fertility and plenty. Above the pilasters are vases of flowers. The main frieze uses festoons of oak leaves and acorns with clusters of grapes to flank the central panel which depicts a personification of Plenty with cornucopia and an attendant putto. This panel was used by Samuel McIntire on mantels now in the White House (Washington, D.C.) and in two Salem, Massachusetts houses, the Pierce-Nichols and the Assembly House.¹ Since the work at Salem dates to 1796 and 1801, it appears that the southeast room was redecorated c. 1800, perhaps when in 1805 Jacob Rowe inherited the Milton house. To the southwest are two rooms. One opens on the main hall. The other has its own stairway to the northwest room (original kitchen) on the first floor.

From a "homestead farm" of two-hundred acres in the eighteenth century, the grounds have been reduced to 23,000 square feet. All of the outbuildings shown in the 1936 Historic American Buildings Survey (MASS 196) were destroyed, their foundations bulldozed, and the land extensively regraded during the building of a housing development in 1955-1958.

In 1958 the street address was changed from 401 Adams Street to 26 Governor Belcher Lane.

¹For additional examples, see: Fiske Kimball, Mr. Samuel McIntire, Carver. Salem: Essex Institute, 1940, pp. 47-48.

8. Significance

MILTON: BELCHER-ROWE HOUSE

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
☐ prehistoric	☐ archeology-prehistoric	☐ community planning	☐ landscape architecture	☐ religion
☐ 1400-1499	☐ archeology-historic	☐ conservation	☐ law	☐ science
☐ 1500-1599	☐ agriculture	☐ economics	☐ literature	☐ sculpture
☒ 1600-1699	☒ architecture	☐ education	☐ military	☒ social/
☒ 1700-1799	☐ art	☐ engineering	☐ music	humanitarian
☒ 1800-1899	☐ commerce	☒ exploration/settlement	☐ philosophy	☐ theater
☐ 1900-	☐ communications	☐ industry	☐ politics/government	☐ transportation
		☐ invention		☐ other (specify)

Specific dates 1776 and 1777 Builder/Architect Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Belcher-Rowe House possesses integrity of location, design, materials and workmanship and important associations with the development of Milton during the late eighteenth century. It stands on the old road linking Dorchester and Braintree on the site of a house built in the early seventeenth century. This fine local example of the Federal style was constructed in 1776-1777 by Elizabeth Teale Belcher and Mary Louisa Emilia Teale after the earlier house was destroyed by fire. In 1781, the property was sold to John Rowe, in whose family it remained until 1940. One Rowe descendent born in the house, Mary Phillips Webster, assembled and preserved documents concerning the Suffolk Resolves, headed musical instruction at the Perkins School for the Blind, and working for women's rights founded the Milton Womens' Club in 1898. Thus the house meets criteria B & C of the NRHP.

The first house on the site was constructed c. 1637 by John Holman. The foundation and stone steps of this house, which was enlarged in 1682, are still visible in the basement of the present house.

In 1727 the Holman family sold the property to Governor Jonathan Belcher (1681-1757) who deeded it to his son, Andrew (1706-1771), and his second wife's daughter, Elizabeth Teale, one month before their marriage in 1754. The newlyweds lived in the old Holman house, joined by Governor Belcher's widow, Mary Louisa Emilia Teale Belcher, following the Governor's death in 1757.

In January of 1776 the old house burned. The Belcher women wished to rebuild immediately, but with the siege of Boston in progress, they were forced to wait until after June of 1776. Despite the troubled times, the Belchers elected to build a large dual-chimney, central-hall residence. It was a substantial departure from the central chimney, nine-room Holman house. Although it is by no means the earliest example of the "Federal" style in Massachusetts, it is the first in Milton and one of the earliest in the Milton-Braintree (Quincy) area. Of similar extant houses, the Colonel Josiah Quincy House in Quincy (HABS, MASS 2-42) pre-dates the Belcher-Rowe House by six years. During the next forty years, the style was frequently employed. Among these later residences is the 1801 Dr. Amos Holbrook House (203 Adams Street, Milton). Even as late as 1820, the Dudley House (260 Canton Avenue, Milton) followed the style.

Her mother having died, Elizabeth Teale Belcher decided to return to British territory and in 1781 sold the property to the Boston merchant, John Rowe (1715-1787). In 1805 Jacob Rowe (d. 1814) inherited the house, and it remained with his descendants until 1940.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Allen, Carrie Sprague. "The Holman-Belcher-Rowe House." Unpublished typewritten manuscript, 1940. Milton Room, Milton Public Library
Batinski, Michael Clement. "Jonathan Belcher of Massachusetts, 1682-1741." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1970.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 23,000 Sq. Feet

Quadrangle name Boston South

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A 1 9 3 3 0 9 6 0 4 6 8 0 3 9 0
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

see attached sketch map.

Please refer to the boundaries delineated on the attached assessor's map.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state NA code county code

state NA code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Candace Jenkins, Registration Director with Richard Kenworthy

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date January 1981

street & number 294 Washington Street telephone (617) 727-8470

city or town Boston state Massachusetts

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

 national state X 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Peter Leslowski

title Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical Commission date 2/17/82

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Delores Byrne
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 4/1/82

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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date entered APR 1 1982

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 1

Jacob's granddaughter, Mary Phillips Webster (1858-1950), was born in the second floor northeast bedroom. In her ninety-two years she dedicated herself to a variety of fields. As a student of local history she wrote a number of papers. Most important was her article on the Suffolk Resolves and her effort to collect and preserve material concerning this document. Her professional interests were in the field of music. A pioneer musicologist, she wrote and lectured on the history of the piano and edited an analysis of J.S. Bach's choral music. She headed musical instruction at the Perkins School for the Blind. In 1886 she wrote a students' text on harmony. Pursuing her humanitarian and social interests, for a time in the 1920's she edited the periodical, International Affairs, for the National Council for the Prevention of War. A champion of woman's rights, she founded the Milton Woman's Club in 1898. She was an early and active member of the League of Women Voters.

¹. See Suffolk Probate Court, 70-224.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAR 3 1982

DATE ENTERED APR 1 1982

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

- Belcher, Jonathan. The Letterbooks of, 1723-54. Boston, Massachusetts Historical Society.
- Carroll, Thomas P. "A Pacific Temper: The Character of a Second-Generation New England Town." Unpublished Master of Arts thesis, University of Missouri, 1977.
- Garland, Edna K. "Notes on Early Milton and its Old Houses." Unpublished type-written manuscript, 1954. Milton Room, Milton Public Library.
- Hamilton, Edward Pierce. A History of Milton. Milton: Historical Society, 1957.
- Historic American Buildings Survey. Historic Buildings of Massachusetts. New York: Scribner, 1976.
- Ketchum, Otilie. Milton Days and Ways. N. pl.: Privately printed, 1978.
- Pratt, Dorothy and Richard. A Guide to Early American Homes: North. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1956.
- Price, Ezekiel. The Papers of, 1754-85. Boston, Massachusetts Historical Society.
- Richmond, Helen T. "A Brief Account of the Early Days of the House and Garden of the Milton Historical Society." Unpublished typewritten manuscript, [c. 1945].
- Teele, Albert K. The History of Milton, Mass. 1640 to 1887. Boston: Rockwell and Churchill, 1887.
- Tiffany, Nina Moore and Susan I. Lesley (eds.) Letters of James Murray, Loyalist. Boston: Gregg Press, 1972.
- Town of Milton. Milton Town Records 1662-1729. Milton: Privately printed, 1930.
- Webster, Mary Phillips. The Evolution of the Pianoforte. [Boston:] Chickering, [1903].
- _____. Exercises on Scales and Chords. Boston: Ditson, 1886.
- _____. (ed.). Bach Chorales. Ann Arbor: Edwards Bros., 1942.
- _____. (comp.). International Affairs. Vol. I. Washington, 1924.
- _____. and Charles R. Morris. The Story of the Suffolk Resolves. Milton: Milton Historical Commission, 1973.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

EVALUATION / RETURN SHEET

Property: Belcher-Rowe House
State, County: MA, Norfolk
Federal Agency: _____

Ref # 82002-748
Working No. 3/3/82-592
Fed. Reg. Date: 2.1.83
Date Due: 4-1-82 4-17-82
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 4/1/82
☐ RETURN
☐ REJECT

Entered in the
National Register

- ☐ resubmission
☐ nomination by person or local government
☐ owner objection
☐ appeal

photos 1
maps 1

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
☐ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: ☐ technical corrections cited below
☐ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name2. Location3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
☒ Public Acquisition		Accessible	

4. Owner of Property5. Location of Legal Description6. Representation in Existing Surveys

has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
☐ excellent	☐ deteriorated	☐ unaltered	☐ original site
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ altered	☐ moved date _____
☐ fair	☐ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates
☐ boundary selection

8. Significance

Period _____ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

- _____ summary paragraph
- _____ completeness
- _____ clarity
- _____ applicable criteria
- _____ justification of areas checked
- _____ relating significance to the resource
- _____ context
- _____ relationship of integrity to significance
- _____ justification of exception
- _____ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UMT References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

_____ national _____ state _____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

Title _____ date _____

13. Other

- _____ Maps
- _____ Photographs
- _____ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: 202 272-3504

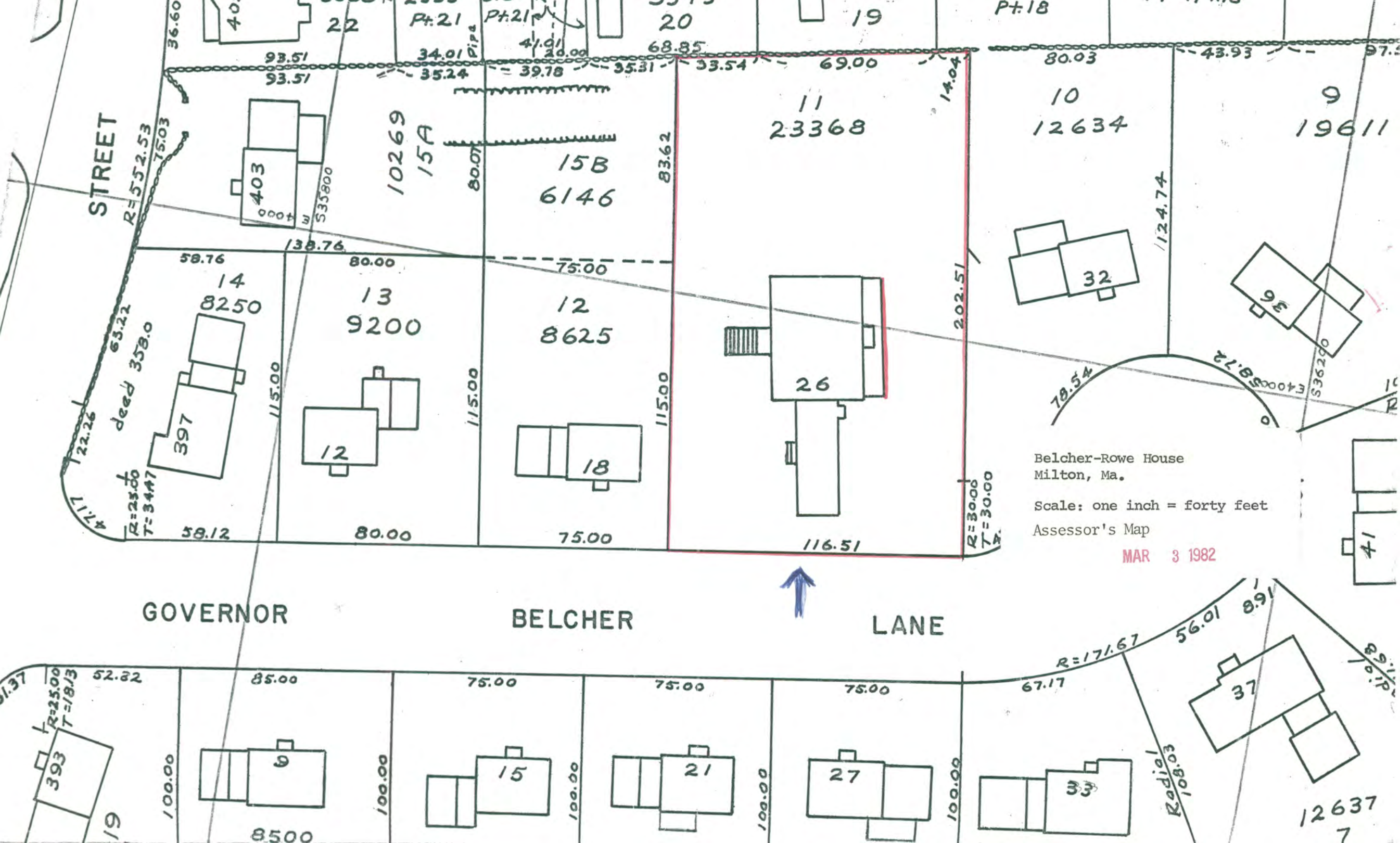
Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



Belcher-Rowe House
Milton
Norfolk County
Massachusetts

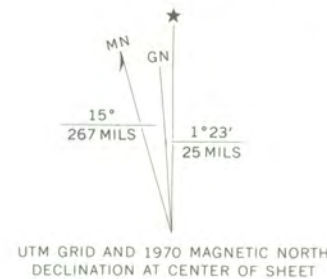
Photo Credit: Richard G. Kenworthy
Negatives Filed: Milton Public Library
Identification: South Elevation
Date: 1979

MAR 3 1982





Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planetable surveys 1943. Revised from
aerial photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1970
Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Charts 246
and 248 (1971). This information is not intended for navigational
purposes
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1,000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 19, shown in blue
Boundaries in tidewater areas from information supplied
by Massachusetts Department of Public Works
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



SCALE 1:24,000
CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET—DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 9.5 FEET



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Unimproved road
Interstate Route
U. S. Route
State Route
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Unimproved road
Interstate Route
U. S. Route
State Route

BOSTON SOUTH, MASS.
N4215—W7100/7.5

1970

AMS 6768 I SE—SERIES V814

Belcher-Rowe House
Milton, MA
UTM Reference
19/330960/4680390



5 V

MILTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Town of Milton
Massachusetts

Commission
Authorized
Town Meeting 1973

Dr. Robert J. Fallon

Mary E. Palardy

Edward S. Shatz

Eileen F. Chamberlain
Secretary
75 Otis Street



Correspondence
should be addressed
to the Secretary {
Researcher {
Chairman { }

Joseph C. Burley
Chairman
5 Hutchinson Street

William J. Loughran
Researcher
375 Adams Street

January 22, 1982

RECEIVED

JAN 25 1982

Ms. Patricia L. Weslowski
Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission
294 Washington St.
Boston, Mass. 02108

MASS. HIST. COMM.

Dear Ms. Weslowski:

Replying to your letter of Dec. 23, 1981, the Milton Historical Commission heartily endorses nomination of the Belcher-Rowe House for National Register listing.

Both principals of the compound name hold prominent places in early Massachusetts Bay history. The house itself has intrinsic historic value.

The Belcher-Rowe House was one of 90 properties included with the Milton inventory taken between 1977 and 1980. A Form B survey report is on file with your office. Form #41

While our inventory was in progress, the Milton Commission regarded the Belcher-Rowe House as one of several properties having potential eligibility for National Register listing. We are happy to endorse the independent effort of the Kenworthy owners to accomplish this end.

As we are sure that the property's historical significance has been meticulously documented by the Kenworthys, we believe there is no purpose in presenting factual material here. Some of the material presented in the Kenworthy's application may have originated from, or been reinforced by, the Milton Commission's survey report.

The Milton Commission is of the opinion that certain other inventoried properties merit consideration for National Register listing. We expect to be in touch with you about these in the near future.

Yours very truly,

Joseph C. Burley
Joseph C. Burley, Chairman
Milton Historical Commission



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

STATE MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered APRIL 1, 1982

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Felton, Nathaniel, Houses	Peabody Essex County
<u>Belcher-Rowe House</u>	Milton Norfolk County
Mills, Davis, House	Needham Norfolk County
Old South Union Church	Weymouth Norfolk County

Notified

Honorable Edward M. Kennedy
Honorable Paul E. Tsongas
Honorable Nicholas Mavroules
Honorable Brian J. Donnelly
Honorable John Joseph Moakley
Honorable Gerry E. Studts

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mrs. Patricia L. Weslowski
Executive Director, Massachusetts
Historical Commission
294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

Mid-Atlantic Regional Office, NPS
North Atlantic Regional Office, NPS