

FORM H - PARKS AND  
LANDSCAPE FEATURES

USGS Quad  
**Marlboro**

Area(s)  
**E**

Form No.  
**903**

Forms within  
**904**

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
80 Boylston Street



Town Marlborough

Place (neighborhood or village) \_\_\_\_\_

Mount Pleasant Hill

Address Granger Boulevard

Historic Name Ward Park

Ownership: [ private ] [X] public

Type of Park or Landscape Feature  
(check one):

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park   | <input type="checkbox"/> farm land      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> green or common   | <input type="checkbox"/> mine or quarry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> garden            | <input type="checkbox"/> training field |
| <input type="checkbox"/> boulevard/parkway |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other _____       |   |

Date of Construction 1925-26

Source Marlborough Annual Repts

Landscape architect N/A

Location of Plans \_\_\_\_\_

none

Alterations/Intrusions (with dates) \_\_\_\_\_

Several modern sports facilities; small pool

house (See Page 2)

Condition fair

Acreage ca 17 acres

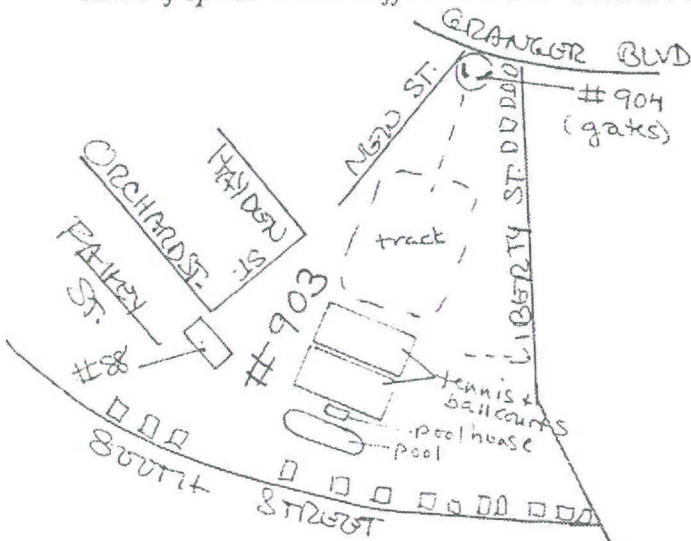
Setting In hollow between residential neighbor-

hoods of Mt. Pleasant and Fairmount Hills

Granger Blvd at N end

Sketch Map

Draw a map of the area indicating properties within it. Number each property for which individual inventory forms have been completed. Label streets, including route numbers, if any. Attach a separate sheet if space is not sufficient here. Indicate north.



Recorded by Anne Forbes, consultant

Organization for Marlboro Hist Comm

Date 6/30/94

## PARKS AND LANDSCAPES FORM

### VISUAL/DESIGN ASSESSMENT *see continuation sheet*

*Describe topography and layout. Note structures such as bandstands, gazebos, sheds, stone walls, monuments, and fountains. Note landscaping features such as formal plantings, agricultural plantings, and bodies of water. If possible, compare current appearance with original.*

Artemus Ward Park is a ca. 17-acre oblong open space in the heart of Marlborough center. It occupies a wide hollow just southwest of the commercial downtown, and is overlooked by Mt. Pleasant Hill to the west, and Fairmount Hill to the southeast. Stretching south from today's Granger Boulevard to South street, it is bordered on the east by Liberty Street, and the northwest by New and Hayden Streets. The Bigelow School (See Form #88,) is situated at the park's southwest corner.

At the southern end, adjoining the school property, are six tennis courts and an oval wading pool, which has a modern cabana structure facing its north side. A children's playground lies east of the tennis courts. (Cont.)

### HISTORICAL NARRATIVE *see continuation sheet*

*Discuss history of use. Evaluate the historical associations of the landscape/park with the community.*

Upon his death, Artemus Ward (1848-1925, ) left \$35,000 to the city in his will for a memorial family gate at the entrance to the new 17-acre Ward Park. The gate was built that same year by Marlborough's most prominent builder, Thomas Hurley. Over the years, the park gradually became the city's most complete outdoor recreational facility, with a track, football field, tennis courts, and spectator stands. The Kiwanis Club later sponsored the building of a wading pool at the west end of the meadow.

This park occupies what may be the longest continuous open space in Marlborough. The meadow was part of the houselot portion of the old Ward/Hayden farm, which, with its venerable farmhouse--twice burned, and used as a garrison during King Philip's War--dated to the earliest years of the town. The property passed down from the Ward through the Hayden family. The house was gone by the end of the nineteenth century, and its replacement was built at #35 Hayden Street (MHC# 373) in about 1890. Over two centuries most of the land was gradually subdivided and sold for the building of the neighborhoods south of West Main Street, but a ca. twenty-acre parcel (most of it remaining from the original William Ward farm,) was acquired by the city in the early part of this century, first for skating pond, and later developed as a playground, called Hayden Meadow Playground. Artemus Ward, a descendant of William Ward and of his great-grandson, Gen. Artemus Ward, first Commander-in-Chief in the American Revolution, dedicated the gateway (See Form#904.\*) to the memory of both ancestors, and today the entire park is named for him.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES:

Centennial '90: Marlborough the City. 1990.

Hudson.

Bigelow.

Marlborough Annual Reports.

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Community

Property

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
80 Boylston Street  
Boston, MA 02116

Marlborough

Ward Park

Area  
E

Form No.  
903

VISUAL/DESIGN ASSESSMENT, cont.

Most of the area north of the tennis courts is filled with a dirt track, which has a baseball diamond laid out in its southwest section.

Just north of the track is the recently-relocated **Artemus Ward Gate (#904)**. This is a symmetrical, two-part, semi-circular masonry structure of random-laid granite block embellished with concrete and wrought iron accents. Mounted at the center of each section is a bronze plaque in an elaborate, high sandstone enframement topped with a broken pediment and urn. The original wrought-iron gates are gone, but the space between the two parts of the structure provides the official gateway to the park. On either side of the opening is a high stone gatepost post to which is attached a narrow section of wrought-iron fencing rising to a high "swan's neck" form of wrought iron filigree. Each gatepost is topped with a wide, elaborate wrought-iron finial. Between each post and the curved wall beside it is a short section of iron-picket fencing. Both the fencing and the swan's neck ornaments are embellished with a wrought-iron "W".

There is very little landscape planting within the park. At the south end few young deciduous trees line a curving footpath that leads up to South Street, and a few others are scattered around the edges of the open space. A short fieldstone retaining wall parallels the line of Liberty Street a short distance down the hill near the north end.

NOTE TO FORM #904, "ARTEMUS WARD GATE":

The park originally extended farther west, across the path of the present Granger Boulevard, with the gates positioned just west of Windsor Street on what is today the parking lot behind the Addison and Middleton Blocks.(MHC #s 134 and 99.) They were moved to their present location in the early 1980's as the area was undergoing urban renewal and Granger Boulevard was being constructed.

