

HISTORIC RESOURCE INFORMATION FORM*

*Data on this Historic Resource Information form is for informational purposes only.

CEN0061

Name, Location, Ownership

1. Historic name Dr. Leonard B. Morrill Park
2. Street and number Plymouth Street
3. City or town Center Harbor
4. Current owner Town of Center Harbor

Function or Use

5. Current use(s) Municipal Park
6. Historic use(s) Municipal Park

Architectural Information

7. Construction date 1952
8. Source Centre Harbor Historical Society
9. Architect/Builder _____
10. Source _____
11. Alterations, with dates _____

12. Moved? no ☒ yes ☐ date: _____

Exterior Features

13. Foundation material N/A
 14. Siding N/A
 15. Roof material N/A
 16. Chimney material N/A
 17. Chimney location N/A
 18. Number of stories N/A
 19. Entry location N/A
 20. Windows N/A
- Replacement? no ☐ yes ☐ date: _____

Site Features

21. Outbuildings N/A
22. Landscape features Benches, plantings
23. Acreage 0.52 Acres



Photo #1 Direction: _____

Date November 1, 2017**Form prepared by**24. Name Karen Ponton25. Date of survey January 2018

26. Email address and/or phone number _____

Please take a moment to tell the Center Harbor Heritage Commission something about a local Historical Resource that is important to you, such as a building, bridge, cellar hole, stone wall or sculpture over 50 years in age. **Any** information you could share with us on this form is greatly appreciated. Collecting this data is part of our effort to document and preserve the rich heritage of our Town, learn more about our local landmarks and educate the public about history in our own backyards. This information will not be used for tax purposes and your participation is entirely voluntary. Thank you.

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27. History of Building:

The site of the Dr. Leonard B. Morrill Park was originally the site of the **Moulton Tavern**. This Tavern was owned by **Jonathan Smith Moulton** (1785-1855) and located along the stage route between Concord and Fryeburg.¹ His grandfather, General. Jonathan Moulton (1726-1788) was one of sixty-two individuals that were granted the township of Moultonboro in 1763. After he granted a fourteen hundred pound ox to Governor Wentworth in Portsmouth, he asked to charter a small gore adjoining Moultonboro in compensation. This "put General Moulton in possession of a track thereafter called by him New Hampton, containing nineteen thousand, four hundred and twenty-two acres." (On early maps of New Hampshire, the area is called "Moultonborough Addition"² and contains the present towns of New Hampton and most of Center Harbor).³

In about 1835, Jonathan Moulton's son, **John Carroll Moulton** (1810-1894) tore down the Tavern and built the **Moulton House**, the first hotel in Center Harbor (Photos 2 & 3). In 1833, John C. Moulton married Nellie Bean Senter (1809-1860), a descendent of Colonel Joseph Senter. The Moulton House was the first hotel in Center Harbor. He was also engaged in manufacturing in Lake Village (Lakeport) of Laconia, moving there in 1841. In 1861, he became a partnership in the Laconia Car Company, a major business in Laconia (then Meredith Bridge).

In 1848, John C. Moulton sold the hotel to his uncle, **John Hale Moulton** (1795-1885), who ran the hotel until his retirement in 1880 (Photo 5). John H. Moulton "was known to the community and elsewhere as an active and popular host, possessing the courteousness and affability of the inn-keeper of the old school."⁴ He died in his hotel in 1885.

By 1860, the hotel was operated by John H. Moulton's son-in-law, **Smith F. Emery** (1835-1921). In 1868, the hotel was enlarged to accommodate 75 guests. Emery had been brought to Center Harbor by his parents at age 4. As a young man, he learned the shoemaker's trade. In connection with running the Moulton House, Mr. Emery carried "on a farm of fifty acres, twenty acres of which is devoted to the raising of vegetables for the supply of his table."⁵ He also worked as an insurance broker, serving as an agent for the Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company in New Hampshire.

Eventually, Emery's daughter, Caroline Porter Emery (1864-1949) and her husband James Walter Hill (1864-1919) took over the hotel. They managed the hotel together until James died in 1919. For some time afterwards, Caroline kept the hotel running. She then sold the property to Edward Dane, reserving life-time occupancy. When Caroline Hill died in 1949, the hotel furnishings were sold at auction. Due to structural weakness, the building was demolished in 1951. (Photos 2 & 3)

The Moulton House is shown on both the 1860 and 1892 maps of Center Harbor.

In 1952, Edward and Ernest B. Dane donated the land to the Town for a park in honor of the beloved town physician Dr. Leonard B. Morrill (1892-1951). A bolder in the park bears the inscription: "To Our Beloved Family Physician Dr. Leonard B. Morrill 1864-1951 This Park is Dedicated." (Photo 6)

¹ Johnson, 169. The Moulton Hotel Stagecoach, which probably transported tourists to the White Mountains is in the collection of the Boston Historical Society.

² *Biographical Review*, 333.

³ Jonathan Smith Moulton's father, **Benning Moulton** (1761-1834) settled in Center Harbor in 1782.

⁴ Hurd, 727-728.

⁵ *Biographical Review*, 350.

Community Planning Survey
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last update 11.10.2017

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28. Are you aware of other buildings in the community like this one? Where are (were) they located?

29. Bibliography and/or References:

Anonymous. *Biographical Review Volume XXI: Containing Life Sketches of Leading Citizens of Strafford and Belknap Counties, New Hampshire*. Boston: Biographical Review Publishing Company, 1897.

Centre Harbor Historical Society. *Centre Harbor New Hampshire Historical Society 15th Anniversary 1791-1986*. Laconia, NH: J & J Printing Inc., 1986. Pages 46-48.

Hurd, D. H. & Co. *Town and City Atlas of the State of New Hampshire*. Boston: D. H. Hurd & Co., 1892.

Hurd, D. Hamilton, ed. *History of Merrimack and Belknap Counties, New Hampshire*. Philadelphia: J. W. Lewis & Co., 1885.

Johnson, Clarence. "Center Harbor," *The Granite Monthly*, Vol. XXIII, 1897: 164-172.

Woodford, E. M. "Map of Belknap County, New Hampshire." 1860. Library of Congress Website (www.loc.gov)

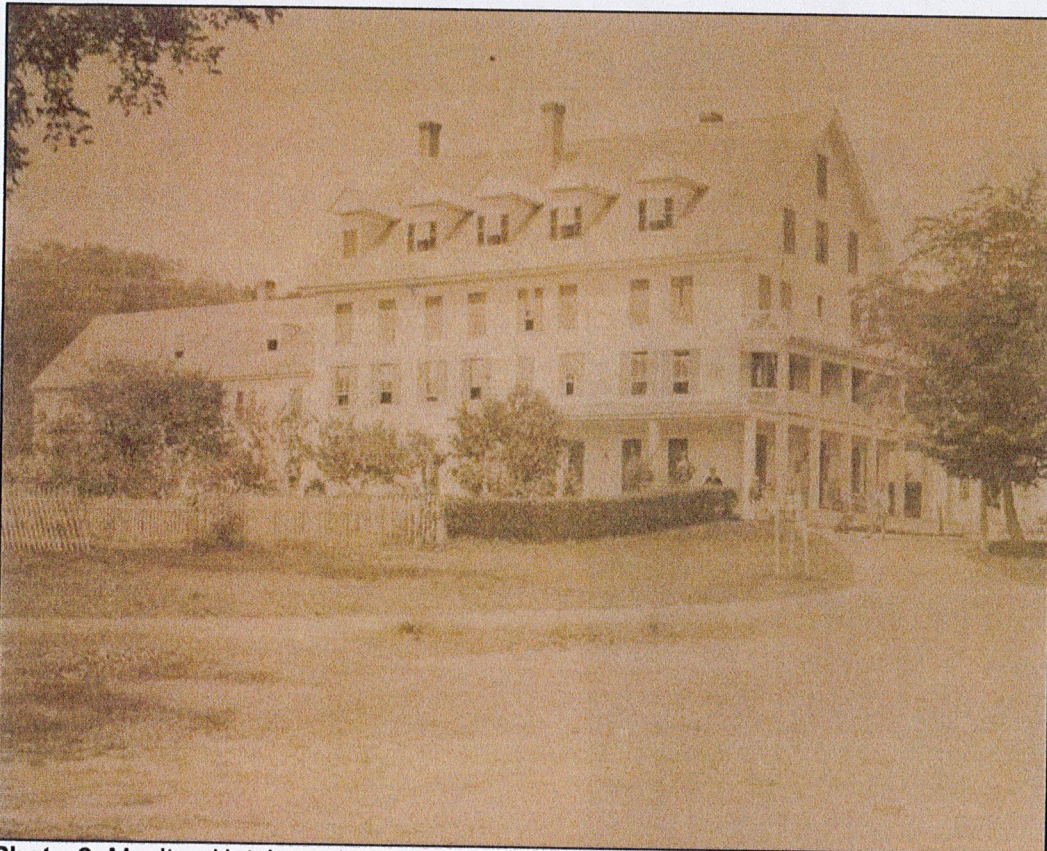


Photo 2: Moulton Hotel, ca. 1872 (New York Public Library collections)



Photo 3: Moulton House Hotel, ca. 1897 (*Granite Monthly*, Vol. XXIII, 166).



Photo 4: Moulton Hotel Coach was donated to the Boston Historical Society (Centre Harbor Historical Society, 47)



Photo 5: John H. Moulton (Hurd, 727)



Photo 4: Boulder in Morrill Memorial Park (Photographed November 1, 2017)