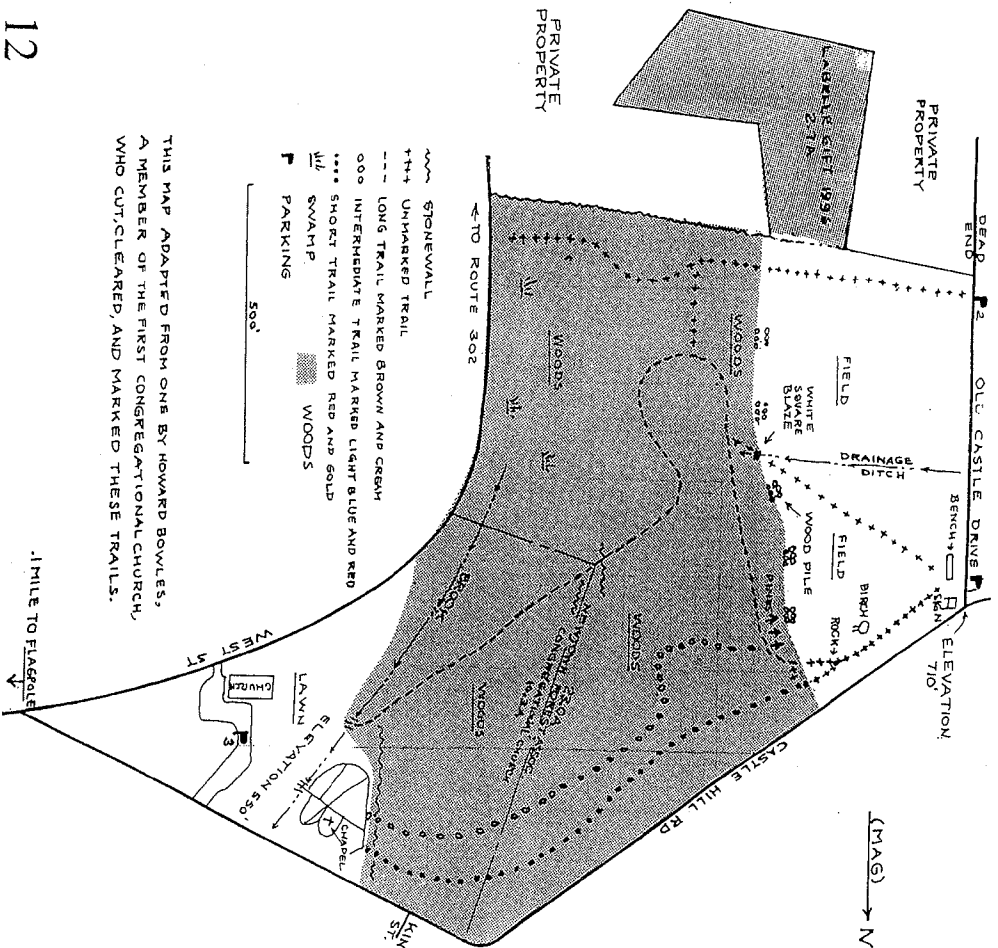


LOCATED IN P2

WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING AT! Panning to right from bench: over the Budd House is IBM Southbury (brick sprawl) 8 miles. Just to right of Congregational Church steeple is Oxford Airport (long row of white buildings) 11 miles. Between Cong. Ch. Steeple and Flag Pole radio tower south of Waterbury 17 miles; tan route sign on 184 Exit 11; Newtown High School; chimney at Fairfield Hills Hospital; Governor's Horse Guard barracks. Vehicles passing just to right of there are on Wasserman Way. Due north of P2 is the red and white water tower at Southbury Training School 8 miles.



THIS MAP ADAPTED FROM ONE BY HOWARD BOWLES, A MEMBER OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, WHO CUT, CLEARED, AND MARKED THESE TRAILS.

Ownership: The Newtown Forest Assoc. Inc. 26 A.

In 1708 when the Proprietors of the Town of Newtown doled out grants to settlers, Thomas Sharp received twenty acres which today is the core of The Nettleton Preserve. Too hilly to farm, it became a pasture where cattle and sheep grazed. Taunton District was developing about then, and a road called a "highway" in old deeds, now called Castle Hill Road, soon skirted the hillside leading to Taunton.

By the 1880s a lane led south off the highway (Old Castle Drive today). Along this lane one spring day in '88 drove Pierre Lorillard Ronald in his classy coach and four. Falling in love with the supert site he bought one hundred acres along the ridge including Thomas Sharp's twenty. Born in 1826, he was a wealthy and dashing horse-fancier known as "The Father of American Coaching."

After the Civil War indoor plumbing came into use. Making a fortune in it, he built a medieval stone castle on the hillside. His wife preferred London to Newtown but her absence didn't phase him. With his lavish parties in a mansion so different than the staid colonials lining Main Street, he remained a legendary figure in local history long after he died in 1905.

This was fortunate. He might not have appreciated the activities of August 16-18, 1912 on what was now called Castle Hill. 20,000 U.S. Army troops divided into the Red and the Blue armies, were waging sham battles in western Fairfield County. "It's the rule of the U.S. Army to have maneuvers every two years in different parts of the county," explained the Commanding General to the *Newtown Bee's* reporter, "to give our militia experience and acquaint the people with army life first-hand."

Newtowners grew fully acquainted on August 16 when the more aggressive Reds backed the Blues into defensible positions on Castle Hill. Thrilled by booming cannon and the sight of long lines of soldiers charging across the open hillside, 5000 spectators crammed Cole's Hill to the north (later the Gretsck place), undeterred by dust and sweltering heat.

2500' above, flew an aeroplane carrying officers who wired reports of the battle to headquarters at the Newtown Inn (later the C.H. Booth Library). On that rainy Saturday night after the battle, the Hawleyville train depot sustained what Dan Cruson called "a logistical nightmare" as the 20,000 doughboys, their horses, and gear, boarded 15 trains and left Newtown.

The general stayed in the house known today as the Balcony House on Main Street as the guest of Newtown's number one citizen, Arthur Treat Nettleton. 50 years old, President and Treasurer of the Newtown Savings Bank, by shrewd, conservative investments he had developed the institution into one of the foremost savings banks in the State. His power was absolute. As Chairman of the

THE NETTLETON PRESERVE (CASTLE HILL)

Ecclesiastical Society (today's Board of Deacons), the governing body of the Congregational Church, he told the church it could not build new offices until funds were in hand. Ten years later, the necessary \$41,599 was in the bank and on October 21, 1948 Nettleton himself laid the cornerstone for the present Church House at 41A Main Street.

Born in 1851, Nettleton was an orphan when at age 18 he moved from Bridgewater to Newtown to live with a cousin, Charles Henry Peck. Living in the Balcony House and mourning the loss of an only son, the Pecks adopted the young "Dick Whittington," and got him started as a clerk in a general store. Marrying Jennie Morris, he took his bride out to St. Paul, Minnesota where real estate was booming. But the rowdy frontier scene was too much for her. A year later Jennie died, and Arthur returned to the Balcony House, a childless widower, to live there the rest of his long life.

By 1920, when Mary Hawley was orphaned and at age 63 an enormously wealthy heiress, he advised her how to benefit her hometown. Edmund Town Hall, the Hawley School, the Cyrenius H. Booth Library, built after her death in 1930, all owe their construction to her generosity.

In 1940 he became president of the Newtown Forest Association. His aim was the preservation of open space. A year later he bought the Castle Hill property whose crumbling castle had been torn down and the land become a pasture. In 1951 Nettleton died. Unaccountably, his executors waited until 1973 to memorialize his devotion to Newtown. They donated Castle Hill to the N.F.A. in his memory. Few properties in Newtown are haunted by as many contrasting ghosts who strangely enough, all shared a mutual need or love for open space with a view. CASTLE HILL #14/2000x