

# Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

## Scanned Record Cover Page

<b>Inventory No:</b>	SWN.1
<b>Historic Name:</b>	Barney, Mason House
<b>Common Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	1 Barneyville Rd
<b>City/Town:</b>	Swansea
<b>Village/Neighborhood:</b>	North Swansea;
<b>Local No:</b>	67;
<b>Year Constructed:</b>	R 1807
<b>Architectural Style(s):</b>	Colonial Revival; Federal;
<b>Use(s):</b>	Single Family Dwelling House;
<b>Significance:</b>	Architecture; Maritime History;
<b>Area(s):</b>	SWN.A
<b>Designation(s):</b>	Nat'l Register District (02/16/1990); Nat'l Register MRA (02/16/1990);
<b>Building Materials:</b>	Wall: Brick; Wood Shingle;
<b>Demolished</b>	No



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125  
[www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc)

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NRMRA  
NRDIS > 2/16/90  
USGS - E. PROV.  
PL - N. SWAN.

NR

AREA	E	FORM NO.
A		1

1C  
21NC

Town SWANSEA

Address 1 Barneyville Road

Historic Name Mason Barney House

Use: Present Residence

Original Residence

DESCRIPTION

Date 1802 - 1812

Source History of Swansea

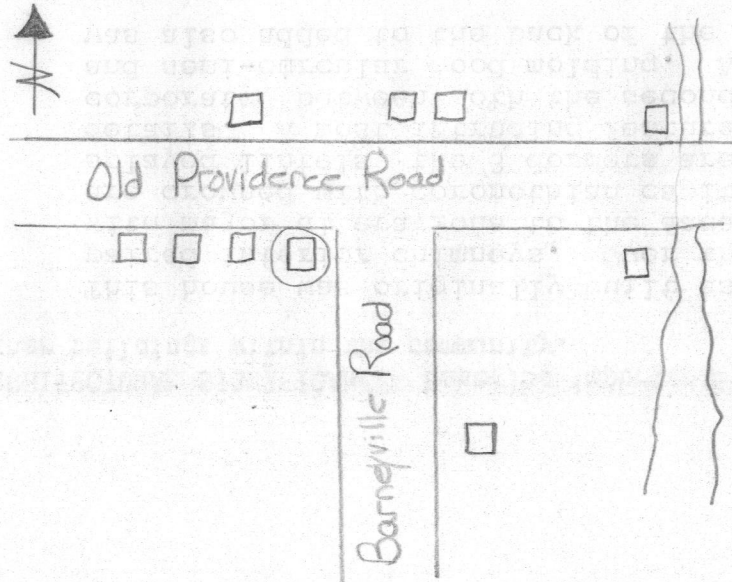
Style Georgian with later Italiante features

Architect \_\_\_\_\_

tion Exterior Wall Fabric Wooden shingles

s Outbuildings \_\_\_\_\_

intersection(s).  
Indicate north



Major Alterations (with dates) \_\_\_\_\_

Considerable alterations early 1900

Condition \_\_\_\_\_

Moved No Date \_\_\_\_\_

Acreage Less than one acre

Setting Located near the Palmer River

this house is nestled between trees

and thic shrubs on a corner lot. Its

originally lavish gardens are long gone.

Recorded by Kim Valente/H. Pierce  
V. Frost '79

Organization Swansea Historical Commission

Date April, 1986

UTM REFERENCE \_\_\_\_\_

USGS QUADRANGLE East Providence, R.I., MA 1971-79

SCALE \_\_\_\_\_



NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

**ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE** Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.

This house was originally built as a 5-bay, 2-story Late Georgian with paired interior chimneys. Over the years however, it had been assorised with major alterations to the facade in paticular. The corner boards are crowned with coronothian capitals, the 2 over 2 windows have slight splayed lintels, the 3 dormers are pedimented with elaborate Paladian details. A most intruding feature is the central dormer which is incorporated between both the second and third floors with fluted pilasters and semi-circular hood molding. A brick ell addition with a greek portico was also added to the back of the house.

**HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE** Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.

This house was constructed for Mason Barney probably by shipwrights. His father had a small shipyard across the street but left Swansea about 1800. Mason Barney who was born in 1772 took over the yard and launched his first ship in 1802. He developed an extraordinary operation building finally ships of about 1000 tons. These ships constructed in the marshes beside the narrow winding Palmer River and floated down stream to Warren for fitting were known all over the world as "Bungtown" ships. To support this enterprise Mr. Barney developed a village where he was landlord, storekeeper, postmaster, banker and at one time even made coins called "Bungtown Coppers." Most of the building was done by his own workmen. In spite of his domination of the lives of his employees, he was admired and respected not only at home but in the far flung fields of the shipping industry.

Mr. Barney married first in 1802 and again in 1812. Considering the construction of the house and the development of his business it seems likely that the house might have been built about the time of his second marriage or a little earlier.

In 1854 Daniel R. Child married Elizabeth Mason Barney and they resided here. Mr. Child served as a town Selectman for eight years and as a Representative in the Mass. Legislature for one term.

At the turn of the century Lorenzo P. Sturtevant, a partner with Mr. Child in the jewelry business purchased this house. Then extensive renovations were

(cont'd)

**BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES**

Swansea Tercentenary - Chronicles of Life in Swansea, 1967  
History of Swansea, O.O. Wright, 1917  
Vital Records of the Town of Swansea  
Atlas of Surveys, Bristol County Mass. 1895

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: SWANSEA Barneyville	Form No: 1
Property Name: Mason Barney House	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

Historical Significance cont'd

made. Ornate windows, doors and porches were added. He maintained lovely grounds with flowers and a fountain. Mr. Sturtevant entertained lavishly.



Staple to Inventory form at bottom



FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

In Area no.	Form no. <del>67</del> 1
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1. Town Swansea  
Address 1 Barneyville Road  
Name Mason Barney House  
Present use Residence

Present owner Jeffrey & Nancy Cole

3. Description:

Date 1802-1812

Source History of Swansea

Style 2 story gable roof with 3 interior chimneys

Architect Unknown

Exterior wall fabric Wooden shingle

Outbuildings (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

Other features Small ell on each side of house. Large brick ell on rear.

Dormers plus palladian type window.

Altered Considerably Date early 1900

Moved No Date \_\_\_\_\_

5. Lot size:

One acre or less  Over one acre \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate frontage 150 feet

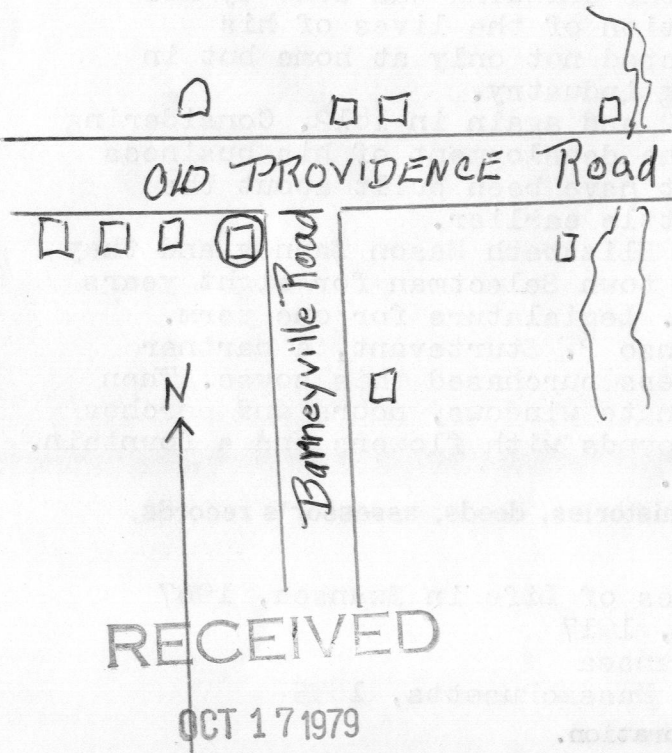
Approximate distance of building from street  
25 feet

6. Recorded by Helen Pierce Virginia Frost

Organization Swansea Historical Soc.

Date Sept. 23, 1979

4. Map. Draw sketch of building location in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings. Indicate north.



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OCT 17 1979

MASS. HIST. COMM.

(over)

7. Original owner (if known) Mason Barney

Original use Residence

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates Inn for a short period. Later a two family house.

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

Aboriginal	<u>      </u>	Conservation	<u>      </u>	Recreation	<u>      </u>
Agricultural	<u>      </u>	Education	<u>      </u>	Religion	<u>      </u>
Architectural	<u>      </u>	Exploration/ settlement	<u>      </u>	Science/ invention	<u>      </u>
The Arts	<u>      </u>	Industry	<u>  X  </u>	Social/ humanitarian	<u>      </u>
Commerce	<u>  X  </u>	Military	<u>      </u>	Transportation	<u>      </u>
Communication	<u>      </u>	Political	<u>  X  </u>		
Community development	<u>      </u>				

9. Historical significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

This house was constructed for Mason Barney probably by shipwrights. His father had a small shipyard across the street but left Swansea about 1800. Mason Barney who was born in 1772 took over the yard and launched his first ship in 1802. He developed an extraordinary operation building finally ships of about 1000 tons. These ships constructed in the marshes beside the narrow winding Palmer River and floated down stream to Warren for fitting, were known all over the world as "Bungtown" ships. To support this enterprise Mr. Barney developed a village where he was landlord, storekeeper, postmaster, banker and at one time even made coins called "Bungtown Coppers". Most of the building was done by his own workmen. In spite of his domination of the lives of his employees, he was admired and respected not only at home but in the far flung fields of the shipping industry.

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10. Bibliography and/or references (such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.)

Swansea Tercentenary - Chronicles of Life in Swansea, 1967  
 History of Swansea, O.O. Wright, 1917  
 Vital Records of the Town of Swansea  
 Atlas of Surveys, Bristol County Massachusetts, 1895

This house is in the process of restoration.