

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	SWN.A
Historic Name:	Barneyville Historic District
Common Name:	
City/Town:	Swansea
Village/Neighborhood:	North Swansea;
Local No:	
Year Constructed:	
Use(s):	Residential District;
Significance:	Architecture; Community Planning;
Designation(s):	Nat'l Register District (02/16/1990); Nat'l Register MRA (02/16/1990);
Building Materials:	
Demolished	No



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

This file was accessed on: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 at 6:27 PM

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02116

Area Letter Form numbers in this Area

A	(See Data Sheet)
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Town Swansea, Mass. MRA
SWANSEA

Name of Area (if any) _____

Barneyville Historic District

Present Use residential

General Date or Period _____

ca. 1750-1939

General Condition good

Acreeage approximately 27 acres

Recorded by Preservation Plus/K. Broomer

Organization Swansea Historical Commission

Date March 1988/October 1989

Photos (3"x3" or 3"x5" black & white) Indicate on back of each photo street addresses for buildings shown. Staple to left side of form.

Sketch Map. Draw a general 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. Indicate north. (Attach a separate sheet if space here is not sufficient).

(see attached map)

UTM REFERENCE

A 19 310720 4626810	E 19 309770 4626650
B 19 310710 4626660	F 19 310010 4626890
C 19 310030 4626700	G 19 310120 4626840
D 19 309870 4626540	

USGS QUADRANGLE East Providence, RI-MA 1971/1979
SCALE 1:24000

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

Barneyville Historic District contains the greatest concentration of buildings associated with growth of the village from the mid-18th century through the early 20th century. A location of early agricultural settlement oriented toward the Palmer (Warren) River, Barneyville became a self-sufficient village with the flourishing of its successive shipbuilding and jewelry-making industries in the 19th century. Now entirely residential, the district maintains its rural character. Retaining integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association, the Barneyville Historic District meets Criteria A and C on the local level.

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

Located in the northwestern section of Swansea, Barneyville Historic District is a rural, residential area comprising approximately 27 acres. Old Providence Road connects village settlement on the east and west sides of the Palmer River, also known historically as the Warren River. The district consists of a nucleated settlement near the intersection of Barneyville and Old Providence Roads giving way to more scattered settlement east of the river.

The area contains 13 contributing resources and 16 noncontributing resources. Two historically significant sites, those of the Jonathan Barney-Mason Barney Shipyard and the Myles Garrison House, are marked by stone monuments. Noncontributing structures are primarily modest contemporary houses and secondary structures such as garages. Of the seven contributing wood-frame residences, two were built in the Georgian style, one in the Federal, two in the Greek Revival, and two in the Colonial Revival. The district includes typical examples of the 2½-story house of the prominent 18th-century farmer, a double house

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain historical importance of area and how the area relates to the development of other areas of the community.

Barneyville was first settled in the 17th century, when the Rev. John Myles, pastor of the First Baptist Church and one of Swansea's first settlers, built his garrisoned home near the present intersection of Barneyville Road and Old Providence Road after 1663. A memorial tablet (1912, MHC #A5) was erected near the site of the garrison, which burned in 1909. Connecting colonial development to the east in Swansea and to the west in what is now Barrington, Rhode Island was Myles (also known as Miles) Bridge over the Palmer River, one of the earliest bridges erected in this section of Bristol County. The first bridge may have dated to the early 18th century, for the Provincial Statutes of 1736-1737 refer to a Miles Bridge on a county road which had decayed. The towns of Swansea and Barrington were ordered to build a cart bridge at the location of the early bridge. Swansea raised the funds to maintain the bridge with a lottery in 1749. Replaced several times, including with an iron bridge in 1878, the present concrete abutment bridge was constructed in 1938 (Photo #3).

The village's earliest identity as Barneyville and its association with the shipbuilding industry in Swansea began in the late 18th century, when the Barney Shipyard was begun by Jonathan Barney. Barney, whose grandfather had moved to the Swansea area from Salem in 1690, built the family homestead east of the river ca. 1750 (166 Old Providence Road, MHC #A3, Photo #1). Jonathan Barney also built the double house at 22-24 Barneyville Road (1771-1774, MHC #A2) across the river, on speculation that the success of his shipyard would translate into growth in the surrounding area. The house is the earliest known example of the double-

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- Hurd, Duane H. History of Bristol County, MA. Philadelphia, 1883.
 Hutt, Frank Walcott. A History of Bristol County, MA. NY: Lewis Hist. Publ. Co., 1924.
 Pierce, Helen, ed. Swansea Tercentenary 1667-1967. Swansea, MA, 1967.
 Wright, O. O. History of Swansea 1667-1917. Swansea, MA, 1917.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Swansea, Mass. MRA SWANSEA	Form No: A see DDS
Property Name: Barneyville H.D.	

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

Architectural Significance (continued)

built for workers, and a typical 19th-century farmhouse.

The oldest dwelling in Barneyville is the Barney House at 166 Old Providence Road (ca. 1750, MHC #A3, Photo #1). Located at the eastern edge of the district but oriented west toward the river (i.e., perpendicular to the road), the Barney House is one of the more architecturally ambitious houses in the district. Of the characteristic 2 1/2-story, side-gable, double-pile form with double interior chimneys, the clapboarded Georgian structure has a five-bay facade distinguished by corner quoins and long first floor windows containing 9/9 sash. Elements believed to date to the Federal period include a hood and engaged column surround at the center entry. Also during the Federal period, a two-story gabled rear ell of brick was constructed. This was an unusual building material in Swansea residential construction and particularly at Barneyville, where wood was in constant supply at the shipyard on the river.

Jonathan Barney, founder of the shipyard in the village, built the double house now known as the Daggett Place at 22-24 Barneyville Road (1771-1774, MHC #A2). This 1 1/2-story house with steeply pitched gable roof is unique in the district for its six-bay facade and paired center doors. Each unit has a central chimney. Modestly detailed with cornerboards and 12/12 sash, the house displays an affinity with the Georgian style in its door surrounds with Doric pilasters and five-light transoms.

A second large dwelling is the Mason Barney House at 1 Barneyville Road (1802-1812, MHC #A1, Photo #4). Prominently sited at the corner of Barneyville Road and Old Providence Road, the house is oriented toward the easterly approach from the river. The 2 1/2-story, Federal style house with five-bay center-entry facade and double interior chimneys was remodeled ca. 1900. Colonial Revival details added at that time include wide corner pilasters bearing oversized Corinthian capitals, a central gabled wall dormer containing a tripartite window, and flanking gabled dormers with fluted pilasters, keyed surrounds, and tracery in the upper sash. A brick rear ell with a columned porch was also added to the house at that time.

The Norton-Barney House at 227 Old Providence Road (ca. 1840, MHC #A162) on the east bank of the river is a typical 2 1/2-story Greek Revival structure with pedimented end gable, three-bay facade, and side-hall plan. The single-story flat-roofed entrance porch is richly detailed with fluted Doric columns. The door surround incorporates a wide frieze, dentil cornice, pilasters with recessed Greek key motifs, and three-quarter sidelights. All windows contain 6/6 sash. A one-story west wing with picture window was probably added in the 1950s. Another Greek Revival house, more modest in scale and located at the closely settled western edge of the district, is 77 Barneyville Road (ca. 1821, MHC #A161). This gabled, 1 1/2-story, 3-bay dwelling has a wide frieze, cornerboards, and 6/6 sash. The end-bay entry is flanked by narrow (possibly later) sidelights and surmounted by a pitched door hood.

A Barney descendant built the farmhouse at 60 Barneyville Road (MHC #A160) ca. 1903. A 1 1/2-story, gable-front and wing dwelling, this vernacular Colonial Revival house displays plain window and door surrounds and bracketed porch posts. While situated on a 16-acre parcel extending from Barneyville Road east to the river, the house and contributing barn and well are located on approximately two acres closest to the road; this acreage comprises the extent of the property within the nominated district. Another 1 1/2-story gable-front house in the Colonial Revival style is 331 Old Providence Road (ca. 1920, not surveyed). Located on the west bank of the river near the bridge, this house is currently abandoned.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Swansea, Mass. MRA SWANSEA	Form No: A see BDS
Property Name: Barneyville H.D.	

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

Architectural Significance (continued)

Miscellaneous contributing resources include the concrete Old Providence Road bridge over the river (1938, not surveyed), the most recent in a series of bridges at this location. The Myles Garrison House Site Marker (1912, MHC #A5) is a stone monument erected on the site of the house belonging to the earliest known settler of Barneyville, the Rev. John Myles, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Swansea.

Located in two pockets among the historic homes at the western end of the Barneyville district are seven contemporary vernacular houses (5, 47, 51, and 55 Barneyville Road; 328, 363 and 367 Old Providence Road). Placement of these late 1940s or 1950s houses suggests that sections of larger lots with street frontage were sold for development at that time. The houses are generally modest one-story, gable-end structures with projecting enclosed entries. The house type is typical of post-World War II residential construction in Swansea.

Historical Significance (continued)

chimney plan in Swansea. Barney's business was largely confined to small boats for local farmers and fishermen. It was not until 1802, when Jonathan Barney relocated to New York and his son Mason (1782-1869) took over the business, that the shipyard developed rapidly.

Mason Barney's shipyard occupied more than five acres of land on the east side of the river. His first ship was launched in 1803, and by the time the last vessel was launched in 1859, 137 ships had been built in the yard under Mason Barney's supervision. These vessels included gunboats built for the Federal government during the Mexican War (1846-1848), whalers, merchant ships for the China trade, barges for use on the Blackstone Canal, and slave ships. Barney ships were built of timber from surrounding forests, particularly in neighboring Rehoboth and Dighton. Trees were hauled to the shipyard where they were hewn to the proper shape. Lack of a saw mill in Swansea necessitated that planking be brought in from Attleboro and Seekonk. [Swansea Tercent., 23-25] The ships were issued from the shipyard near Myles Bridge and sent downstream to Warren, Rhode Island for fitting. These ships were known as "Bungtown" ships, a name of unknown origin that is still associated with Barneyville today. By 1850 the yard employed more than 175 workers, at a time when the town's population numbered only 280 families.

A self-contained village had developed around Barney's shipbuilding enterprise, one in which he served as landlord, chief employer, storekeeper, postmaster, and banker. At one time Barney minted coins known as "Bungtown Coppers." Extant evidence of his financial success is his house, built by his employees at 1 Barneyville Road (MHC #A1) between 1802 and 1812. This home and the Barney family homestead on the east side of the river are the largest houses in the village. The Barney shipyard closed abruptly in 1861, a direct result of the 1858 financial panic and growing demand for iron, rather than wooden, ships. A site marker at the southeast corner of Old Providence and Barneyville Roads (1983, MHC #A4) documents the importance of the shipyard to the community.

Jewelry manufacturing replaced shipbuilding as Barneyville's mainstay in the third quarter of the 19th century. Daniel R. Child, a carpenter in the Barney shipyard, went to Providence to learn the jewelry business. Returning to Barneyville, Child opened a jewelry factory, located first on the shipyard lot and later on Old Providence Road west of Mason Barney's house. The two-story wood-frame factory (no longer

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INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Swansea, Mass. MRA SWANSEA	Form No: A see DDS
Property Name: Barneyville H.D.	

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

Historical Significance (continued)

extent) produced collar buttons and cuff links, which reportedly were shipped to all parts of the country. Child had married Elizabeth Mason Barney, granddaughter of Mason Barney, in 1854, and the couple eventually resided at the Mason Barney home. Child was politically active, serving eight years as a town selectman and one term as a Representative to the Massachusetts Legislature.

D. R. Child & Co. employed men and women from Swansea and adjoining towns. Barneyville's accessibility via the Providence & Fall River Street Railway accounted for a steady supply of employees. In 1894, the business was sold to J. L. Fenimore and later transferred to Lorenzo P. Sturtevant. Sturtevant, then owner of the Mason Barney House, was responsible for the ca. 1900 remodeling of the building. Sturtevant planted elaborate gardens south of the house which are no longer extant. After more transfers, the jewelry manufacturing business was purchased in 1911 by B. E. Norton and J. A. Wheeler and the name changed to the North Swansea Manufacturing Company. The factory employed 50 to 60 people in the manufacture of collar buttons, sleeve links, tie clasps, and stick pins. Business continued to flourish until the early 1920s when the street railroad, which brought employees to the factory, went out of business. The factory was demolished at an unknown date.

In addition to the industries that supported Barneyville throughout its history, farming and other agriculture-related pursuits were practiced by Barney descendants on their large land-holdings flanking the river in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Algernon H. Barney, who resided at the 1200-acre family homestead at 166 Old Providence Road in the 1890s, sold hay and produce to the City of Providence. He held the garbage contract for the cities of Providence and later Pawtucket, Newport, Fall River, and New Bedford. The refuse provided food for the thousands of hogs that Barney raised over the years. In 1903, John Barney built a farmhouse on the opposite side of the river at 60 Barneyville Road. Some portion of John Barney's 16-acre property is believed to have been cultivated, though the products of the farm have not yet been determined.

Although most of Barneyville's extant buildings served or complemented residential uses, the Greek Revival building at 77 Barneyville Road (MHC #A161) was used as a chapel in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Algernon Barney, who obtained the building from the Free Will Baptist Church, deeded the structure to the Catholic church ca. 1903 for the benefit of the Portuguese immigrants who worked on his farm. This may be the same building where the mission church of St. Francis was established in 1910-1911 by a priest from the Fall River parish of St. Anne's. The building reverted to residential use at an undetermined date. Only one commercial building known to have been associated with Barneyville survives, a vernacular Gothic Revival structure located roughly one-quarter mile east of the historic district at 5 Mason Street. This building, which served various uses as a hotel, store, and post office, has been excluded from the historic district due to the amount of contemporary infill construction between Mason Street and the Barney homestead (166 Old Providence Road) at the eastern edge of the district.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Swansea, Mass. MRA SWANSEA	Form No: A see DDS
Property Name: Barneyville H.D.	

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

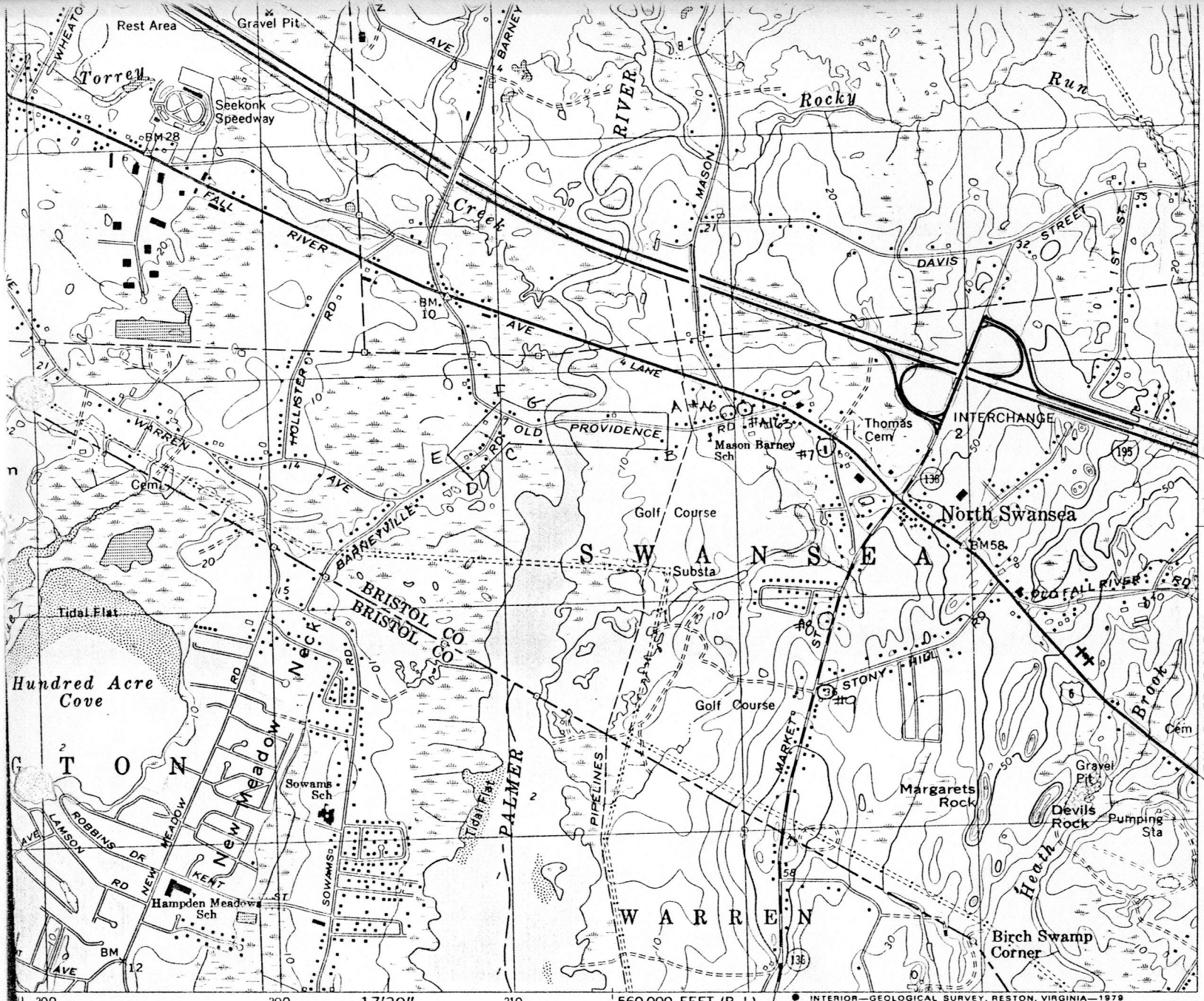
Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

The Barneyville Historic District comprises the greatest concentration of intact resources historically associated with the development of the village at Barneyville from ca. 1750 to ca. 1939. The district also includes a portion of the Palmer (Warren) River where it is spanned by a bridge on Old Providence Road, as well as portions of marshland on the river banks and open space on the south side of Old Providence Road, now used as a golf course. Boundaries incorporate a line of convenience drawn approximately 200 feet from the road on large properties within the district. The district is distinguished from areas of concentrated contemporary development and/or lesser architectural integrity to the east, southeast, and northwest.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

SWN. A

To convert feet to meters
multiply by .3048
To convert meters to feet
multiply by 3.2808



4628

FALL RIVER (INTERCHANGE) (57.6 MI.)
250 000 FEET
(R. I.)

4626

FALL RIVER (P.O.) (7 MI.)

4625000m N

41°45'

BARNEYVILLE HIST. DIST.
SWANSEA, MASS. MRA
EAST PROVIDENCE QUAD
1:24000

A	19 310720	4626810
B	19 310710	4626660
C	19 310030	4626700
D	19 309870	4626540
E	19 309770	4626650
F	19 310010	4626890
G	19 310120	4626840

61 OLD PROVIDENCE RD (#A)
SWANSEA, MASS. MRA
EAST PROVIDENCE QUAD
1:24000

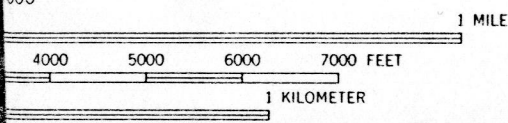
19 310990	4626800
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5 MASON STREET (#A16)
SWANSEA, MASS. MRA
EAST PROV. QUAD 1:24000
19 311050 4626810

FIRST BAPTIST CH. (#7)
4625000m N SWANSEA, MASS. MRA
EAST PROV. QUAD 1:24000
19 311390 4626630

177 MARKET STREET (#8)
SWANSEA, MASS. MRA
EAST PROV. QUAD 1:24000
19 311380 4625890

282 MARKET ST. (#9)
SWANSEA, MASS. MRA
EAST PROV. QUAD
1:24000
19 311360 4625600



10 FEET
DATUM OF 1929
DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road

○ Interstate Route ◻ U. S. Route ○ State Route

1/1

District Data Sheet
Barneyville Historic District, Swansea, Massachusetts

(Map Number indicates: accessors #/general number)

<u>MAP #</u>	<u>MHC #</u>	<u>HISTORIC NAME</u>	<u>STREET ADDRESS</u>	<u>DATE OF CONSTRUCTION</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	<u>STYLE</u>	<u>RESOURCE</u>
20-1	A1	Mason Barney House Shed 2-car garage	1 Barneyville Rd.	1802-12 1960's 1940's	C NC NC	Georgian -- --	B ST B
20-2	--	--	5 Barneyville Rd.	1940's	NC	--	B
20-3	A2	Daggett Place Converted Barn Shed Well House	22 & 24 Barneyville Rd.	1771-74	C NC NC NC	Cape -- -- --	B B ST ST
20-4	--	--	47 Barneyville Rd.	1940's	NC	--	B
20-5	--	--	51 Barneyville Rd.	1940's	NC	--	B
20-6	--	--	55 Barneyville Rd.	1940's	NC	--	B
20-7	A-160	John Barney Farm Barn Well	60 Barneyville Rd.	1903	C C C	Vernacular/ Col. Rev. --	B B ST
20-8	A-161	Assembly Hall Modern Garage	55 Barneyville Rd.	ca. 1850	C NC	Greek Rev. --	B ST
20-9	A6	Norton House	61 Old Providence Rd.	ca. 1779	C	Georgian	B
20-10	A3	Barney House Barn	166 Old Providence Rd.	ca. 1750	C C	Georgian --	B B
20-11	A-162	Norton/Barney House	227 Old Providence Rd.	ca. 1840	C	Greek Rev.	B
20-12	A4	Jonathan Barney Mason Shipyard - Site Marker	Old Providence Rd. & Barneyville Rd.	dedicated 1983	C	--	SI
20-13	A5	Myles Garrison House Site Marker	Old Providence Rd. & Barneyville Rd.	dedicated 1912	C	--	SI
20-14	--	--	331 Old Providence Rd.	--	NC	--	B
20-15	--	--	363 Old Providence Rd.	--	NC	--	B
20-16	--	--	367 Old Providence Rd.	--	NC	--	B
35-17	A-163	Wm. P. Mason H.	5 Mason St.	ca. 1860	C	Gothic Vern. Rev.	B



Viewing West on Old Providence Road with Palmer River and Present bridge (Myles Bridge site) in background. March 1988. SWN.A



227 Old Providence Road. Palmer River in background. March 1988. NW view.
SWN.A



Mason Barney House, 1 Barneyville Road. March 1988. West view.
SWN.A



Barney House, 166 Old Providence Road. March 1988. Southwest view.
SWN.A



Area Letter Form numbers in this Area

A	1-6
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Town SWANSEA

Name of Area (if any) _____

Barneyville

Present Use Residential

General Date or Period _____

Late 18th Century and

Early 19th Century

General Condition _____

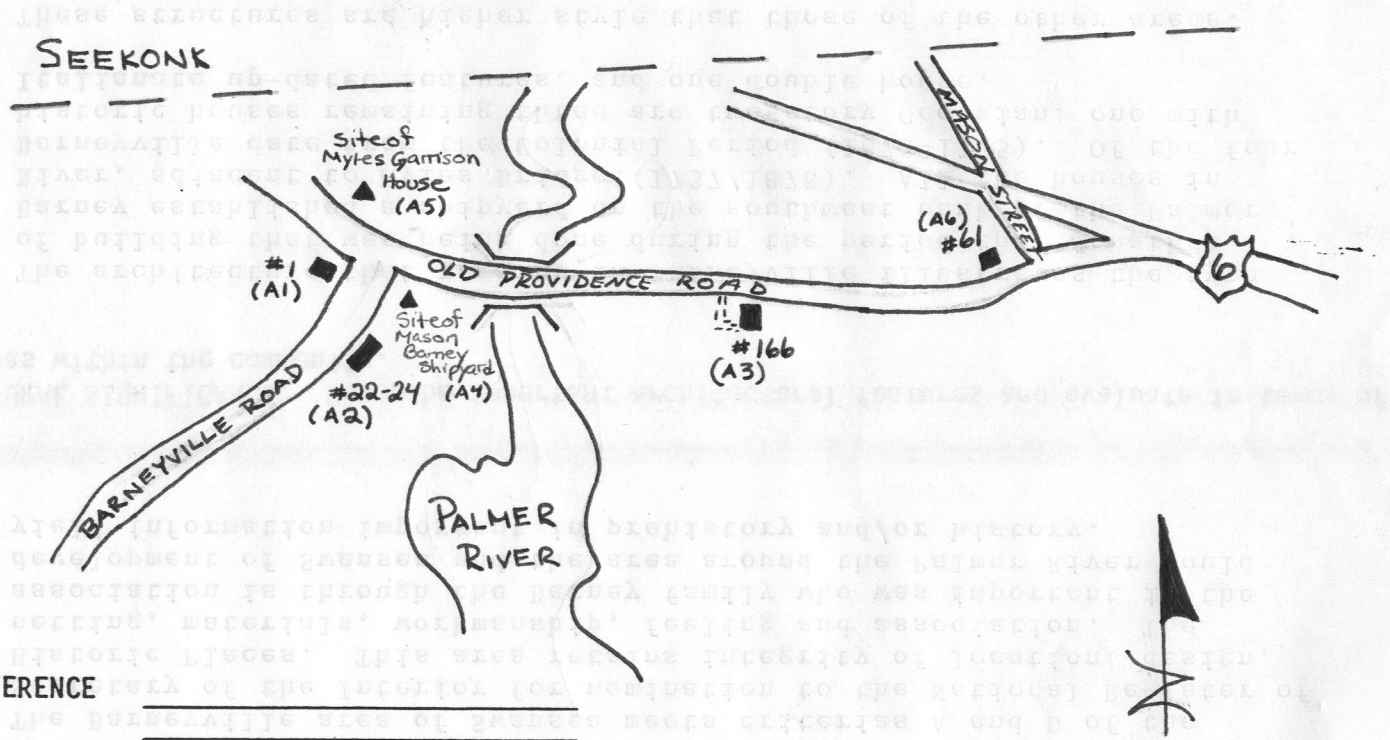
The few remaining structures (4) are in good condition and sites are marked.

Acreege .5 mile square

Recorded by Kay Flynn

Organization Swansea Historical Comm.

Date May, 1986



UTM REFERENCE _____

USGS QUADRANGLE EAST PROVIDENCE, R.I. 1971-79

SCALE _____

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The Barneyville area of Swansea meets criterias A and D of the Secretary of the Interior for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. This area retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The association is through the Barney family who was important in the development of Swansea and the area around the Palmer River could yield information important in prehistory and/or history.

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

The architecture that remains in Barneyville illustrates the type of building that was being done during the period that Jonathan Barney established a shipyard on the southwest bank of the Palmer River, adjacent to Myles Bridge (1737/1878). All the houses in Barneyville date from the Colonial Period (1675-1775). Of the four historic houses remaining three are two-story Georgian, one with Italianate up-dated features, and one double house.

These structures are higher style than those of the other areas.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain historical importance of area and how the area relates to the development of other areas of the community.

Barneyville/North Swansea is located on the Palmer River and close to the R. I. Border. This was the area of the first Baptist Church settlement, of which nothing remains. During the 19th century, Barneyville was the location of a thriving shipyard and later a jewelry factory. None of these are extant in physical structures, however, both the shipyard and Myles Garrison Site have site markers.

In the late 1700's Jonathan Barney established a shipyard on southwest bank of the Palmer River, adjacent to Myles Bridge. The yard flourished between 1802 and 1858. The Barneyville, later changed to North Swansea, Post Office was established in 1830 but is no longer extant.

In 1879 North Swansea Manufacturing Co. manufactured jewelry ("collar buttons, sleeve links, tie clasps and stick pins" - Hutt:819) beginning as the firm D. R. Child. It was established in the shipyard lot at Barneyville. The company changed hands in 1894 and in 1910. By 1911 it was called North Swansea Manufacturing Co. St. Francis Catholic Church was established in Barneyville. However, the shipyard was gone and so was the core of the village.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

See Selected Bibliography and Resources attached to the Historical and Architectural Overview..