

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH 0666343 DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED APR 3 1978
JUL 21 1978
DATE ENTEREDNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Thayer Public Library

AND/OR COMMON

Water Department Building

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

2 John F. Kennedy Memorial Drive

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Braintree

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
11th

STATE

Massachusetts

CODE

025

COUNTY

Norfolk

CODE

021

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

DISTRICT

X BUILDING(S)

STRUCTURE

SITE

OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

X PUBLIC

PRIVATE

BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

IN PROCESS

BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

X OCCUPIED

UNOCCUPIED

WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

YES: RESTRICTED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

NO

PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

COMMERCIAL

PARK

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

X GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Town of Braintree, Board of Selectmen

STREET & NUMBER

1 John F. Kennedy Memorial Drive

CITY, TOWN

Braintree

VICINITY OF

STATE

Massachusetts 02184

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Norfolk County Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

High Street

CITY, TOWN

Dedham

STATE

Massachusetts

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth

DATE

1976

FEDERAL X STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Massachusetts Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

Boston

STATE

Massachusetts

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT
☒ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Thayer Public Library is located in a mixed area of civil, commercial and residential buildings. The 36'x58' one story, rectangular building is sited on about one acre of simply landscaped grounds. The Renaissance Revival style structure has a slate hipped roof and two chimneys. The brick masonry walls rise from a continuous, finished granite belt above the granite foundation. Corners are quoined, and the deep eaves and moulded cornice are supported by granite consoles rising from a continuous narrow granite stringcourse.

The three bay wide facade faces east and is dominated by the center entry. The paired doors are topped by a multi-light transom and set within a round arch with key and boss in spandrels. The entrance is framed by projecting pilaster and a triangular projecting pediment. The fluted pilasters are interrupted by three rusticated blocks and set upon high bases.

Fenestration on the facade consists of paired, double tiered 2/2 sash framed by granite pilaster and segmental arch with key and boss in the spandrels. The top pair of windows are cut to fit the arch. Fenestration on the side elevations consists of a single double tiered 2/2 sash and framed by the same granite pilaster and arch as the facade.

The rear elevation is four bays wide. The two end bays are composed of paired 2/2 sash set on top of longer paired 1/1 sash. Above these flat arched windows are single width round arches with granite key filled now with brick. The center bays are composed of narrow, single round arched 2/2 sash set above, on the north a long 1/1 sash, and on the south a multi-light transom and door reached by a steel staircase running against the building. In the partially exposed basement are four simple segmental arched openings now boarded over.

The interior plan is composed of a central hall which is flanked by two identical rooms and leads to the main room in the rear half. Only one interior room remains substantially unaltered and contains original marble mantel, window shutters, moulded ceiling cornice and vaulted ceiling. Original finish in the other rooms has been removed.

The end bay windows on the rear elevation have been replaced by the present paired configuration; the central bay windows have been replaced by a door.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
☐ PREHISTORIC	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING	☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	☐ RELIGION	
☐ 1400-1499	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	☐ CONSERVATION	☐ LAW	☐ SCIENCE	
☐ 1500-1599	☐ AGRICULTURE	☐ ECONOMICS	☐ LITERATURE	☐ SCULPTURE	
☐ 1600-1699	☒ ARCHITECTURE	☒ EDUCATION	☐ MILITARY	☒ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
☐ 1700-1799	☐ ART	☐ ENGINEERING	☐ MUSIC	☐ THEATER	
☒ 1800-1899	☐ COMMERCE	☐ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	☐ PHILOSOPHY	☐ TRANSPORTATION	
☐ 1900-	☒ COMMUNICATIONS	☐ INDUSTRY	☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		☐ INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1873-74

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Hammatt and Joseph E. Billings

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Thayer Public Library is significant for its architecture and as the first public library in Braintree.

Thayer Public Library was designed by Hammatt and Joseph E. Billings. The Billings brothers were well known designers in New England in the mid-19th century and often collaborated. Joseph designed many of the early structures at the Charlestown Navy Yard as well as Grace Episcopal Church in Lawrence. Hammatt is known for the old Boston Museum, the National Monument to our forefathers at Plymouth, the original College Hall at Wellesley College, and for the earlier canopy over the Plymouth Rock. He was also an artist and book illustrator.

The Braintree Public Library and this building were the result of the generosity of General Sylvanus Thayer, a Braintree native and retired officer of the Army Engineers. Thayer also endowed the Thayer School of Engineering at Dartmouth and the Thayer Academy of Braintree. Thayer donated \$10,000 to the town for construction of a fireproof structure for the library. He also lent the town another \$10,000 and gave an additional \$10,000 for support of the institution.

After Thayer's death, the affairs of the new free public library were directed by his friend, the Braintree lawyer, Asa French. French had control of the property transferred to the trustees and arranged appointments to insure that they would always be dominated by appointments of the Thayer Academy. For over 80 years, the town of Braintree supported the library, although the town did not own the building or hold full control. The town gained title in the 1950's when a larger building was built elsewhere as a library. Since then, this building has been used as offices for the municipal water department.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Records and Collections of the Braintree Historical Society
Records of the Town of Braintree
Stoddard; Richard, Hammatt Billings, Artist and Architect, "Old Time New England,"
Winter 1972, Vol. LXII, No. 3.
Withey & Withey, Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased), New York, 1970.
Pattee, M.D.; W.S., History of Old Braintree and Quincy

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	9
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3	3	4	3	9	0
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4	6	7	4	3	8	0
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ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B

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ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

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D

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Braintree
Joseph R. Orfant, National Register Editor & Malcolm Walker, Historical Commission
ORGANIZATION Massachusetts Historical Commission DATE 24 February 1978
STREET & NUMBER 294 Washington Street TELEPHONE 617-727-8470
CITY OR TOWN Boston STATE Massachusetts 02108

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

Deputy
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE Patricia Zwolonski 3/23/78
TITLE Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical Commission DATE Acting

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Charles A. Smith Acting DATE 7-21-78
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
ATTEST: Walter L. Cole DATE 6-29-78
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Property

Ishay Public Library

State

Mass.

Working Number

4.3.78.2844

Norfolk

TECHNICAL

Photos 1

Maps 1

Sign?

CONTROL

OK

pl
4.6.78

HISTORIAN

Accept 5/24/78

de Towner

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

Accept
Bravman
5.15.78

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory _____

Review _____

*architecturally significant bldg
erected through generosity of
prominent citizen.*

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

Accept
Lebrunich
6/12/78

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

perman
7/21/78

National Register Write-up

Federal Register Entry

9.5.78

Send-back _____

Re-submit _____

Entered

JUL 21 1978

INT:2106-74



Thayer Public Library

Braintree, MA.

1976

Malcolm Walker

Office of the Selectmen

1 JFK Memorial Drive

Braintree, MA. 02184

JUL 21 1978

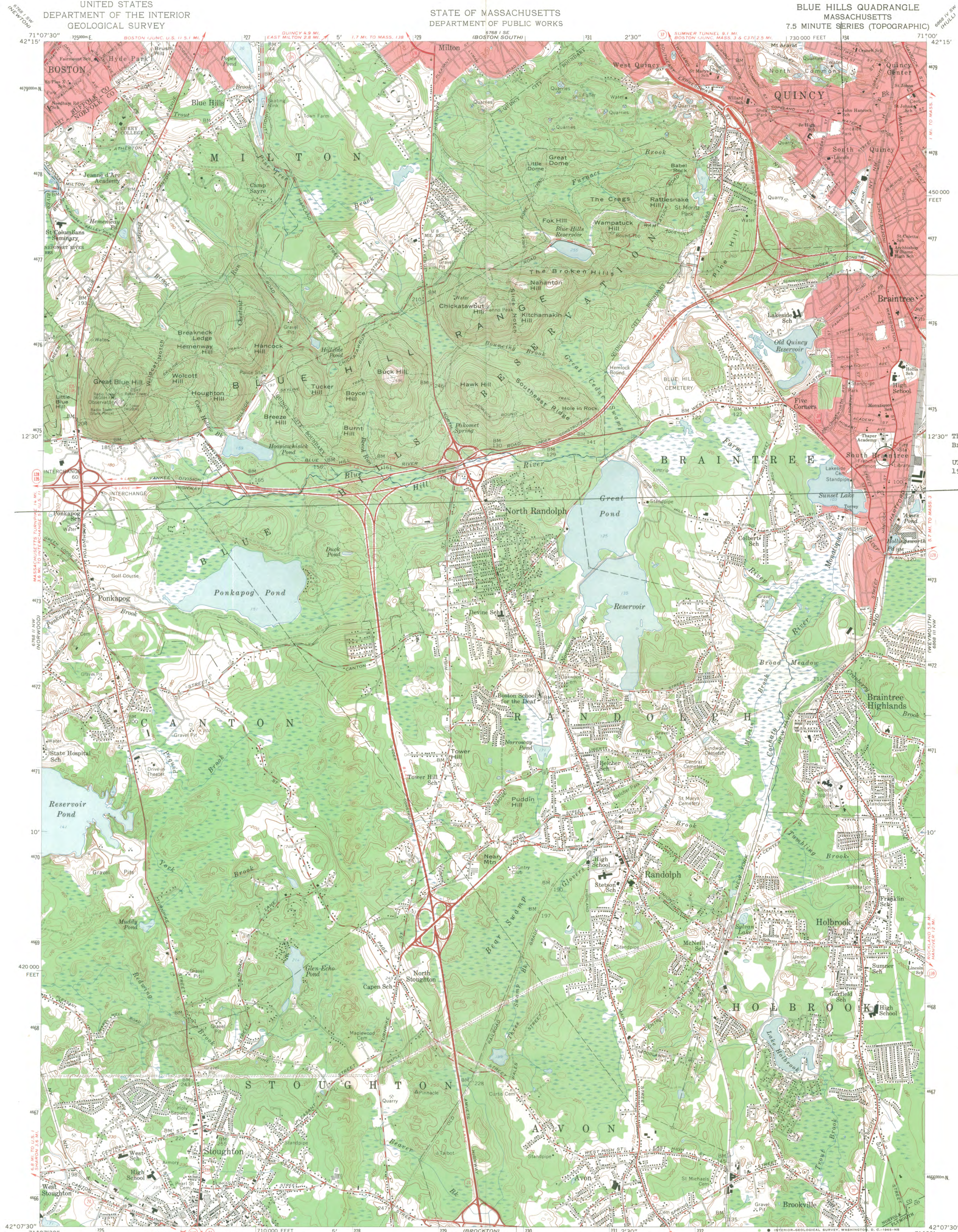
Norfolk
County

APR 3 1978

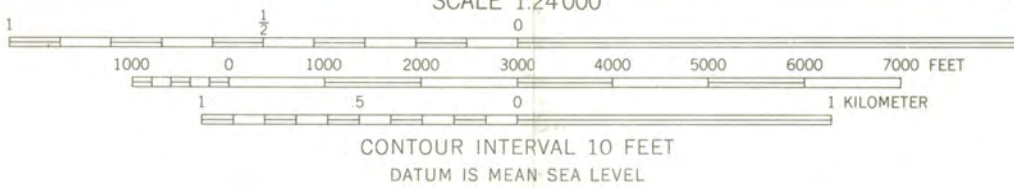
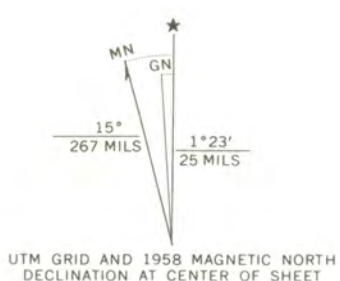
Photo #1 81

Looking west towards the facade and south
elevation

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, Massachusetts Geodetic Survey, and Massachusetts Harbor and Land Commission
Culture and drainage in part compiled from aerial photographs
Topography by planetable surveys 1936
Culture revised by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1957. Field check 1958
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system, mainland zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 19, shown in blue
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———
○ State Route



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

BLUE HILLS, MASS.
N4207.5-W7100/7.5
1958
AMS 6768 II NE-SERIES V814



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered JUL 21 1978

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Half Way House	Chatham Barnstable County
First Parish Church	Duxbury vicinity Plymouth County
Capron House	Attleboro Bristol County
Newell Farm	West Newbury Essex County
Locke, Capt. Benjamin, House	Arlington Middlesex County
Hawthorne Class Studio	Provincetown Barnstable County
Thayer Public Library	Braintree Norfolk County

Also Notified

Honorable Edward W. Brooke
Honorable Edward M. Kennedy
Honorable Gerry E. Studds
Honorable Margaret M. Heckler
Honorable Michael J. Harrington
Honorable Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr.
Honorable James A. Burke

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mrs. Patricia L. Weslowski
Executive Director, Massachusetts
Historical Commission
294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

NATIONAL REGISTER DATA SHEET

① NAME as it appears on federal register: Thayer Public Library		② OTHER NAMES: Water Department Building		③ date of entry: JUL 21 1978		④ county code: 21	
⑤ LOCATION street & number 2 John F. Kennedy Memorial Dr.		city / town Braintree		vicinity of MA		county Norfolk	
⑦ OWNER ☐ PRIVATE ☐ STATE ☒ MUNICIPAL ☐ COUNTY ☐ MULTIPLE ☐ FEDERAL (agency name)		⑧ ADMINISTRATOR:		⑥ NPS REGION: NA			
⑨ EXISTING SURVEYS ☐ HABS ☐ HAER ☐ NHL		⑩ FUNDED? ☐ YES ☐ NO		⑪ CONGRESS. DISTRICT 11th		⑫ SOURCE of NOMINATION ☒ STATE ☐ FEDERAL	
⑬ WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT? ☐ YES, NAME _____ ☒ NO		⑭ WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK? ☐ YES, NAME _____ ☒ NO		⑮ ACREAGE		if state who prepared form? SHPO staff	
⑯ CONDITION ☐ excellent ☐ deteriorated ☐ good ☐ ruins ☐ fair ☐ unexcavated		☐ altered ☐ original site ☐ unaltered ☐ moved ☐ reconstructed ☐ unknown ☐ excavated		⑰ features: INTERIOR ☐ SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-1 ☐ NOT INTACT-0 ☐ UNKNOWN-4 ☐ NOT APPLICABLE-7 EXTERIOR ☐ SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-2 ☐ NOT INTACT-0 ☐ UNKNOWN-5 ☐ NOT APPLICABLE-8 ENVIRON ☐ SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-3 ☐ NOT INTACT-0 ☐ UNKNOWN-6 ☐ NOT APPLICABLE-9			
⑱ ACCESS ☐ YES-Restricted ☐ YES-Unrestricted ☐ No Access ☐ Unknown		⑲ ADAPTIVE USE ☐ YES ☐ NO		⑳ SAVED? ☐ YES		IS PROPERTY A HISTORIC DISTRICT? ☐ yes ☐ no	
㉑ AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE : ☐ ARCHEOLOGY-prehistoric-2 ☐ COMMERCE-6 ☐ ARCHEOLOGY-historic-1 ☐ COMMUNICATIONS-7 ☐ AGRICULTURE-3 ☐ CONSERVATION-8 ☐ ARCHITECTURE-4 ☐ ECONOMICS-9 ☐ ART-5 ☐ EDUCATION-10		☐ ENGINEERING-11 ☐ LANDSCAPE ARCH.-15 ☐ ENTERTAINMENT-26 ☐ LAW-16 ☐ EXPLORATION-12 ☐ LITERATURE-17 ☐ HEALTH-27 ☐ MILITARY-18 ☐ INDUSTRY-13 ☐ MUSIC-19 ☐ INVENTION-14 ☐ PHILOSOPHY-20		☐ POLITICS/GOVT.-21 ☐ RECREATION-28 ☐ RELIGION-22 ☐ SETTLEMENT-29 ☐ SCIENCE-23 ☐ URBAN PLANNING-31 ☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN-24 ☐ OTHER (SPECIFY) _____ ☐ SOCIAL/CULTURAL-30 ☐ TRANSPORTATION-25		㉒ CLAIMS: explain 'first' ☐ 'oldest' ☐ 'only' ☐	
㉓ functions WHEN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT: CURRENTLY:		㉔ dates of initial construction: major alterations: historic events:		㉕ ETHNIC GROUP ASSOCIATION			
㉖ architectural style(s):		㉗ architect:		㉘ master builder:		㉙ engineer:	
㉚ landscape architect / garden designer:		㉛ interior decorator:		㉜ artist:		㉝ artisan:	
㉞ builder/contractor:							
㉟ NAMES give role & date PERSONAL: EVENTS: INSTITUTIONAL:							
㊱ NATIONAL REGISTER WRITE-UP							