

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

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See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

Historic Historic Resources of Rehoboth (Partial Inventory Architectural and Historic Properties)  
and/or common

2. Location

street & number Incorporated Town Limits of Rehoboth N/A not for publication  
city, town N/A vicinity of ~~congressional district~~  
state Massachusetts code 025 county Bristol code 005

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Multiple Resource	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple: See attached

street & number

city, town N/A vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Bristol County Registry of Deeds, Probate Court

street & number Court Street

city, town Taunton state MA

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Inventory of the Historic Assets of the Commonwealth has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1976; 1981  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Massachusetts Historical Commission

city, town Boston state MA

## 7. Description

Rehobath Multiple Resource Area , Rehoboth, MA

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>multiple</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Rehoboth Multiple Resource Area encompasses the entire political and geographical territory of the Town of Rehoboth in southeastern Massachusetts. Comprising forty-seven-and-one-quarter square miles within approximately rectangular bounds, Rehoboth is flanked on the north by the towns of Attleboro and Norton, east by Taunton and Dighton, south by Swansea and west by Seekonk. Less than twenty miles distance from Rehoboth center sprawl the urban cores of Providence, Rhode Island (west), Attleborough(north), Taunton(east) and Fall River (southeast); Boston is located forty-miles to the northwest.

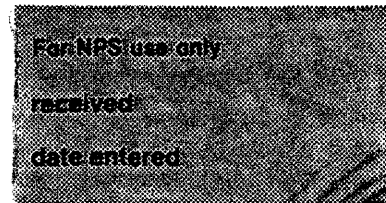
Rehoboth is located in the coastal lowland within the Narragansett Basin. Glacial action produced a moderate, rolling topography which can support a range of natural resources. Soils are generally sandy to gravelly; the level floodplain of the Palmer River in the south central and western sections of town continue to provide the most productive agricultural land. The river is fed by minor streams and swamps in the rugged uplands of the northern half of town and by two larger tributaries, Oak Swamp Brook and Rocky River, which drain the southeastern section. The latter drainage area is composed of three extensive swamps separated by narrow ridges. Elevation ranges from 170 to 200 feet in the northern half of town, to sea level where the Palmer River becomes tidal in the southwest corner. An unusual remnant of glacial action in the center of town is known historically as "tittle rock". It is composed of two large boulders, one balancing precariously atop the other. Devil's Pond in the southwest quarter of town is the only naturally created pond; manmade bodies of water include two reservoirs and several abandoned mill ponds.

In both prehistoric and historic periods, the most valuable and heavily exploited natural resources in Rehoboth have been those associated with the Palmer River drainage. Alewives and shad ascended the river from Narragansett Bay spawn until 19th century mill dams blocked passage. These fish, as well as shellfish in the lower reaches of the river, served as a source of food and fertilizer for prehistoric and historic populations. In addition to valuable farmland on its peripheries, salt meadow hay for fodder and clay for pottery and brick manufacture were also available along the river banks. In historic times water flow on the Palmer River and its tributaries was harnessed to power processing and manufacturing industries crucial to local subsistence and commercial economies. The many swamps in town were found to be rich in wetland species of flora and fauna and also bog iron.

Forest timber was also a critically important resource for European colonists. Settlers in Rehoboth encountered a diversity of good timber stock. Early records indicate that hardwood forests of oak, maple, beech and chestnut as well as pine covered upland elevations, while cedar and other softwoods filled swamps and wooded wetlands. From these forests colonists obtained wood for building and boat construction, fuel, lumber export, and a variety of manufacturing activities. Clear cutting initially had a secondary purpose in opening land for tillage and pasture, but the disadvantages of this practice were apparent by the end of

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the 18th century as timber stock rapidly diminished.

Historic Overview

Rehoboth's historical development has been determined by a combination of topographical, geographical, political, economic and social factors. Following initial settlement in 1645 at a site between the Ten Mile and Seekonk Rivers in present day Rhode Island the town's territorial bounds fluctuated considerably during the 17th century, then remained essentially stable until 1812 when the present day boundaries were established. At its greatest extent in the 17th century, Rehoboth encompassed over 150 square miles and included the modern cities and towns of Seekonk Mass; East Providence and Pawtucket, R.I.; Attleboro and North Attleboro, MA; Cumberland, R.I.; and part of Old Swansea, (later Barrington, R.I.) called "Wannamoisset" (see Map 1).

As population grew and spread, the tensions generated by the town's large size in conflict with a need for more easily accessible meetinghouses contributed to the attrition of territory. By the early 18th century, all the secondary land purchases had broken off to become separate towns, leaving the original land grant again as one unit (present day Rehoboth and Seekonk, MA, and East Providence, and portions of Pawtucket, R.I.).

The settlement pattern still prominent within the bounds of the present day Rehoboth emerged early on: scattered farms; small and loosely clustered population groups in the vicinity of industrial sites; and scattered but insular neighborhoods focused on a particular church. Over the years, present-day Rehoboth (established as a separate church precinct in 1759) began to acquire exclusive rights to that name, whereas the site of original settlement, in a portion of Seekonk which is now present-day East Providence, RI, became known by the area's Contact Period and Native American appellation, Seekonk. Thus, while present-day Rehoboth achieved a degree of autonomous status in the mid-1800s and eventually laid claim to the name given to the first permanent settlement within the once immense town, it never functioned as a primary settlement nucleus. Rather it remained affiliated with the original settlement in Seekonk until 1812 and a decentralized agrarian and satellite town throughout its history. In contrast the more intense development of other discrete areas, once part of Rehoboth, was influenced by high-industrial potential or greater proximity to urban cores and a variety of lesser factors. By the end of the 19th century, they generally exhibited denser, nucleated settlements with a broader diversity of population and economic base. Thus, the dispersed settlement pattern visible within the bounds of Rehoboth today is a direct result of 17th, 18th and 19th century boundary shifts.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Rehoboth acted as a breadbasket supplying produce to surrounding communities. Some light industrialization and suburban infill occurred, particularly after World War II, however, Rehoboth remained an essentially pastoral community, dispersed and rural in character, with its former settlement cores now

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located insurrounding towns.

A Note on Organization:

Present-day Rehoboth was first substantially settled after 1675; defined as a religious precinct in 1759; and subsequently established as the modern town in 1812. Consequently, the description and significance sections are generally arranged as follows: from 1645 to 1675, the greatest extent of Rehoboth's territorial bounds are discussed; after 1675, discussion focused on the much smaller territory which is now present-day Rehoboth.

Rehoboth's bounds fluctuated greatly during its early history expanding once and shrinking three times. Initially founded in 1645 with approximately 100 square miles, its territory was nearly doubled with the addition of the North Purchase in 1661. Thereafter it returned to its original configuration in 1649 (North Purchase set off); lost a small tract on the Northwest corner in 1714 (Wannamoiset); and split essentially in half in 1812, the west half as Seekonk, the east as Rehoboth.

Prehistoric Period:

The presence of aboriginal inhabitants in southeastern Massachusetts is well documented and dates to as early as ca. 8,000 years ago. The Massachusetts Historical Commission files lists 17 known prehistoric sites in Rehoboth, however, no systematic survey or excavations have taken place to date. Consequently, temporal and cultural information is limited. Regional data indicate that southeastern Massachusetts was populated in prehistoric times by aboriginals exploiting marine, riverine, and upland resources. Hence, a high probability exists for the presence of prehistoric sites from Archaic to Contact periods (ca. 8,000 -400 B.P) in Rehoboth. Recorded sites are located on the lowlands near the Palmer River; additional work may identify sites in the upland areas of town.

Contact Period: 1500-1645)

At the time of first permanent European settlement New England, including Rehoboth, was not a true wilderness, but a landscape modified by perhaps 8,000 years of human occupation. Colonists found large areas of land already cleared for agriculture and a network of trails connecting settlement areas.

In Rehoboth, probable major native trails extended along the present routes of Anawan Road (Route 44) and Tremont Street, secondary routes may have followed Summer, Elm and County Streets, as well as Chestnut, Brook and Mason Streets. Settlement areas were likely adjacent to these trails, the Palmer River, and Anawan Rock, a convenient rockshelter. While no documented native contact period sites are known, probable village sites have been reported opposite the Steven's Corner cemetery (north part of town) and north of Davis Street between Mason and First Streets/stet

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(south part of town). Native settlement was probably heaviest along the lower portions of the Palmer River where annual herring runs occurred and potential planting grounds are present. These areas are particularly promising archaeologically since later development has been minimal.

Politically, Rehoboth's native population in this period was likely closely tied to the Pokanokets (Wampanoags) because their proximity to the former natives' central settlement at Mt. Hope (Bristol, Rhode Island). No population figures are available.

First Settlement at the "Ring of the Green": 1645-1675.

Present-day Rehoboth comprised the eastern portion of the original one hundred mile square tract granted to some fifty proprietors by Plymouth Colony in 1643; the total parcel consisted of the modern towns of Rehoboth and Seekonk, MA. the First and Second Wards of Pawtucket, R.I., and East Providence, R.I.. Initial settlement occurred in 1645 within the latter bounds where home lots were laid out in a ring around a common green. Present-day Rehoboth remained an essentially undivided wilderness. Although by the 1660's a grist and sawmill complex existed (erected c.1662) at the upper end of Shad Factory Pond and several farmsteads were scattered along the fertile banks of the Palmer River, intensive occupations of modern Rehoboth did not begin until after King Philips War (1675-1676).

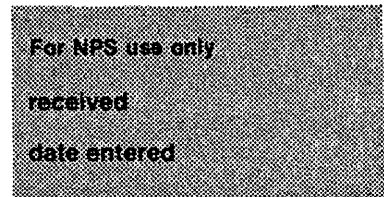
This early and spotty European settlement spread most likely occurred in response to expanding population at the original village; there are no population figures available for present-day Rehoboth at this time. The Palmer River frontier settlement remained tied to civic/religious facilities at the "Ring of the Green". The community's limited demographic development during this period inhibited industrial growth; agriculture, lumbering, and fishing formed the town's economic base. There is minimal documentation of native settlement locations.

Little data exists concerning the pre-1675 transportation network. However, as demand was minimal, the transport system may have relied on existing native trails: Broad Street/River Street/ Carpenter Street, Summer Street/Elm Street and Mason Street paths, which would have provided access to immediately surrounding settlements in all directions. Water routes, via the Providence and Palmer Rivers to Narragansett Bay were also important.

During this period, Rehoboth's territorial bounds fluctuated considerably and eventually returned to its original grant size by the end of the 17th century. A small tract called "Wannamoiset" which this became a ward of Rehoboth in 1645 was included as part of Swansea to the south in 1667. A major additional grant of almost 70 square miles was the North Purchase in 1661 (including the modern towns of Attleboro and North Attleboro, MA and Cumberland, R.I.). This area remained a peripheral settlement area of the "Ring of the Green" for thirty-three years;

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separating in 1694.

Although no extant structures in modern Rehoboth can be securely attributed to this period, the probability of archaeological remains existing is excellent. In large part, this is due to minimal later commercial and residential development in the vicinity of Shad Factory Pond and the southern portion of the Palmer River.

Religious Autonomy and Agricultural Foundations: 1675-1812

The 18th century heralded a period of steady population and economic growth in Rehoboth. As was the case in many southeastern Massachusetts towns, the damages caused by King Philip's War resulted in a new wave of settlement, following patterns different from those of the pre-war period. Settlement increased dramatically in present-day Rehoboth after 1675; within forty years the southern half of the town had been settled to just north of present Route 44. Henceforth the discussion will be confined to the present bounds of Rehoboth unless otherwise noted.

Settlement concentrated initially on the most desirable land, the fertile meadows along the Palmer and Rocky Rivers. Two roughly defined areas of dispersed farmsteads emerged: "The Neighborhood at Palmers River" and "The Neighborhood at Rocky River." Three early houses built about 1700 still stand in the areas today. Documentary evidence indicates that the least altered structure, a 2½-story wood frame dwelling with medieval characteristics, may predate King Philip's War.

In 1710 the residents at Palmer River were considered by the town fathers to be "settled upon Rough Land, in the woods and there lands at Present no benefit to them, neither have they houses fit for men to Dwell in, nor Money to build better" (Town Meeting Records 2:142-143). Yet, by 1721, a meetinghouse had been built at present-day Lake Street to serve the growing Congregationalist Palmer River community.

Subsequently, Rehoboth Village in the center of Rehoboth began to emerge as a local focus of milling and commerce. With the erection of the second meetinghouse there in 1773, following the incorporation of the congregation as the "Second Precinct of Rehoboth" in 1759, it became a center of religious and social activities as well. Towards mid century small pockets of a growing Baptist community began to establish churches, erecting no less than seven by 1774.

By the mid-18th century settlement had spread to all sections of Rehoboth; In the northern part of town mills had been established a decade prior to homesteads. After 1750, when the most valuable lands were already occupied, new generations were forced to settle on smaller farmsteads and in the less productive rocky uplands to the north. At the outbreak of the Revolution the voracious wood requirements of the export lumber trade and local forges and sawmills had greatly reduced forest areas. As a

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result, land surveyors relied on "greate" stumps rather than trees as markers.

1675-1812:

As settlement expanded out to the north, south and east of the original settlement node at Palmer River, a series of new roads were extended from the eastern portion of Tremont Street and Anawan/Plain Street; Rocky Hill Road (c.1680), Fairview Avenue (c.1720) Carpenter Street (c.1720), and portions of Brook Street and Cedar Street. Hornbine Road is probably contemporary with the establishment of the Hornbine neighborhood in the first half of the period.

No native population figures are available for this period, it is postulated that their numbers were quite small.

By 1675, Rehoboth (including the original grant and the North Purchase) boasted 3690 residents, one of the largest populations in southeastern Massachusetts at the time. This figure increased 13.6 percent to 4191 residents in 1776 towards the end of the period despite the loss of considerable territory, the North Purchase in 1694.

The exact reasons for the separation of this tract, established as Attleboro in 1684 unclear; the fledgling settlement likely wanted its own church, which it erected 1710-1714. This corresponds in time to early requests by present day Rehoboth for religious autonomy. Not originally an integral part of the Rehoboth grants, the North Purchase was therefore more loosely bound politically to the "Ring of the Green". Portions of the North Purchase subsequently became Cumberland, Rhode Island (1747) and North Attleboro, MA (1887).

Reflecting the agrarian nature of the town, farmhouses built during the 18th century are scattered across the landscape. Over ninety percent of today's standing structures are residential or agricultural. Dwellings are frequently oriented southward and towards fields and outbuildings rather than the adjacent road, giving visual and spatial emphasis to the relationship between farmer and land. By 1770 there were nearly 250 houses in Rehoboth of which approximately 45 still stand (Snape 1976:1). House styles were vernacular, favoring 1½-story center chimney houses which, towards the end of the century, occasionally exhibit fine Federal detail at the entrance and on the interior. Barns which survive from the 18th century reflect the Yankee or English common form of barn construction. This multi-use structure is typically "a post and timber building three bays wide by two bays deep with the entry in the longwall and a bay wide through the other longwall" (Abernathy 1974: 20). Unlike later barns, it lacks a basement.

The potential for the presence of associated archaeological components, such as dumps and outbuilding remains, is in many cases quite good for



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these structures. An increase in mill construction during these years results in the preservation of many as archaeological sites. Although later 19th century industrial activities may have altered those at the most favorable locations, the more remote mill remains are largely undisturbed.

Town Formation and Agricultural Prosperity: 1812-1900

The present town bounds of Rehoboth, corresponding to the area set aside as a religious precinct in 1759, were formally defined in 1812 with the incorporation of Seekonk. Portions of Seekonk later became Pawtucket (1828) and East Providence (1862) R.I.

During the first half of the 19th century, commercial manufacturing and agriculture in Rehoboth achieved peak production followed by a slow, steady decline. Yet, Rehoboth remained a rural community on the "fringe" of adjacent growing urban centers and population growth stabilized at about 1,800 throughout the 19th century.

From the first decade of the century newly formed commercial firms manufactured a variety of wood and cotton products for export. The substantial water requirements of these new mills necessitated additional damming of the Palmer River, including the creation of Bad Luck Reservoir in the eastern part of town. The large industrial buildings associated with these concerns are long since gone. However, structural remains of building foundations, dams and gristmills continued to operate in scattered locations, although in lesser numbers than previously. Their fate has paralleled that of the larger mills, but with more uneven preservation of structural remains.

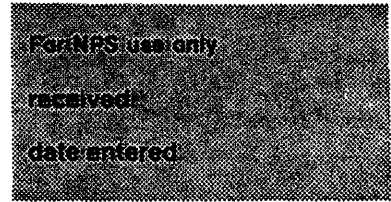
As Rehoboth shifted from a self-sufficient farming community to one based on specialized market-oriented agriculture, the landscape was adjusted accordingly. By 1900 much of the town's timber stock was already cut providing commercial farmers with expanses of cleared land for cultivation and pasturage. While the small 18th century farm by no means disappeared, large commercial dairy and market gardening farms predominated. A Rehoboth resident, Dr. William Blanding, writing in the second quarter of the 19th century was struck by boyhood memories of extensive vistas, now eradicated by secondary and tertiary forest growth.

Transportation quality was an influencing factor in Rehoboth's socio-economic development: the town remained dependent on road transportation and no railroad was ever built. The Providence and Taunton Turnpike constructed in 1826-1829 and a trolley line laid out basically parallel to it in 1898, plus two other lines connecting North Rehoboth to Attleboro, were the only major additional arteries. Internal road networks became increasingly intricate over time, yet continued to follow



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natural land contours and property bounds. The pattern of road which had been established by 1850 is little changed today (see Maps 2a and 2b).

By the mid 19th century Rehoboth Village, the geographic center of town and an early industrial site, had acquired the characteristics of a social and civic gathering place. This was affirmed by establishment of the first Federal Post Office there in 1828 and erection of a new Greek Revival style Congregational Church in 1838. Later, Goff Memorial Hall (1884) was built there to serve as a locus of social, civic and intellectual activities. The decades at mid-century are marked by the construction of a number of other vernacular Greek Revival style churches in town. By 1847, the town had been divided into fifteen school districts, each with its own one-room schoolhouse. Nevertheless, with the exception of Rehoboth Village and scattered small nodes of population clustered near mills, stores, and post offices, persed throughout the 19th century (see Map 3a, 3b, 4). The outstanding qualities of this cultural landscape have survived intact to the present day.

Again, in this period residential and agricultural architecture comprises by far the majority of structures, although small numbers of ecclesiastical, industrial/commercial and social/civic buildings were erected in the first three-quarters of the 19th century. Construction was invariably of wood. Vernacular and Greek Revival styles were the most popular, but Italianate and Queen Anne motifs began to appear popular, but Italianate and Queen Anne motifs began to appear towards the end of the period. Over all, building scale remained small, rarely reaching monumental proportions. On farms, however, the 18th century barn was often expanded or replaced by a huge 19th century dairy barn designed to house a commercial size herd. The arrangement and upkeep of accompanying outbuildings such as granaries, milk houses and carriage sheds became important to upholding the image of the prosperous farmer.

Stagnation and Suburbanization: 1900 to the present

Rehoboth, like other New England communities, was unable to compete with large northern textile manufacturers after the Civil War. Lacking large amounts of capital, stable water power and access to transportation facilities, Rehoboth lost its industrial economic component in the post war era. By 1900, no textile firms remained in business in the town. Small concerns such as sawmills, shingle mills, gristmills, and turning shops continued to operate primarily to serve local needs. Commercial agricultural undertakings, although not extinguished completely, also suffered from insufficient capital and poor transportation.

The population remained at about 2,500 until after World War II. This represents a gain of only 500 since Rehoboth's present bounds were established in 1812. The national trend of population migration away from rural farms to urban centers accelerated around the turn of the

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century, and its impact in Rehoboth was noted with dismay by contemporaries. New construction was rare in this period of "no growth" which lasted until the 1930's. The outward movement by members of Rehoboth's families was, however, counteracted by some incoming residents. Many were Portuguese farmers who helped revive the agricultural economy of the town. After the Second World War, Rehoboth developed many characteristics of a "bedroom community" serving nearby urban centers. Construction of two interstate highways across the southwest corner of Rehoboth have facilitated transportation. However, linear east-west pattern of roads indicated an emphasis in communication flow across rather than in and out of the town (see Map 5).

Architectural Description

Rehoboth's historic building stock is predominantly residential, complemented by ancillary farm structures and by a relatively small number of institutional buildings; commercial and industrial buildings are rare and mostly date from the mid 20th century. In general buildings are arranged in a scattered pattern, uniformly distributed throughout the town and thus reflect the community's historical development.

The largest percentage, both of constructed and extant buildings, date from between 1750 and 1850: Georgian and Federal styles. All buildings types are generally characterized by wood frame construction, conservative design, modest scale and spare ornamentation; one-and-one-half story cottages overwhelmingly outnumber two-and-one-half story houses.

While Rehoboth's historic architecture is notable for its high survival rate of both distribution pattern and vernacular forms, limited economic capabilities in conjunction with an inherent conservatism has also tended to result in modifications to existing buildings as a popular alternative to new construction, particularly during the 19th century. This organic process represents an important component of the town's development and sustained historic character and has been treated as such in this submission.

Colonial Period 1675-1775

In general architecture of the early years of the period (1675-1725) in southeast Massachusetts has had a limited survival rate and is ill understood. In Rehoboth, the earliest extant structure, the Kingsley House ca. 1680 (Form #21), appears to fit within the architectural parameters of the period derived from available regional data. (see: Historic and Archaeological Resources of Southeast Massachusetts: MHC; 1982). An asymmetrical two-story added leanto center chimney structure, it was possibly originally built as a stone endwall chimney house, a common Rhode Island type. At least two additional early structures, enveloped in later 19th century modifications, stand at 384 Tremont Street (Form #192) and 154 Agricultural Avenue (Form #170)

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The traditional center chimney house plan by far predominates Rehoboth's architecture of this period—typical Georgian centerhall plan houses are notably absent—with cottages outnumbering houses by a ratio of three to one. This traditional pattern continued well into the 19th century in this rural, conservative community. As detailing on houses and cottages built between 1725 and 1775 is generally very plain and limited to a trabeated entrance surround and simple, projecting window trim diversity is most distinctive amongst roof types and building materials. The most commonly employed roof type is the gable found on small cottages such as the Elisha Allen House (Form #160) as well as more substantial houses: Caleb Cushing House (Form #28). Several houses with integral leantos are known to have been constructed; the Wheeler-Ingalls House (Form #217) of ca.1750 is the best preserved. At least one house with gable-on-hip roof was constructed, the Colonel Thomas Carpenter House (#152). The gambrel roof cottage was apparently a popular period form, although relatively few are known to survive in Southeast Massachusetts. However, seven 18th and 19th century gambrel cottages still stand in Rehoboth. Among them the Nathaniel Drown House (Form #42) and the Wheeler-Dexter-Bowen House (Form #108), both dating from ca.1750, retain their original form and features with only minor alterations.

Rehoboth is notable in southeast Massachusetts for the presence of several early masonry cottages. Possibly the product of Colonial period brick was on the Palmer River, the Seth Knapp House (Form #36) a brick gambrel cottage is further distinguished for its triangular end chimney containing canted fireplaces.

Federal Period 1775-1830

A great deal of housing construction occurred in Rehoboth during the Federal period, with a high present survival rate. Like their predecessors' these houses and cottages exist at scattered location throughout the town. Likewise, they are inherently conservative in design as the impact of European highstyle architecture which transformed urban colonial architecture in the 18th and 19th century reached rural "fringes" like Rehoboth in a diluted form. Center chimney plans remain omnipresent and modest cottages comprise the majority of structures erected. Gable roofs are virtually universal, and well-developed Federal period architectural detail is rare. Among the most sophisticated houses are the Nathan Bowen House (Form #76), The Carpenter House (form #128) and Peter Carpenter House (Form #124) which exhibit typical period doorway treatment; flanking pilasters surmounted by a semi-circular fanlight and pediment. Sidelights with wide trabeated entablatures also occasionally appear as entrance surrounds on substantial houses as well as do dentillated roof cornices (Form #76) and splayed window lintels. Both the Nathen Bowen House (Form #76) and the Carpenter House (Form #128) were built as two-family dwellings with a bake oven on each story. The most common mode of doorway treatment, especially for cottages, was however a simple straight transom between the door and eaves as

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found in the 4-bay cottage at 330 Fairview Avenue (form #90), often accompanied by sidelights as illustrated by the Captain Mial Pierce Farmsted (Form #61).

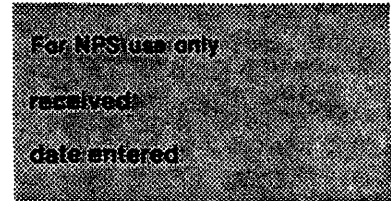
Displaying a departure from the traditional center chimney plan and one of very few commercial buildings known to survive from the period is Briggs Tavern (Form #109) a double plan, double interior chimney house. It is also notable for its crib (timber) chimney bases; chimney supports in Rehoboth most commonly of rectangular fieldstone piers or the ground surface.

Industrial Period 1830-1900

By the 1840's new construction was clearly on the wane in Rehoboth, and comparatively few houses were built through the end of the century. Architectural design remained conservative with few appearances of fully developed Greek Revival or Italianate examples. With minor exceptions, the basic horizontal and compact forms of vernacular architecture remained constant. This retardataire approach held both for plan, still dominated by center entrance cottages, and for detailing, which remained simple and traditionally located on major architectural features. An important architectural innovation of the period, the three-bay, sidehall plan house is markedly rare in Rehoboth. Residential construction from mid-century on appears to have been primarily replacement or major redesign of established landuse patterns. This trend is clearly shown by the Darius Goff House (Area A; Form #156) in Rehoboth Village which exhibits the most fully developed Greek Revival details in the town. A two-story, double chimney house with a gable roof end center entrance with Doric columns set in antis, its present appearance is the result of a remodelling of an earlier hip-roofed Federal period structure. Similarly, the more modest Samuel Viall House (Form #212) one of the few sidehall plan Greek Revival style cottages in Rehoboth is an enlargement of an early 19th century washhouse. This economical and ingenious practice continued throughout the 19th century (as it does today) is demonstrated by the Goff Farm (Form #213), most notable for its Victorian period interior detailing, and by 384 Tremont Street (Form #207).

Typical period innovations in cottage design are evident including the introduction of end chimneys and side service ells with porches. The early cottages of the period such as 30 Kelton Street (Form #77) exhibit transitional Federal/Greek Revival elements; later versions incorporate Italianate style embellishments including bracketted door hoods and cornices, paired dormers, large central gables with round head windows and bay windows (Forms #209, 211, and 215). A small number of comparatively elaborate houses were built by more wealthy citizens of the town, although, like the James Perry House (Form #210), they are essentially enlarged versions of the ubiquitous cottage form. Other prevailing period architectural styles do not appear in Rehoboth, with the exception of a limited number of Queen Anne Houses (Area A, Form #203).

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Modern Period 1900-Present

In the early years of the 20th century, population growth and new construction were at a near halt in Rehoboth. The predominate house forms of this century have been bungalows and more recent common suburban house types. An important exception is "Bramblehill" (Form #208), a substantial and finely detailed Norman Revival house of masonry construction designed by prominent Rhode Island architect Albert Harckness

Farm Complexes 1800-1900

The 18th century farm was built and laid out to accomodate the needs of a farmer exploiting many resources simultaneously. Over half the farmland would generally be under tillage and the remainder divided between pasture and woodland.

Farm structures were generally located in close proximity to one another and comprised house, barn plus a variety of a smaller outbuildings. Lesser structures have not survived from this period, but a number of good examples of the relatively small multi-purpose barn type still stand and were commonly constructed before about 1840 (Forms #22, 28). Much of the processing of farm products occurred in the residence itself. In addition to a cellar storage area, houses of this period often had a room reserved as a buttery (Form #128) and a space within the chimney stack for drying meats, herbs and so forth (Form #76).

The total sense of the relationship amongst house, outbuildings and encompassing stone fences and fields is particularly well-preserved in southern Rehoboth at the Pierce-Baker farmstead. (Form #61).

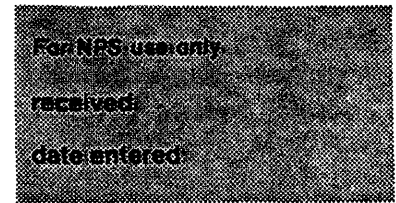
Farm Complexes 1900-2000

With the exception of laying houses for poultry production, the building requirements for market gardening or specialized fruit production were met by the traditional 18th century post and beam side opening barn or its identical 19th century counterpart.

The demands of commercial dairy farming however, necessitated large and opening basement barns, specifically designed to hold rows of cows. As the herd grew, so could the barn, as in the case of the Bliss barn at 76 Homestead (Form #161). Another Bliss Family cow barn (Form #170) incorporated an existing 18th century barn at one end. Milk storage butter making and the like were transferred from the house to milk houses such as that at 60 Carpenter Street (Form #128).

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An unusual exception is found on the Goff Farm (form #213) where a large walk-in ice box is located in a pantry or storage area off the kitchen. Ice was cut from mill ponds and stored, packed in sawdust in the milk house or ice house such as that at the Cushing Farm (Form #142) and Goff Farm (Form #213).

Additional buildings, found on all types of farms, were corn barns and wagon sheds. Seasonal and permanent laborers were normally housed in the attic of the main house, as whitewashed and plastered rooms in a number of houses attest (Forms #109 and #161). The Blanding Farm (Form #138), home of a prominent physician and celebrated framer, William Blanding, Esq., is a superb example of a late 19th century commercial dairy farm with farm plan and most structures intact.

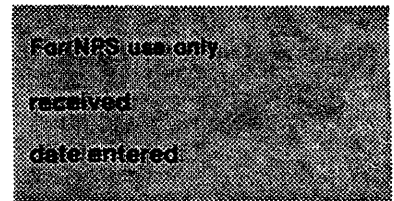
Other (Institutional; Structure; Historic Site)

Rehoboth's <sup>institutional</sup> architecture is relatively small in number, being comprised of one multi-purpose hall, the town hall, and several schools and churches.

In the early days of settlement, civic functions were performed in the Meetinghouse and later in private houses or the Mason's Hall at 1 Locust Street (Area A, Form #154). A town meetinghall (not included) was built ca.1850. This modest structure has been altered a number of times. Towards the end of the 19th century, a movement surfaced to recognize the town's history and civic pride in a monumental fashion. This was accomplished with the building of Goff Memorial Hall at Rehoboth Village in 1885 on land denoted by the prominent Goff Family. These original wood frame Queen Anne style building burned in 1911 and was replaced in 1915 by a new brick Tudor Revival Building (Area A; Form #1) designed by William R. Walker & Son, of Providence, RI; like its precursor, this is a multi-purpose building having housed the town library, the Rehoboth Antiquarian Society Collections, a school, and a large hall with stage for meetings and entertainment.

Rehoboth's extant ecclesiastical architecture dates primarily from the mid-19th century when civic and religious activities were formally separated. The church played a significant role in the early development of Rehoboth as it progressed from religious precinct to town.

In response to the needs of a growing community, the church members voted in 1773 to pull down the first meetinghouse at Palmer River. A new house, 50' x 40' erected near the site of the present village cemetery served the town and church members until 1838 when it was razed and the present structure (Area A; Form #2) was built in the Village center. Archaeological investigations sponsored by the Rehoboth Bicentennial Commission were conducted in 1974 at the site of the first meetinghouse on Lake Street. Town records indicate that all materials were sold after demolition, a fact verified during excavation, although enough

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fragments remained to provide information about building size, construction, and use. A report is available containing a detailed discussion of findings and the role of the church in the community (Abernathy and Horvath 1977).

Religious architecture standing today in Rehoboth dates from the 19th century with one notable exception. The First Free Baptist Church or Hornbine Church as it is known (Form #63), erected in 1753, despite later alterations, is an excellent surviving example of the simple one-story structures lacking bell or steeple which characterized early meetinghouses; further, it is thought to be the earliest surviving Baptist meetinghouse in southeast Massachusetts. Other churches of this period were either burned, allowed to decay, or torn down and replaced.

The movement away from focus on the Holy Bible and towards rational intellectual spiritual thought which emerged across the country in the 1830's and 1840's was clearly felt in Rehoboth. Churches from that period in Rehoboth are designed in a provincial vernacular Greek Revival style and were constructed between 1838 and 1843 at the height of religious activism. They are invariably of wood frame construction with a three bay entrance facade in the gable end and simple adornment. The Village Congregational Church (Area A; Form #2) is the most elaborate with round head stained glass windows (later additions), fanlight over the entrance, and rectangular tower.

Remodelling of these buildings has by and large occurred to install necessary amenities, such as heat and electricity, or to enhance the social role of the church addition of kitchen, social hall, library and classroom space. In most cases, this has been accomplished by basement alterations or additions. In the case of the Village Congregational Church these functions take place in nearby Goff Memorial Hall (Area A; Form #1).

Rehoboth contains two additional institutional buildings of note: one public and one private. Of three extant one-room schools built in the 19th century, Hornbine School (Form #62) erected 1862, is the best preserved and has been restored as a museum. The Anawan Club (Form #214), a one-story log cabin built in 1898, expresses Rehoboth's rural character in a rustic architectural mode borrowed from northern New England; sited on 200 acres of woodland, it has functioned as headquarters for a men's hunting and recreational club for nearly 100 years.



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The Carpenter Street Bridge (Form 802), a small dry laid stone bridge with central pier and two abutments erected in 1873, is the last remaining example of the simple bridges which spanned streams throughout the town. It replaced an earlier (c.1720) wooden bridge and has recently been stabilized. Anawan Rock (Form #801) a large boulder glacially deposited and containing a natural shelter is strongly documented as the site of the surrender of Chief Anawan and the last holdout of Indians, ending King Philips's War in 1676; it is currently owned and maintained by the town as an historic site.

Milling and manufacturing, whether as part of the 18th and early 19th century self-sustaining agrarian support system, or an independent commercial enterprise in the later 19th century, formed an important part of economic and social life in Rehoboth. The impact of these activities and the individuals associated with them reached far beyond the town bounds. Today, a small vernacular cottage, built as a mill office and now a residence (Area A; Form #216), is the sole structure which still stands as a direct reminder of past industrial activities in the town. Houses of those who owned and worked in the mills also provide an important, if indirect, reference. Yet, despite an overall paucity of architectural resources, subsurface remains of mill buildings and remnants of associated water power systems may fulfill this vital role in reconstructing and understanding life in Rehoboth. The first step towards aggregating and utilizing such information would be a comprehensive archaeological survey of mill sites in the town. Such a survey has not been undertaken to date, but is recommended in order to complete and support this section of the nomination.

Archaeological Component

A comprehensive survey of archaeological resources in Rehoboth has not been realized to date, and no subsurface testing was done during this most recent survey phase. Yet, on the basis of existing information, the following predictions can be made. In general, archaeological potential for prehistoric and historic period properties is thought to be excellent since construction activities in the town have been relatively minimal. Prehistoric period sites are known along the Palmer River and expected in the hilly uplands as indicated by regional data. The distribution of historic sites is anticipated to mirror that of other historic resources in Rehoboth. They seem to be evenly distributed in a low density scatter throughout the town. The majority are residential. Their spatial distributions, in part seems to reflect patterns in terms of particular environmental settings. Sites relating to early settlement are found in the south central section of town where farmsteads were established between about 1660 and 1730. Industrial archaeological properties from the 17th to 19th centuries are located on fall lines of the Palmer River and Rocky River, as well as lesser tributaries. Selected early historic sites were identified and tested by Leslie C. Abernathy in 1976; results are available through the Rehoboth Historical Commission. Further archaeological research resulting in identification and nomination of sites should be a priority for Rehoboth.

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Previous Research

Several early histories of Rehoboth have provided the basis for subsequent research in the town (Bliss 1836; Bowen 1945; Tilton 1918). The recent efforts of town citizens and organizations during the past fifteen years have produced an additionally strong body of literature (Snape 1976; Trim et al. 1968). The written and orally documented history of Rehoboth's development is thus fairly well recorded. Research on various topics has also been conducted by students in the Anthropology Department at Brown University, Providence, RI. These include two Masters of Arts theses, one on barns (Abernathy 1974) and one on graveyards (Horvath 1976) in Rehoboth. A report discussing the results of archaeological investigations at the site of the first Palmer River meetinghouse discusses settlement processes and the role of the meetinghouse (Abernathy's research in Rehoboth is expanded in a forthcoming doctoral dissertation on Rehoboth's settlement patterns).

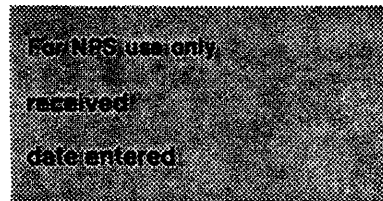
An additional important contribution to present-day knowledge of 18th century architecture and lifeways in Rehoboth was made by a prominent Rehoboth citizen in 1848. In a two volume manuscript of "Reminiscences" William Blanding (1773-1857) recorded the town of his youth. He included sketches of 137 houses, of which 110 were in Rehoboth and 27 in what is now Seekonk, and stories of their occupants. The Rehoboth Revolutionary War Bicentennial Commission's book Mighty Liberty Men (Snape 1976) drew heavily from this manuscript which is in private hands. A final important source for understanding the regional context of Rehoboth is the "Historic Archaeological Resources of Southeast Massachusetts" (MHC 1982).

Survey Methodology

Initial work on an architectural survey of Rehoboth was conducted in 1976 by Leslie C. Abernathy, a graduate student in the Anthropology Department, Brown University. This phase of work included a survey of all buildings constructed in Rehoboth before 1850 (approximately 250 structures). In the fall of 1980, Virginia H. Adams, a full time employee at the Public Archaeology Laboratory (PAL), Brown University; and part-time graduate student in the Anthropology Department there, was engaged to amend the existing building forms and expand the town survey towards preparation of a Multiple Resources National Register Nomination. Ms. Adams is an archaeologist with training in architectural history. Advice and guidance was provided by Dr. Patricia E. Rubertone, Historic Principal Investigator at the PAL. Because of the size of the project, work was to be done on a "best effort basis". It was carried out between October 1980 and October 1981.

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During this most recent phase of survey, properties included in the 1976 survey were selected for closer examination on the basis of two major criteria: owner interest, potential architectural and/or historical significance, and MHC recommendations.

Pre-1850, buildings were grouped into general temporal and stylistic categories and a framework was outlined based on Rehoboth's historical development and significant characteristics. Selected structures of each time period and architectural type present in the town was selected for evaluation. It is estimated that there are 50-75 structures dating from 1850-1900 in Rehoboth. Representative examples were chosen for survey inspection and possible inclusion in this submission. In all cases, emphasis was placed on architectural character, integrity, setting (including the arrangement of outbuildings), and a reconnaissance level assessment of associated archaeological components. Documentary research and personal interviews provided the basis for establishing historical significance for the individual structures. The total distribution and characteristics, both temporal and spatial, of cultural resources as they reflect patterns of community growth has been an overriding consideration throughout.

Overall, this group should be considered as representative, but not ultimately inclusive. While each historic period and architectural category is accurately illustrated, further work will certainly bring to light additional properties to supplement this nomination.

# 8. Significance

Rehoboth Multiple Resource Area, Rehoboth, MA

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1645-Present      **Builder/Architect** See individual forms

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Introduction:

The town of Rehoboth, Massachusetts is significant as a community where the integrity of a 19th century rural agrarian cultural landscape has been extraordinarily well preserved. Written documentation recording the history of rural settlements and folk lifeways in New England and elsewhere tends to be relatively sparse. Information relating to individuals, events, and daily activities must, therefore, be gleaned from alternate sources such as oral history and remains of vernacular material culture. The wealth and quality of 18th and 19th century homesteads, farm complexes, industrial remains, streetscapes and road networks which remain intact in Rehoboth today offer an excellent opportunity for study. Moreover, construction activities since ca. 1875 have been minimal; thus there is a high probability for the presence of undisturbed prehistoric and historic archaeological remains complementing the standing structure stock.

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Rehoboth's prominent historic resources are the physical manifestations in vernacular form of the processes and patterns of the town's cultural development. These resources are consistently dispersed and directly reflect settlement. Community growth has been characterized by a pattern of scattered farmsteads and small clusters of population associated with past industrial activities. No permanent, central community nucleus of significant size or continuing vitality was ever established within the bounds of present day Rehoboth. Today, broad areas of town are still referred to as "neighborhoods" and retain their historic names. A succession of technological, socio-economic, and cultural factors have fostered the cultural landscape existing today.

The Rehoboth Multiple Resource nomination possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. It meets criteria A, B, and C and potentially D of the National Register of Historic Places. Submitted with the nomination are individual properties and one district which stand as key and/or representative examples of their type landscape existing today.

Community Development: First Settlement at the "Ring of the Green: 1645 - 1675

At the time of first European Contact in southeastern Massachusetts in the 17th century, the territory extending from Narragansett Bay to Cape Cod, including Rehoboth, was held by the Wampanoag (or Pokanoket). They had been one of the strongest tribes in the region before the epidemic of 1617-1619 which struck heavily in their villages, leaving

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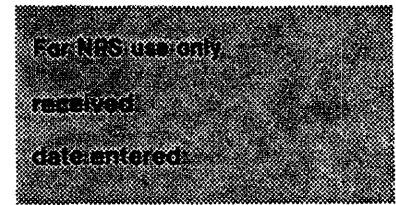
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their numbers greatly diminished. Consequently, they welcomed the English as potential allies against the Narragansett, their traditional enemies to the west. The drawing of a formal agreement between the colonies and the Wampanoag chief, Massasoit, insured peace and the release of Indian lands for colonial settlement. Massasoit and his successor, King Phillip, had headquarters at nearby Bristol, Rhode Island. In 1668, twenty odd years after initial settlement, the land which is now Rehoboth was formally deeded to Plymouth Colony by King Philip with rights to an additional one hundred acres of salt marsh to the south (Swansea; never considered a true part of Rehoboth).

The "two kings" who entertained Verrazano on his 1524 visit to Narragansett Bay may have been Wampanoag or Narragansett. The first confirmed record of European contact in the vicinity of Rehoboth is found in William Bradford's writings with mention of a journey made in 1621 by Edward Winslow and Stephen Hopkins to visit Massasoit at Mount Hope in present-day Bristol, Rhode Island. By 1623 a trading post had been established in this frontier region and a strong communications and trade link existed between Plymouth and the Mount Hope area. The first permanent European settler was William Blackstone, a prominent scholar, who in 1635 came to what is now Pawtucket, Rhode Island (once part of Rehoboth North Purchase). A year later, Roger Williams and his followers resided on the east side of the Seekonk River (later Old Rehoboth) for three months. Upon discovering that they were still within the jurisdiction of Plymouth Colony (from which Williams had been banned) the group crossed the river and founded Providence, Rhode Island.

These early years of exploration and settlement by individuals fleeing Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth Colonies were followed by the creation of a planned, permanent settlement in 1645 and called by its founders Rehoboth. These Congregationalist families came with the blessing of their parent church in Weymouth. Noted events recorded for the subsequent seventy-five years of Rehoboth's history relate to those who established this original settlement at the "Ring of the Green", west of present-day Rehoboth and now East Providence, Rhode Island. Today, this site has been completely altered by industrial and suburban development.

One of the first acts of the original Rehoboth proprietors was to vote at a meeting in Weymouth on December 10, 1643 that the teacher was to have a "certain portion" from each settler and in town land allotments be awarded a lot valued at 50 pounds. This is the second provision on record in the Colonies for free public education by taxation, the first being a similar decision made by Boston four years earlier. The name of the first teacher on record for Old Rehoboth is that of Edward Howard, who in 1680 "got 20 pounds a year and his diet besides what the Court doth allow". (Trim et al. 1968:52).

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Thirty years after settlement began, the young community at the "Ring of the Green" was almost totally destroyed during King Philip's War (1675-1675). Still considered a frontier settlement, Rehoboth was not required to send troops. Nevertheless, many local men joined the colonial ranks to fight locally and as far away as Narragansett, Rhode Island. The closing event of the war--the surrender of the remnant of Philip's men led by the sachem Anawan in 1676--took place at Anawan Rock in modern Rehoboth.

Religious Autonomy and Agricultural Foundation: 1675-1812

Early town records refer to the Palmer River area by 1652, however, the history of permanent settlement in present-day Rehoboth begins at the end of the 17th century during the period of rebuilding after King Philip's War. Within the present town bounds land roughly south of Route 44 was allotted prior to 1660 and land to the north shortly thereafter. Saw and gristmills were commonly in operation in these remote areas decades before actual settlement. From 1680 onwards reference to specific places in modern Rehoboth, such as Rocky Hill and Oak Swamp appear in the town annals.

Initial settlement in the vicinity of the Palmer River was carried out by two groups: Congregationalists from the "ring of the Green" community and Baptists who moved north from the Swansea area. The former were concentrated along the River itself; the latter occupied lands on Manwhague Plain in the southeastern section of town and present a very early contingent for the region. The social as well as geographic distance between these two groups strongly influenced the dispersed nature of Rehoboth's future development.

Present-day Rehoboth experienced its largest growth during this period, mirroring regional expansion. A handful of families are associated with purchasing and settling large portions of Rehoboth in the early 1700's. The north central part of town was settled by Carpenters; the northeast by Blisses and Pecks; the southeast by Masons, Bakers and Pierces; and the southwest by a diverse group. A significant number of houses built and lived in by generations of these founding families are still standing.

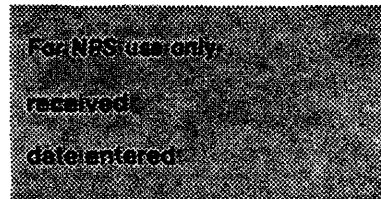
By 1708 a pound was needed for control of livestock in the Palmer River vicinity. Arrangements for a schoolmaster for the community are first mentioned on November 12, 1703 when the town at large voted to hire Mr. Joseph Metcalf to keep school at Palmer River the 1st six months of the year in a suitable place which the local inhabitants were to provide. In 1709 Palmer River students were allotted fourteen weeks of schooling per year.

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By 1700 the growing number of families in the Palmer River community found travelling westward to the meetinghouse in the "center" to town of great inconvenience and petitioned the General Court of Massachusetts for their own church. Permission received, a church was erected on Lake Street and occupied by ten members in 1721. The business of the two churches and congregationalist societies was handled as one by the town until 1759. In that year the Palmer River church and congregation were incorporated as the "Second Precinct of Rehoboth", freeing the town at large of further financial responsibility. This meetinghouse and its successors (c. 1773, junction of Anawan Road and County Street; 1839, (Form #2) served as focal points for precinct social and civic functions as well as religious service.

Rehoboth is also notable for its early Baptist component which erected their first church in the southeastern section of the present town at Oak Swamp, c.1732, followed by Hornbine Church in ca. 1753 (Form #63) with Deacon Mial Pierce (#Form #61) as leader. A lesser Baptist community residing in the north of the precinct founded Round Church near Stevens Corner in 1743, lapsed and reorganized 1789, and revived as the Reformed Methodist Church 1827. Also serving the northern community, near Briggs Corner, was the Irons or Free-Will Baptist Church of 1777.

Intensive exploitation of meadow, field, woodland, wetland and riverine resources was quickly accomplished. Settlement pattern was governed by familial structure and intensification of land use occurred as first settlers such as Deacon Thomas Carpenter (Form #152) and Ephraim Bliss (Form #2) subdivided land amongst their offspring. The town's economic basis was primarily agricultural, patterned after the self-sufficient English medieval (Yoeman) tradition. The basis of this yoeman way of life was the family unit which provided for its own needs in so far as possible. Each farmer raised his own Indian corn, potatoes, rye, flax, and vegetables. A selection of livestock--sheeps, goats, pigs, geese, and cattle provided sustenance and clothing materials. While the farmer himself generally made his own tools, the products of local blacksmiths using iron from Peck's Forge after 1720 and the five or six gristmills operating at any one time along the Palmer River were, among others, important auxiliary services.

Despite this self-sustaining image, however, farmers did need to rely to some degree on the market and each other for items they could not produce themselves. Informal exchange of goods and services created an interlocking economic network amongst the townspeople, particularly as small scale specialization began to occur around mid-century. Carpentry skills might be traded for turnips, or shoe repair for rum. The account book kept from 1762-1774 by one such enterprising and versatile man, Captain Philip Wheeler, who lived at the site of 214 Chestnut Street (Form #209) indicates that hard cash rarely changed hands in these transactions. Money was a scarce commodity, but a number of wealthier men in town lent money at interest, including Thomas Carpenter III of Bay State Road (Form #152).



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Cottage and artisan industries were also important activities, providing goods for local consumption and limited export. In addition to saw, grist and fulling mills, Rehoboth had its share of tradesmen: blacksmiths, coopers, housewrights, cordwainers, brass workers, brickmakers, tanners and a glazier. Until the 1750's, southeastern Massachusetts led New England in primary iron manufacturing and was prominent in lumber export. Rehoboth residents participated in both activities, boasting two iron forges and a prosperous lumber trade.

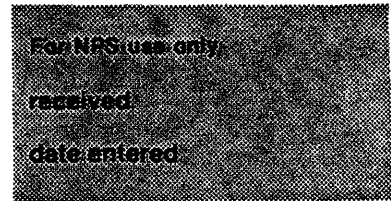
On the eve of the Revolution, the inhabitants (for the present town boundaries) numbered close to 2,500. As rebellious sentiments grew, the townspeople instructed their representative to the First Continental congress of 1774 to join the other colonies in requesting a redress of grievances. By March 1775, one month before the skirmish at Lexington, they were openly rebellious, voting "to raise a sum of money for the Incoragement of the Minitmen" (in Snape 1976: 79). At the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, Rehoboth (all sections inclusive) was the most populated town in Bristol County and contributed at least five military companies to the colonial ranks. Rehoboth men served at Dorchester, MA and at White Plains, New York. Captain Mial Pierce (Form #61) and Colonel Thoms Carpenter (Form #152) were respected leaders. Among those who did not return was Elisha Allen, Jr. (Form #160), who was killed in the Battle of Rhode Island serving under Colonel Thomas Carpenter. In addition to furnishing money and 1400 men, townspeople also manufactured saltpeter, contributed 42,106 pounds of beef for support of the soldiers, and maintained warning beacons in the town.

The depression accompanying the post-war years was felt hardest in rural hinterlands like Rehoboth. Currency had depreciated; paper money was useless; and many farmsteads were badly deteriorated due to neglect during the fighting years. In 1782 the Palmer River Precinct church investments were reported at less than half their original value (Snape 1976: 111). With suitable farmland long since overcultivated or available only in small four and five acre plots, many war veterans migrated northward and westward. This eased the land strain somewhat and allowed others to increase their land holdings by purchasing numerous small parcels. However, in 1800, the precinct felt the necessity of establishing a poor farm to cope with the poor and indigent in the community.

By 1800, evidence of shifting demographic conditions is indicated by a slight decline in the census figures for Rehoboth's present town boundaries. Numbers continued to inch downward throughout the 19th century, not experiencing significant upswing until the 1930's. Hence, Rehoboth's population remained an essentially homogeneous group composed of descendants of early Anglican settlers well into the 20th century.

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Rehoboth Multiple

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Page 5

Town Formation and Agricultural Prosperity: 1812-1900

Present-day Rehoboth was separated from Seekonk and gained town status in 1812. At this same time, the impact of the industrial revolution began to be felt as the Embargo Acts prior to the War of 1812 helped promote mercantile investments in manufacturing. In Rehoboth, capital investment in commercial enterprises, particularly cotton manufacturing, came from both local residents and urban entrepreneurs. The Rehoboth Union Mill in Rehoboth Village began operation in 1809, two years before the first cotton mill in Fall River began production. This mill and the Palmer River Manufacturing Company at Shad Factory Pond in 1811, manufactured cotton batting, thread, fine printed fabric and hose which was shipped as far away as Albany, Buffalo and New York City.

By 1822, the latter site, reputed to be one of the earliest to spin fine #16 yarn, possessed ten looms and 600 spindles. A decade later, the combined product of the mills was listed as \$36,000.

A third cotton batting mill was located at Peck's Forge water privelege at mid-century. Initially these mills remained tied to earlier cottage industries, as weaving was done by local women in their own homes, although looms were introduced in the 1830's.

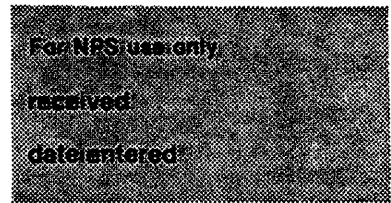
William Blanding (Form #138) was one of the Rehoboth investors in the Palmer River Manufacturing Company, later known as the Orleans Cotton Manufacturing company. It operated under several different owners until 1884, at which time cutlery was being manufactured there. The Rehoboth Union Manufacturing Company was begun by four sons of Colonel Thomas Carpenter (Form #152), Richard Goff and Dexter Wheeler. Darius Goff, who with others, owned the company from 1835 to 1870 was a renowned innovator in textile technology; in 1846 he patented a cotton wadding process used throughout the world. He grew up in the family homestead which was torn down to build the first Goff Memorial Hall in 1886.

Through the efforts of these men, Rehoboth reached the peak of its manufacturing activity in this period. In addition to the three cotton mills seven saw and grist mills were in operation within the town.

Production of wood products for local sale and export continued, notably at the Perry family's woodturning and ring traveler company at Perryville in northern Rehoboth. One historian claims that Ezra Perry was the first in the country to manufacture bobbins for the cotton industry. By the 1880's, when the textile mills had all but ceased operation, wood products formed the chief base of the town's manufacturing industry. The Perry family incorporated as the Charles Perry Manufacturing Co. in 1790 (Form #2/0). though even this soon faded.

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Continuation sheet      Rehoboth Multiple  
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Agriculture, however, remained the true mainstay of Rehoboth's economy in the 19th century.

Paralleling the development of industrial manufacturing. The subsistence mode of farming gradually gave way to a more commercial orientation in Rehoboth as demand was generated by adjacent urban centers. Commercial farming was accomplished in one of several ways: specialization in dairy or produce, or a generalized combination of the two. This shift allowed Rehoboth to become a major supplier of produce and dairy products to the regional urban market.

Encouraged by government subsidies, several Rehoboth farmers attempted silk culture in the 1830s and 1840's, but with little success. A mulberry tree at the Elisha Allen house (Form #160) is reputedly a remnant of this short-lived industry.

After mid-century local response to national movements in agricultural reform and rural social organization is reflected in the formation in 1874 of the Rehoboth Farmers club and, in 1896, of Anawan Grange.

As indicated by the 1895 Massachusetts census, 310 of 373 farms in Rehoboth were devoted to generalized farming (Abernathy 1974: 25). The goals of men such as Edwin F. Cushing (Form #142) and J.W. Bliss (Form #161), who were listed as contributors to the 1895 Everts and Richards Atlas, differed from those of earlier farmers, however, in their recognition of an dependency on a commercial market. By the second half of the century, many farmers were on a harvest schedule beginning in May with strawberries and ending in November with apples and pumpkins.

By the end of the 19th century, the strength of Rehoboth's agricultural base was undeniable. The township ranked 195th in population out of 353 towns in Massachusetts, but was sixth in the value of agricultural goods (\$456, 180 for 1800 people) (Massachusetts Industrial Statistics 1895: 48-53 quoted in Abernathy 1974:23). The decline in farming at the turn of the century in Rehoboth as in other rural New England towns, was due more to the attraction of industry than to loss of market or depletion of soils.

In the first half of the 19th century, present day Rehoboth allotted an average of \$600 yearly for its schools. By 1840 there were 22 school buildings within its bounds. Several of these district schoolhouses are still standing, although much altered. The Hornbine School (Form #62) was the last one-room schoolhouse in Rehoboth to be closed. It enrolled pupils for the last time in 1937. It was restored in 1967 and is maintained as a museum commemorating an important phase in the history of our educational system.

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Intellectual interests were actively pursued in Rehoboth during the second half of the 19th century. A debating club formed in 1846 had 38 charter members. The town boasted a number of private schools in addition to its public ones which were finally consolidated, after much debate, in 1885. That same year, Blanding Public Library was formed by Thomas and Amelia Blanding Bicknell. The excitement surrounding the nation's centennial celebration in 1876 gave the townspeople an opportunity to express their strong sense of Rehoboth's heritage; Goff Memorial Hall was built in the 1880's to house memorabilia from local attics and provide a locus for church and civic gatherings. This building, which burned in 1911, and its successor (Form #1) are the only civic structures ever built in Rehoboth that were designed in a monumental mode.

All recreational activities were not intellectual; many were purely social. Clambakes have been sponsored annually by a number of institutions in Rehoboth since the mid 19th century. Among these are the Hornbine Church and the Goff Family Gathering Association. In 1898 a group of Providence businessmen formed the Anawan Club (Form #214) a sport hunting association, and purchased woodland in central Rehoboth.

At the close of the period in 1890, Rehoboth's population bottomed out followed by a gradual increase in both number and diversity which continues today. However, by 1885 foreign born population comprised only 6 percent of total persons.

Stagnation and Suburbanization: 1900-to present.

Rehoboth's economic and demographic growth was clearly slowing to a trickle by 1900. No major industry in Rehoboth had survived intense competition from outside. Increasing numbers of people were commuting to work in nearby manufacturing centers, or leaving Rehoboth altogether. Agriculture was the practically sole viable form of livelihood available in the town. Even it became less and less attractive in the first decades of the 20th century.

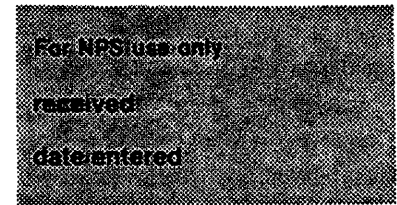
Population growth began eventually to pick up again in the 1930's and 1940's. It was not until 1955, however, that the population exceeded the pre-revolutionary war total. The newcomers were basically composed of urbanites who continued to commute to work in adjacent cities, and an influx of Portuguese immigrants who helped revitalize the town's fading agricultural economy.

Preservation Activities:

A major instrumental force in the preservation of the landscape and community fabric in Rehoboth has been the town residents. Many descendents of early families still reside in town, often on original homestead land. Their presence and recollections create a continuity of social structure

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and history which is tightly interwoven with Rehoboth's material cultural resources.

The formation of the Rehoboth Antiquarian Society in 1884 signalled the town residents' recognition of the importance of preserving Rehoboth's cultural heritage. The Society's main interest was in collecting and curating "memorabilia," now housed in the Carpenter Museum in the Village. Expanded preservation activities began in 1965 with the establishment of the Anawan Historical Society and the Rehoboth Historical Commission. Considerable preservation and conservation work has been accomplished since that time. The Historical Commission, which was set up under 1963 state law enabling legislation, meets monthly to discuss and act upon pertinent preservation issues. It has been actively involved in town planning and instrumental in direct preservation through purchasing and maintaining historic sites such as Anawan Rock as well as sponsoring the 1976 inventory of pre-1830 properties of this nomination. The efforts of the Hornbine School Association have been to restore and support the Hornbine School, a one-room schoolhouse, as a museum.

Despite the caliber of historic resources and the strong interest in preservation of Rehoboth, no properties have yet been listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Multiple: See Attached

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property see individual forms

Quadrangle name Somerset, MA; Norton, MA; Attleboro, MA;  
East Providence, RI.

Quadrangle scale 1:25000

UMT References see individual forms

A 

Zone	Easting			Northing							

B 

Zone	Easting			Northing							

C 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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**Verbal boundary description and justification** Boundaries for individual properties generally follow present lot lines and comprise between one and ten acres. In cases where large amounts of acreage are associated with a property site, the land possesses historical significance and is integral to the property's ability to convey a sense of time and place. Please see individual inventory forms.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

## 11. Form Prepared By

(formerly Research Supervisor)

name/title Virginia Adams Fitch, Preservation Planner Public Archaeology Laboratory  
Brown University)

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date December 1982

street & number 294 Washington St.

telephone (617) 727-8470

city or town Boston

state Ma.

02108

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Patricia L. Westowski

title State Historic Preservation officer  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

date 4/5/83

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

See Continuation sheet for listing date  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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National Park Service

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received

date entered

Continuation sheet    Rehoboth Multiple    Item number    9    Page    1  
Resource Nomination

Abernathy, Leslie C., III

1974 The barns of Rehoboth, Mass. A paper presented as a partial requirement for the Master of Arts degree. Brown University.

Bicknell, Thomas W., ed.

1894 Historical addresses, poem, and other exercises at the celebration of two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the settlement of Rehoboth, Mass. Held October 3, 1894. Rehoboth Antiquarian Society.

Bidwell, Percy W. and John I. Falconer

1925 History of agriculture in the northern United States, 1620-1860. Carnegie Institute, Washington, D.C.

Blanding, William

1848 "Reminiscences." 2 vols. Unpublished ms., in private hands. Copy available through the Rehoboth Historical Commission.

Bliss, Leonard, Jr.

1836 History of Rehoboth. Otis Broaders and Company, Boston.

Bowen, Richard LeBaron

1945-50 Early Rehoboth, 4 vols. Rumford Press, Concord, New Hampshire.

Cole, Stephen A.

1977 The Kingsley homestead, Rehoboth, Massachusetts. Unpublished ms. with additions by George Nan Burridge, 1980. On file, Public Archaeology Laboratory, Brown University.

Dodge, J. Robert

1952 Rural architecture and farm planning. In Forms and functions of 20th century architecture, edited by Talbot Hamlin, pp. 220-268. Columbia University Press, New York.

Everts and Richards

1895 New topographical atlas of surveys: Bristol County, Mass. Everts and Richards, Philadelphia.

Horvath, Steven M., Jr.

1976 Palmers River burial ground: a case study of the use of gravestones as prestige indicators. A paper presented as a partial requirement for the Masters of Arts degree, Brown University.



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Continuation sheet    Rehoboth Multiple    Item number    9    Page    2  
Resource Nomination

Hurd, D. Hamilton  
1883 History of Bristol County, Mass.: with biographical sketches of many of its pioneers and prominent men. J.W. Lewis and Company, Philadelphia.

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
1982 Historic and archaeological resources of southeast Massachusetts. Massachusetts Historical Commission, Boston, MA.

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
1979 Cultural resources in Massachusetts: a model for management. Massachusetts Historical Commission, Boston.

Rehoboth Antiquarian Society  
1886 Historic Rehoboth: record of the dedication of Goff Memorial Hall, May 10, A.D., 1886. Perry and Barnes, Attleborough, Mass.

Snape, Sue Ellen  
1976 Mighty Liberty Men. Rehoboth Revolutionary War Bicentennial Commission, Rehoboth, Mass.

1979 In Old Rehoboth. Rehoboth Historical Commission, Rehoboth, Mass.

Tilton, George H.  
1918 A history of Rehoboth, Massachusetts. Louis E. Crossup Company, Boston.

Trim, Robert et al.  
1968 Rehoboth 325th anniversary. No publisher.

Walling, H.F.  
1850 Map of Rehoboth

1871 Map of Rehoboth

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Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Rehoboth Multiple Resource Area  
State Massachusetts

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

- |  |   |                   |                                      |
|--|---|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Rehoboth Village Historic District          | <i>REHOBOTH</i><br>Multiple Resource Area | Keeper            | <u><i>Bruce Alan Boyd</i> 6/6/83</u> |
|  |   | Attest            | _____                                |
| 2. Allen, Elisha, House                        | Entered in the<br>National Register       | Keeper            | <u><i>Arlene Byers</i> 6/6/83</u>    |
|  |   | Attest            | _____                                |
| 3. Anawan Club Caretaker's House               |   | Keeper            | _____                                |
|  |   | Attest            | _____                                |
| 4. Anawan Club Clubhouse AND CARETAKER'S HOUSE | Entered in the<br>National Register       | <i>for</i> Keeper | <u><i>Arlene Byers</i> 6/6/83</u>    |
|  |   | Attest            | _____                                |
| 5. Anawan Rock                                 | Entered in the<br>National Register       | <i>for</i> Keeper | <u><i>Arlene Byers</i> 6/6/83</u>    |
|  |   | Attest            | _____                                |
| 6. Baker House                                 | Entered in the<br>National Register       | <i>for</i> Keeper | <u><i>Arlene Byers</i> 6/6/83</u>    |
|  |   | Attest            | _____                                |
| 7. Bliss, Abiah, House                         | Entered in the<br>National Register       | <i>for</i> Keeper | <u><i>Arlene Byers</i> 6/6/83</u>    |
|  |   | Attest            | _____                                |
| 8. Bliss, Daniel, Homestead                    | Entered in the<br>National Register       | <i>for</i> Keeper | <u><i>Arlene Byers</i> 6/6/83</u>    |
|  |   | Attest            | _____                                |
| 9. Bowen, Nathan, House                        | Entered in the<br>National Register       | <i>for</i> Keeper | <u><i>Arlene Byers</i> 6/6/83</u>    |
|  |   | Attest            | _____                                |
| 10. Bramble Hill                               | Entered in the<br>National Register       | <i>for</i> Keeper | <u><i>Arlene Byers</i> 6/6/83</u>    |
|  |   | Attest            | _____                                |

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Name Rehoboth Multiple Resource Area  
State Massachusetts

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

- 11. Brown House Substantive Review Keeper James Van Dyke 6/6/83  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 12. Briggs Tavern Entered in the  
National Register *for* Keeper Delores Byers 6/6/83  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 13. Carpenter Bridge Entered in the  
National Register *for* Keeper Delores Byers 6/6/83  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 14. Carpenter, Christopher,  
House (60 Carpenter St.) Entered in the  
National Register *for* Keeper Delores Byers 6/6/83  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 15. Carpenter House  
(89 Carpenter St.) Entered in the  
National Register *for* Keeper Delores Byers 6/6/83  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 16. Carpenter, Col. Thomas, III,  
House Entered in the  
National Register *for* Keeper Delores Byers 6/6/83  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 17. { Cushing, Caleb, Farm  
*Combined* Keeper \_\_\_\_\_  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 18. { Cushing <sup>CALEB,</sup> House and Farm Entered in the  
National Register *for* Keeper Delores Byers 6/6/83  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 19. Drown, Nathaniel, House Entered in the  
National Register *for* Keeper Delores Byers 6/6/83  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 20. Elm Cottage/Blanding Farm Entered in the  
National Register *for* Keeper Delores Byers 6/6/83  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_

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Multiple Resource Area  
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Name Rehoboth Multiple Resource Area  
State Massachusetts

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

21. Goff Farm

Substantive Review

Keeper

Anna Lee Boyd 6/6/83

Attest

22. Goff Homestead

Entered in the  
National Register

for  
Keeper

Delores Byers 6/6/83

Attest

23. Hornbine Baptist Church

Entered in the  
National Register

for  
Keeper

Delores Byers 6/6/83

Attest

24. Hornbine School

Entered in the  
National Register

for  
Keeper

Delores Byers 6/6/83

Attest

25. Horton, Welcome, Farm

Entered in the  
National Register

for  
Keeper

Delores Byers 6/6/83

Attest

26. House at 197 Hornbine Road

Entered in the  
National Register

for  
Keeper

Delores Byers 6/6/83

Attest

27. House at 30 Kelton Street

Entered in the  
National Register

for  
Keeper

Delores Byers 6/6/83

Attest

28. Ingalls-Wheeler-Horton  
Homestead Site

Entered in the  
National Register

for  
Keeper

Delores Byers 6/6/83

Attest

29. Kingsley House

Entered in the  
National Register

for  
Keeper

Delores Byers 6/6/83

Attest

30. Knapp, Seth, Jr., House

Entered in the  
National Register

for  
Keeper

Delores Byers 6/6/83

Attest

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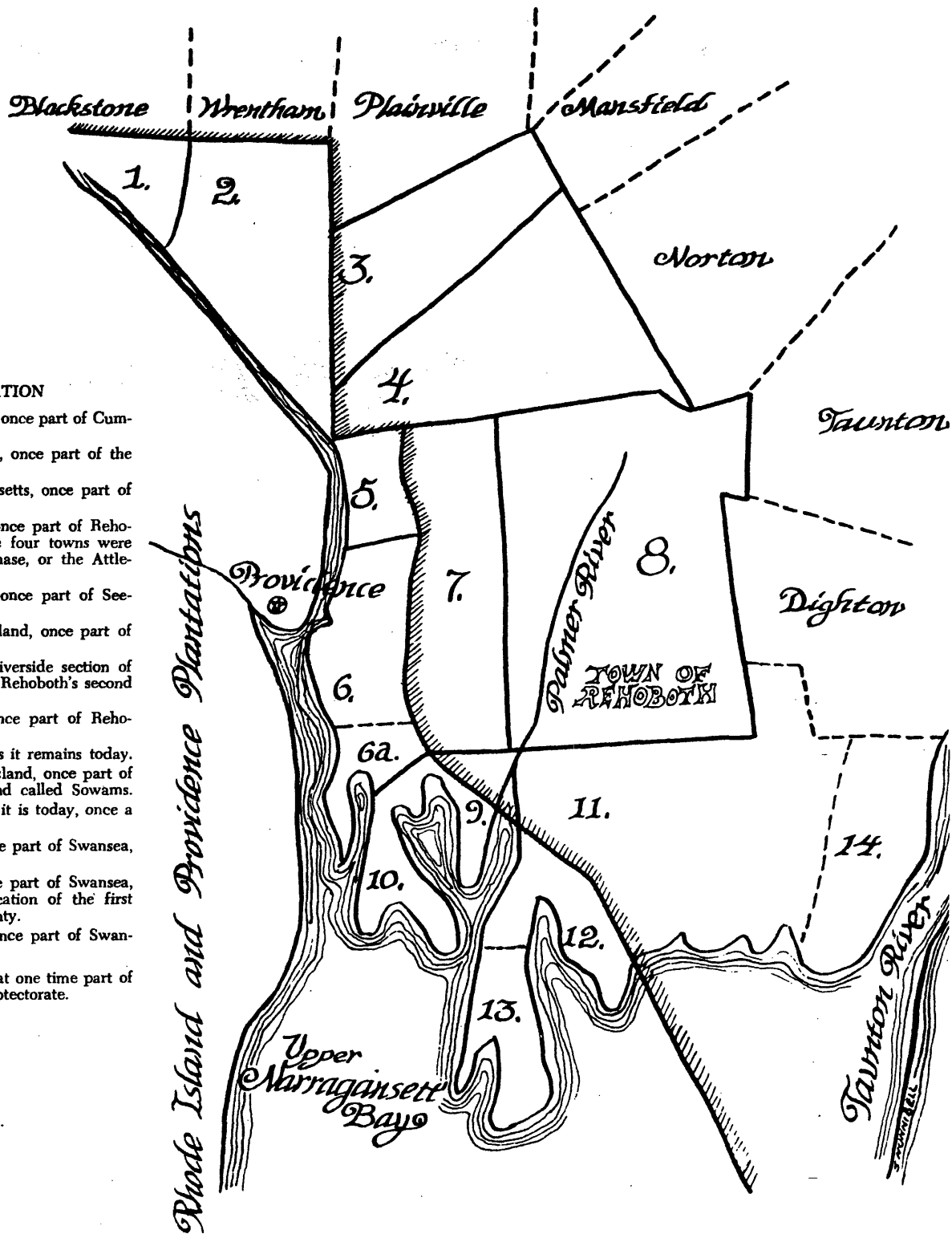
Name Rehoboth Multiple Resource Area  
State Massachusetts

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

- 31. Martin Farm Substantive Review Keeper Mary Ann Boyd 6/6/83  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 32. Peck-Bowen House Entered in the  
National Register *for* Keeper Melrose Byers 6/6/83  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 33. Perry, James House Entered in the  
National Register *for* Keeper Melrose Byers 6/6/83  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 34. Pierce, Capt. Mial, Farm Entered in the  
National Register *for* Keeper Melrose Byers 6/6/83  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 35. Viall, Samuel, House Entered in the  
National Register *for* Keeper Melrose Byers 6/6/83  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 36. Wheeler, Aaron, House Entered in the  
National Register *for* Keeper Melrose Byers 6/6/83  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 37. Wheeler-Ingalls House Entered in the  
National Register Keeper \_\_\_\_\_  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 38. \_\_\_\_\_ Keeper \_\_\_\_\_  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 39. \_\_\_\_\_ Keeper \_\_\_\_\_  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_
- 40. \_\_\_\_\_ Keeper \_\_\_\_\_  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_

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MAP IDENTIFICATION

1. Woonsocket, Rhode Island, once part of Cumberland.
2. Cumberland, Rhode Island, once part of the North Purchase.
3. North Attleboro, Massachusetts, once part of the North Purchase.
4. Attleboro, Massachusetts, once part of Rehoboth, Massachusetts. These four towns were known as the North Purchase, or the Attleboro Gore.
5. Pawtucket, Rhode Island, once part of Seekonk, Massachusetts.
6. East Providence, Rhode Island, once part of Seekonk, Massachusetts.
- 6A. Wannamoisett, now the Riverside section of East Providence. This was Rehoboth's second purchase.
7. Seekonk, Massachusetts, once part of Rehoboth, Massachusetts.
8. Rehoboth, Massachusetts as it remains today.
9. & 10. Barrington, Rhode Island, once part of Swansea, Massachusetts and called Sowams.
11. Swansea, Massachusetts as it is today, once a protectorate of Rehoboth.
12. Warren, Rhode Island, once part of Swansea, Massachusetts.
13. Bristol, Rhode Island, once part of Swansea, Massachusetts and the location of the first county seat of Bristol County.
14. Somerset, Massachusetts, once part of Swansea.

The above towns were all at one time part of Rehoboth or under it's protectorate.

Map 1  
Rehoboth Massachusetts