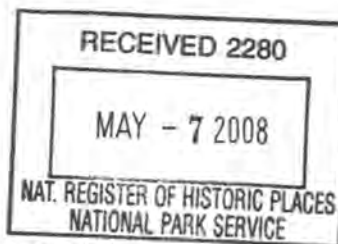


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Macy-Colby House

other names/site number Obadiah Colby House

2. Location

street & number 257 Main Street not for publication

city or town Amesbury N/A vicinity

state Massachusetts code MA county Essex code 009 zip code 01913

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Brona Simon May 2, 2008
Signature of certifying official/Title Brona Simon Date
Massachusetts Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- ☒ entered in the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain):

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Patrick Andrews

6/16/2008

Macy-Colby House

Name of Property

Essex, MA

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	building
<u>2</u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	objects
<u>7</u>	<u>5</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

COLONIAL

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: fieldstone

walls WOOD: weatherboard; shingle

roof WOOD SHINGLE

other N/A

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Macy-Colby House
Amesbury (Essex), MA

Section number 7 Page 1

7. DESCRIPTION

Setting.

The Macy-Colby House, 257 Main Street, is located approximately three-quarters of a mile from Amesbury's commercial downtown. The one-acre property is about 500 yards south of Bartlett's Corner, the intersection of Haverhill Road (MA Rte 110), Macy Street, and Main Street. The surrounding neighborhood consists of a primarily residential section of the old Ferry District filled with single-family houses dating from the Colonial period to the present day. The house faces east at a slight angle to the road, about 100 feet back from the front edge of the long, narrow lot. Large coniferous trees line the rear property boundary and the rear portions of both sides. Clumps of old lilacs are located both at the front corners of the house and along part of the south side of the property, where they are backed by a six-foot-high hedge. A small, recently constructed garden and gravel patio partially bordered by a stone wall occupy the angle between the rear of the main block of the house and the northwest rear ell. (Map # 12; Photo 1)

Part of the house's setting but outside its rear property line are two cemeteries that extend southwest and northwest--the small Bartlett Cemetery and the larger Union Cemetery (MHC # 807) (See Sketch Map.) The 1.35-acre original section of the Bartlett Cemetery abuts the southwest rear corner of the Macy-Colby parcel. The Main Street access to that 1899 cemetery is over a long paved driveway passing through the nominated property south of the house before rising up a gentle slope to the cemetery entrance. (Map #6) Together with the larger Union Cemetery to its north, the Bartlett Cemetery forms a quiet backdrop to the Macy-Colby House.

There are no outbuildings on the property. A barn that stood directly behind the house as late as 1910 was removed toward the mid-20th century and replaced with a utility shed. (Map #7) The shed was taken down about 1990. The 18th-century Colby blacksmith shop, which was converted to a store in the 1830s, was located near the street at the southeast corner of the lot. (Map #8) The date of its removal is not known.

Several objects dot the landscape around the Macy-Colby House. Four are noncontributing to the nomination: a modern board fence along part of the south boundary of the property and a section of stockade fence along the north boundary, a tall flagpole that occupies the center of the broad front lawn, and a sign for the Bartlett Cemetery that hangs from a wood post at the base of the driveway. (Map #s 3, 9, 10, 11; Photo 9) Other objects remain from earlier periods, however, and contribute to the context of the nomination. A rough granite post or "signboard" next to the sidewalk, about 3 1/2 feet high with a small bronze plaque attached, was put up by the Amesbury Improvement Association in 1894. (Map #4; Photo 9.) Line by line, the plaque reads "Thomas Macy/The first clerk of Amesbury/ Built this house prior to 1654/ Persecuted for harboring Quakers/ He fled to Nantucket in 1659/Having previously sold this place to Anthony Colby, whose descendants/ Have occupied it to the present time./ I. A. 1894." Two rough granite hitching posts about 2 1/2 feet high (now missing their hitching rings) which stand to either side of the driveway entrance probably date from around the time that the Bartlett Cemetery access drive was put

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Macy-Colby House
Amesbury (Essex), MA

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through at the turn of the 20th century. (Map #5, Photo 9) A large metal sign with raised letters (MHC # 916) sits atop a tall wooden post near the front of the lawn. This is one of many signs, all of similar design, that were erected across eastern Massachusetts by the Massachusetts Bay Colony Tercentenary Commission around 1930. The inscription paraphrases the wording on the 1894 plaque: "1630-1930/ MACY-COLBY HOUSE/ Thomas Macy, first Town Clerk of Amesbury, erected this house prior to 1654./ Persecuted for harboring Quakers he sold the house to Anthony Colby and fled to Nantucket, becoming the first white settler there as related in Whittier's poem 'The Exiles.'" (Map #2, Photo 9)

Exterior description

The present Macy-Colby House (Map #1, Photos 1-3, 8) is a wood-frame Colonial dwelling from about 1745, 2 ½-stories high, two rooms deep at the first story and one room deep at the second, resulting in a distinctive "salt-box" profile. The rear leanto is integral to the structure, and extends the full width of the building. At its north end the leanto joins a one-story ell that extends to the rear under a gabled roof with a ridge perpendicular to that of the main house. The frame of most of the ell apparently dates to the early years of the 19th century when it served as a woodshed or other utility area. In about 1900 the ell was lengthened to the west, connecting it to a small shed-roofed privy that probably dates to the mid-19th century. (See Plan 3)

The main house is clad in wood clapboards. The ell and privy are shingled, except for a short section of vertical-board sheathing along the south side of the ell. All of the roofs are wood shingle. The main foundation is fieldstone; a concrete slab was inserted under both rear ell and privy in the late 20th century.

A massive brick center chimney with a corbelled top rises just behind the main roof ridge, and a small brick chimney is positioned at the west end of the roof ridge of the ell. The latter dates to the ca. 1900 enlargement of the ell. The main center chimney was rebuilt above the attic floor in 2005.

The façade of the house is a symmetrical, three-bay arrangement—a type of fenestration quite rare in Amesbury, where most extant Colonial-era houses are either five-bay center-chimney dwellings or three-bay "half"-houses. Nearly all the main window sash in the house appears to result from an update of the 1830s or 1840s. All but one double-hung window are 6/6 sash, with panes as large as 9 by 12", and all have flat casings that are flush with or slightly recessed from the plane of the siding. On the façade, three 6/6 windows are widely spaced at the second story, and at the first story a single 6/6 façade window in a casing with a simple applied molding is positioned to either side of a flat-roofed entry vestibule (or "porch"). The vestibule, an addition of about 1800, has a single small 6/6 window in each of its side walls, and a large 6-panel entry door in its front wall. A 20th-century wooden sign above the door reading "1654" occupies what may be the location of a former transom.

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On the south elevation of the main house, a vertical line of three windows, one for each story and the attic, is centered below the peak of the roof. The first-story window is a 9/6-sash, the one at the second story is a 6/6, and the little square attic window just under the roof peak has four panes. To their rear the south elevation of the leanto has two 6/6-sash windows at the first story, the easternmost directly adjacent to a four-panel Victorian door (now covered by a vertical-board storm door.) A shallow slanted rain hood extends over both the doorway and the window beside it. Directly above the door, a small six-pane window lights the leanto loft. The surrounds of the main windows on this side of the house have casings trimmed with beaded moldings and flat corner blocks.

The north elevation of the main house, like the south, also has a four-pane attic window and a 6/6 second-story window centered under the roof peak, but below them at the first story is a pair of 6/6 windows. In the north side of the leanto is a small 6/6 window, and above it is a 6-pane window mirroring the placement of the one at the south end. The rear west elevation of the main house consists of the low back wall of the leanto, where there are two widely spaced 6/6-sash windows.

The fenestration of the ell is present mainly on its long south side, facing what would have been the rear dooryard for the house. A four-panel door at the east end of that elevation is presently covered by a vertical-board storm door; to its west is a fixed-sash 9-pane window, and in the western part are two 9/6 windows. The west elevations of both the ell and privy are windowless. A small sliding single-pane window occupies the south wall of the privy. There are two four-panel doors in the north elevation—one in the privy and one toward the rear of the ell. The privy door has raised-field panels; the ell door's panels are recessed. Either or both of the doors may have been relocated from elsewhere in the building. (Photo 3)

Most of the severely plain exterior architectural trim of the house has been replaced over time. It consists largely of narrow cornerboards and rakeboards. In lieu of a cornice, wood gutters line the front and rear edges of the roof leading to wooden downspouts at the corners.

Interior description

While the windows of the Macy-Colby House are apparently replacements of the second quarter of the 19th century, the 18th-century floor plan and the major features of the Macy-Colby House interior are remarkably unaltered. The main changes to the building's form are the additions of the front entry vestibule and the rear northwest ell. The interior trim of the main house is largely a blend of high- and low-style woodwork of the mid 18th century.

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Amesbury (Essex), MA

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The floor plan is typical of a center-chimney house with rear leanto. (See Plan 1) Two front rooms flank the chimney mass at each story. The room north of the chimney (called the "hall" at the first story, and hence the hall chamber at the second story), measuring 13' 6" by 14', is three inches wider than the south parlor and the parlor chamber above it. The lobby entrance in front of the chimney, expanded into a small sitting/reception area around the turn of the 19th century by the addition of the vestibule, includes a winding staircase against the chimney face. The leanto presently houses the kitchen (or "keeping room") as one long 33' 10" by 10' 8" space with an enclosed staircase against the front wall at the north end of the room. The leanto loft or garret is divided into two spaces by a partition wall running back from the southwest corner of a narrow attic stairway that rises against the south side of the chimney.

The northwest ell contains the kitchen space utilized by the Daughters of the Revolution after 1900. At its east end is a short passageway from the old leanto kitchen. The passageway was reduced in size in the 1980s, when the present lavatory was installed in its north portion. (See Plan 3)

Parlor and "hall". In the broad stylistic range of its period finishes, the Macy-Colby House is illustrative of a trend among many mid 18th-century Colonial houses built for prosperous owners. The use of up-to-date, high-style interior finishes in its more formal first-story rooms contrasts vividly with cruder, less-skilled and more old-fashioned carpentry in the non-public spaces. The two front first-story rooms--the north "hall" and the south parlor--both have fully plastered outer walls and ceilings. Posts at the outer corners and the chimney posts in the northeast room are cased and trimmed with a quarter-round molding. (Photo 10) The cased front corner post of the southeast parlor is concealed from view by a stylish "beaufat" or floor-to-ceiling corner china cupboard. (Photo 11) This massive piece of Georgian joinery (which may well have been brought by Obadiah and Elizabeth Colby from Boston in the 1740s) features a segmental-arched, keystone opening framed by two bands of complex-molded arches and fluted pilasters. The divided-light glass door to the cabinet is believed to be a protective addition dating to the 20th century.

The fireplace walls of both front rooms feature a sophisticated arrangement of two-range raised-field paneling, two long horizontal field panels above the fireplace, a molded cornice along the ceiling, and a large-scale compound bolection molding around the firebox opening. (Photos 4 and 5) Each fireplace is surmounted by a simple mantel shelf that is likely to be a later addition to the room's decor. In the south parlor, a shallow closet just east of the fireplace is a 19th-century alteration. Its narrow batten door occupies what would have been one section of paneling.

From each room, a door with four raised panels aligned with the wall panels opens into the front entry. A rear four-panel door between the hall and kitchen has an unadorned surround, but a doorway in the rear wall of the parlor is much more elaborate. There, a later 18th-century four-panel door (with shallow raised-field panels and Federal style moldings) is set into a surround embellished with fluted pilasters. The fact that the pilasters are set on top of the plaster suggests that they may be re-used from another location—perhaps even an exterior one such as the original front entry—as does the use of mismatched pieces of crown molding, rather than a casing board, that are mounted above the doorway.

(continued)

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Lobby entrance. Except for its lower steps, the three-run turning staircase against the chimney face is enclosed with vertical feather-edge sheathing. The face of the chimney and the side walls of the vestibule are plastered. The six-panel front door is hung on long strap hinges; the pintel from an earlier strap hinge is still in place on the south door jamb.

Leanto kitchen. As stated above, the rear kitchen or "keeping room" extends the full width of the building as one unobstructed space. Changes in the woodwork and wall treatment south of the fireplace, however, suggest that a partition wall may have once enclosed a small bedroom or utility room there. (See below)

The large fireplace features two bake ovens. Their openings in the rear wall of the firebox are not identical: the opening to the north oven is rectangular and has a stone lintel, while the south opening is segmental-arched and topped by a curved line of bricks. There is one ash pit, located below the south oven. The fireplace jambs protrude slightly into the room, and are covered with vertical boards. The space between the huge wood fireplace lintel and the ceiling is filled with six square raised-field panels. (Photo 12)

Most of the walls of the kitchen are covered to a height of about four feet with planed horizontal boards, with plaster above them on the upper portion of the wall. The outer walls of the south end of the room, however, are clad in horizontal feather-edge sheathing—a different, and probably earlier, treatment than the rest of the space, supporting the conjecture that at one time that portion may have been a separate room. The stairs to the loft and the cellar in the northeast corner of the leanto are enclosed in vertical feather-edged sheathing, and have batten doors of the same material. The treatment of the frame in the leanto is worthy of mention: most of the ceiling is plastered, but the lower parts of two hewn transverse ceiling girts extending back from the fireplace to the rear wall are exposed, and the two rear, flared cornerposts are also exposed and uncased. While those timbers do not have any decorative treatment, a carved quarter-round bead along the length of what at first appears to be the front wall girt mimics one type of decorative chamfer characteristic of the early 18th century. Close examination, however, reveals that this bead is actually part of a two-inch-thick trim board that runs along the face of the north and south sections of the girt. Such a treatment may date to work done at the turn of the 20th century under Moses Colby, possibly with the intent of giving a First Period appearance to the interior of this Second Period building.

A cast-iron dry sink is located against the north wall of the leanto next to the doorway to the northwest ell. On the other side of the doorway on the west rear wall is a 1980s glassed view port showing scraps of 19th-century wallpaper, early plaster containing lime from clamshells, and split-board lath. That type of late 18th-century lath suggests that the kitchen wall there may not have been plastered originally.

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Second story. The upper rooms of the house lack the high-style finish and sophisticated craftsmanship that is evident in the hall and parlor below them. The second-story corner posts are exposed, but not chamfered or decorated in any way. The front and rear plates in the northeast chamber are similarly unfinished, as is the rear plate in the southeast chamber. The upper portion of the northeast corner post is flared, but the one in the southeast chamber is not. The fireplace walls of the two front rooms are constructed largely of vertical feather-edged sheathing, as are the batten doors, which hang on their original strap hinges. Each front chamber has a small fireplace.

In contrast to the rest of the house, the fireplace wall in the northeast (hall) chamber is somewhat crudely constructed. Boards around the fireplace opening have unbeaded edges, and a long, narrow horizontal field panel high in the wall is slightly depressed from the wall plane, indicating that it may once have been surrounded by an applied molding in the manner of the 1730s-1740s. A low section of feather-edge sheathing to the right of the fireplace is mounted somewhat askew. The off-center mantel shelf in this room is a later alteration. Clay mortar is still evident between the bricks of the fireplace. (Photo 6)

The finish of the southeast (parlor) chamber includes some features that apparently represent an update in the early 19th century. Shallow open shelves fill the space above the fireplace, where a single section of horizontal feather-edge sheathing and a remnant of crown molding remain just below the ceiling. A closet built of narrow-beaded vertical sheathing stands west of the fireplace. Both the closet sheathing and the bank of shelves are likely to postdate 1800. (Photo 7)

Attic. The hewn roof frame, fully exposed in both the main attic and the leanto loft, is a system of principal rafters, approximately 5 1/2 inches in section, rising to a four-sided ridge purlin. The rear rafters continue uninterrupted from the ridge to the low rear plate of the leanto—indicating that the leanto is an integral, original feature of the house rather than a later addition. (Photo 13) The purlin arrangement is also indicative of integral leanto construction. In the main attic space one set of purlins is tenoned into the lower part of both the front and rear rafters, but the front purlins are set about six inches higher than the rear ones (36 inches, as opposed to 28-30 inches on the rear slope). On the rear slope, a second set of purlins supports the vertically oriented roof boards midway down the long leanto roof. The attic and the unfinished leanto loft also reveal the upper sections of the stud-framed end walls of the house, with their horizontal sheathing.

Cellar. The foundation of the building is fieldstone, enclosing a full cellar only under the original part of the lobby entrance and the north half of the main house. Filling the southwest rear corner of the cellar is what appears to be a massive stone chimney base that is not associated with any known chimney. Its presence lends support to the belief that at least part of the cellar and foundation remains from the original Thomas Macy house of ca. 1652. (See Plan 2)

Northeast ell and privy. The rear ell, which was extended several feet to the west in about 1900 to connect to the existing privy, is believed to have evolved from a woodshed dating to the early 19th century. The shed was enlarged and converted to a kitchen by the Bartlett Cemetery Association for the use of the

(continued)

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Macy-Colby House
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Daughters of the Revolution. Interior changes remaining from that renovation include plastered walls and ceiling, a wooden pantry closet or china "press" in the southwest corner, and a cast-iron "Quaker Charm" cook stove against the west wall. As is the case with the exterior doors, in this part of the house the interior door between the ell and the rear privy, a board-and-batten type on strap hinges, was apparently relocated from another location. Renovations to this area since the period of significance consist of the installation of the lavatory in the north part of the passage from the leanto, a sink and countertop, and modern plumbing and electricity.

The "two-hole" privy is essentially intact, complete with layers of old wallpaper on both walls and ceiling, and a small sliding single-pane window high in the south wall.

Archaeological Description

While no ancient Native American sites are known on the Macy-Colby House property, it is possible that sites exist. Three sites are reported in the general area (within one mile). Two sites are located within 1,000 feet of the Merrimack River and the third site within a similar distance to an unidentified wetland. Environmental characteristics of the property represent several locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, proximity to wetlands) that are favorable for the presence of ancient sites. The level to moderately sloping property is located on a well-drained glacial outwash plain. The property is, however, located well over 1,000 feet from the nearest wetland, a characteristic that reduces the overall site potential for this location. Given the above information, the size of the property (1.1 acres), and the extent of historic land use, a low potential exists for locating ancient Native American archaeological resources on the property.

A high potential exists for locating historic archaeological resources on the Macy-Colby House property. Structural evidence may survive from the original 1652 Macy-Colby House whose foundation was reportedly incorporated into the existing 1745 structure. A builder's trench and massive stone chimney base, not associated with any known chimney, may survive that were associated with the earlier house. Structural modifications to the original fieldstone foundation might also exist that were used to adapt the earlier foundation to the present structure. Structural evidence from barns and outbuildings associated with both the 1652 and 1745 homes may also survive on the property. The locations of potential barns and outbuildings associated with the 1652 home are unknown. At least one barn stood directly behind the extant house as late as 1910, but was removed toward the mid-20th century and replaced with a utility shed. An earlier barn may also exist associated with the extant 1745 house. The mid-20th century utility shed was removed in 1990. An 18th century Colby blacksmith shop, converted to a store in the 1830s was located near the street at the southwest corner of the lot. The date of its removal is unknown.

Archaeological evidence of occupational-related features (trash pits, privies, wells) should also exist on the property. No occupational-related features are known associated with the 1652 house. One probable mid-19th century "two-hole" privy was connected to the house when the early 19th century ell was lengthened to the west ca. 1900. An earlier privy should also exist associated with the 1745 house. Trash pits associated with both the 1652 and 1745 homes and the 18th/19th century blacksmith shop/store may survive.

(continued)

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Unmarked graves may survive near the rear of the Macy-Colby House property associated with both the Bartlett and Union Cemeteries. Unmarked graves may contain evidence of grave shafts, coffins, human remains, and material culture items associated with the deceased. Mortuary-related artifacts, including artifacts associated with memorial services and materials associated with the maintenance and operation of the cemeteries, may also exist towards the rear of the property bordering the cemeteries.

Archaeological evidence of boundary markers, fences, and walls may exist around the periphery of the nominated property.

(end)

Macy-Colby House

Name of Property

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Essex, MA

County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance

Ca. 1652 - 1958

Significant Dates

Ca. 1652 Thomas Macy House foundation

Ca. 1745 Obadiah Colby House

1899-1900 conversion to museum

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☒ Other

Name of repository:

Friends of the Macy-Colby House

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8. SIGNIFICANCE

The Macy-Colby House meets Criterion A of the National Register at the local level for its role in over 300 years of the development of the town of Amesbury. While the existing cellar is likely to remain from the ca. 1652 house of Thomas Macy, Amesbury's first Town Clerk and a founder of the settlement on Nantucket, the house is historically significant primarily for its association with eight generations of the locally prominent Colby family. The Colby owners and occupants were yeoman farmers, town and colony magistrates, church deacons, and blacksmiths through the 18th century, and in the 19th century they included merchants, small farmers, a sea captain, and the longtime editor of one of the most influential journals of the spiritualist movement in the United States. In the early 20th century the building took on added significance as a house museum managed by the Daughters of the Revolution, one of the lesser-known heritage organizations formed during the late 19th-century antiquarian movement.

The building meets Criterion C as an extremely well-preserved early Second Period house displaying a profusion of architectural features characteristic of that important transitional period. The house includes a wealth of early Georgian carpentry executed by highly skilled craftsmen, as well as woodwork in its less public spaces that suggests the hand of country carpenters of lesser experience and abilities.

As an important early Second Period center-chimney, integral leanto house with a three-bay façade (updated in the 19th-century), a variety of 18th-century interior finishes, and an intact below-ground masonry structure likely to date to the mid 17th century, the Macy-Colby House retains integrity of setting, location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Background and early history

The town of Amesbury is located in the northern portion of Essex County, bounded on the north by the New Hampshire border, on the east by Salisbury, on the west by Merrimac, and on the south by the Merrimack River. The town was originally part of the 1638 Merrimac(k) Plantation, which included land both in Essex County, Massachusetts, and in southern New Hampshire. The portion of the plantation in what is now Massachusetts ultimately was incorporated as three towns, Salisbury, Amesbury, and Merrimac. Salisbury was the first town established, in 1639. Settlement began in the part of Salisbury west of the Powwow River in the 1640s, and in 1666 that section of the plantation separated from Salisbury and was incorporated as Salisbury New Town. Two years later the name was changed to Amesbury. In 1876 land was divided out from Amesbury to form the town of Merrimac, and in 1886 Amesbury's boundaries were extended and finalized with the annexation of part of Salisbury east of the Powwow River.

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The development of the Macy-Colby property dates to the very earliest years of European settlement along the west bank of the Powwow River. The Powwow, together with the Merrimack into which it flows a short distance south of the nominated property, was a major regional source of water power throughout the Colonial period. The Powwow River was also important for its floodplain. In particular, meadows along the river's banks provided a significant supply of hay for the early settlers. In 1640-1641, properties granted to the first proprietors (or "commoners") of Salisbury New Town were laid out in long, narrow, lots extending west from the bank of the river to a highway running north from the Merrimack to the plantation's common land. A second range of lots was laid out on the west side of the road, some extending west to the "Great" swamp and others to another section of common land. Four more lots were located south of the others, along the bank of the Merrimack.

Most of the original lots in Salisbury New Town were twenty acres in size. Three measured thirty acres, one was a triple-size lot of sixty acres, and four were double lots of forty acres. One of the latter, located between the highway and the Powwow River, was granted to **Anthony Colby** (d. 1660-61), who had been one of the original commoners of Salisbury, having received a house lot there in 1639. In the early years of development west of the Powwow, only a few homesteads were established in that part of the town, but there was much buying, selling, and dividing of the original lots. By 1645 Anthony Colby had sold off the west part of his new property and had bought eight more acres to the southeast abutting the bank of the Powwow at Ware (or Weire) Point. By that time his original 40-acre lot was crossed by two town roads--an east-west road northwest from Ware Point to Haverhill (the Haverhill Road--today's Haverhill Street and Macy Streets/Rte. 110), and a road leading north to the local mill that constituted the first part of today's Main Street. The intersection of the two roads, later to be dubbed Bartlett's Corner, soon became the earliest center of institutional activity for the small settlement west of the Powwow.

In 1648 Anthony Colby sold his house in Salisbury, and is believed to have moved to the portion of his original property that lay on the east side of the road to the mill. He did not remain there long, however, as in 1654 he settled his eldest son, John Colby, there, and he relocated to a property on the west side of the road that he purchased that same year from **Thomas Macy**. In the transaction, Anthony Colby bought back a portion of his original lot of 1640 along with a piece of the original lot abutting it to the south. In the intervening years, however, Thomas Macy (1610-1682), a planter and merchant, had established a homestead there, and put up a house and barn, probably about 1652. By the time Anthony Colby repurchased the property, Macy had moved to a second dwelling further to the north on the road to the mill.

While only the cellar of the original Macy House is believed to remain as part of the present house, Thomas Macy's connection with the nominated property is one of its most important associations. Not only was Macy an influential early citizen of Amesbury--one of the first "prudential men," deputy to the General Court in 1654, first Town Clerk in 1655, and half-owner of the town's second mill built in 1656--he is also

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known for his role in the social history of the town. During a severe rainstorm in the summer of 1659 he briefly gave shelter to four Quakers, an act that violated a two-year-old law against harboring "any of the cursed sect of Quakers," and for which he was fined and admonished by the governor of the colony. Two centuries later both his kindness and the religious discrimination embedded in the 1657 law became the subject of the poem "The Exiles," written by Amesbury's most famous resident, John Greenleaf Whittier. Shortly after the incident, Thomas Macy and his family left Amesbury for the island of Nantucket, where he and his companions were its first white settlers. He became Chief Magistrate of Nantucket in 1676.

Anthony and Susanna Colby ownership: 1654-1682

Anthony Colby (Colby generation 1) lived in the Macy house until his death in 1660-1661. Just prior to that time he, like Thomas Macy, had been chosen one of three men on the Prudential Committee that oversaw town affairs. His widow, Susanna (Haddon) Colby, inherited the dwelling house and barn along with the small homestead farm that measured fourteen acres at that time. Descriptions of the property from Old Norfolk County Records of 1664-66 reveal that the farm had been considerably improved by that time, with the land used as orchard, "English pasture, . . . some for sowing, some for feeding, and some for mowing." Susanna, who was left with two young children (Mary, age 13, and Thomas, age 9) still at home, lived in the house until her death in 1689. She was married again in 1663, to William Whitridge. He died in 1668, leaving her a widow for a second time. At the end of her life, after the last of her seven children had established households of their own, she apparently resided alone in the farmhouse.

Over the three decades of **Susanna (Haddon) (Colby) Whitridge's** ownership, the little settlement west of the Powwow River began to grow into a true village, with its own meetinghouse, two mills, fishing and boating activity on both rivers, and houses and outbuildings along the two oldest streets. In 1663 the townspeople purchased an acre of land on the Haverhill Road for a burying place. That land, which abuts the west part of today's Macy-Colby property, had formerly belonged to Thomas Macy. In the late 1660s the first Amesbury meetinghouse was built there. Property belonging to Joseph Bartlett, the progenitor of a long-time Amesbury family, abutted the west side of the cemetery, and over the years the intersection of the Haverhill Road and Main Street came to be known as Bartlett's Corner.

Salisbury New Town was incorporated in 1666, and in 1668, the same year that its name was changed to Amesbury, a ferry landing was established on the Merrimack River west of the mouth of the Powwow. A road laid out to the ferry in 1670 swung southwest from Main Street (then still called "the road to the mill") just south of Susanna Colby Whitridge's house. This new access to the river ferry spurred more development in the vicinity of Bartlett's Corner, and by 1678 buildings there included the first tavern authorized by the town—the public house of Anthony and Susanna's second son Samuel Colby, located at the northwest corner of the Haverhill Road and the road to the mills.

Samuel Colby (2) ownership: 1682-1716

Samuel Colby (2) was soon to acquire his mother's homestead, as well. In 1682, seven years before her death in 1689, Susanna Colby Whitridge sold her rights in the homestead to Samuel in exchange "for her necessary support in her old age." Samuel Colby (ca. 1638-1716), who resided at the tavern on the road to

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Haverhill until his death, was one of Amesbury's more important citizens of the time. He represented the young town in the General Court in 1669 and 1689 and was later an assessor in 1696.

Although he did not occupy his mother's homestead himself, Samuel did enlarge it in 1686, when he purchased five acres of orchard and upland adjoining it to the south and west. Susanna already had an orchard on the section of the land where her house stood, and after the 1686 purchase the combined orchards, presumably with the house still standing, were fenced off together in one enclosure.

By the early 18th century five members of the second and third generation of the Colby family owned and occupied all the properties immediately surrounding the intersection of the Haverhill Road and the road to the mill (Bartlett's Corner) as well as the Macy-Colby homestead and Anthony Colby's first homestead on the east side of the road to the mill. In 1683, the 1663 burial ground (later named the Union Cemetery) was enlarged by the annexation of some additional land from Thomas Colby, who with his brother Samuel shared the duties of ringing the bell and caring for the meetinghouse. Samuel Colby owned several other parcels of land in addition to his tavern and the Macy-Colby property, and in a complex set of deeds executed in 1712 a few years before his death, he distributed most of his real estate to his sons and his wife, Elizabeth (Sargent). He retained the enclosed orchard on the Macy-Colby House property, however, until he died.

Samuel Colby, Jr. ownership: 1716-1744

It was Samuel and Elizabeth's eldest son, **Samuel Colby, Jr. (3)** (1671-1746) who received the Macy-Colby property and the parcels immediately adjoining it upon his father's death in 1716. It is not known who occupied the old Macy-Colby house at the turn of the 18th century, or even if it was occupied at all. Although Samuel, Jr. may have lived there for several years after his grandmother's death in 1689, from 1695 on he and his wife Dorothy (Ambrose) resided opposite it on the east side of today's Main Street. It is believed that after 1695 the original Macy-Colby house stood empty in the midst of the orchard, and that sometime during the next ten or fifteen years it fell or was taken down, leaving only the foundation intact. In a 1712 deed in which Samuel, Jr. was assured the reversion of the old orchard from his father, there is no mention of a building on the property, even though the "ffence thereunto belonging" is specifically mentioned.

Over the next three decades Samuel Colby, Jr. gradually reduced the size of his grandmother's former 14-acre homestead. In 1729 and 1731 he sold the north part of the former Macy land along Main Street to John Bartlett, a tanner, in two parcels. Sometime before 1744 he also sold off a small house lot immediately adjoining the north boundary of the present Macy-Colby property to his daughter Keziah (Colby) Currier.

He gained a small amount of land, however, when in 1719 the 1670 road to Amesbury ferry that had curved southwest around the original Macy-Colby house was replaced by a new road leading southeast from the edge of the Currier property. As a result, the southeast section of the Macy-Colby lot was realigned slightly to the east. In 1744 Samuel Colby, Jr. sold off more of the land west and south of the Macy-Colby property, and later that year he sold the remaining house lot itself, reduced to about 1½ acres in size, to his son **Obadiah Colby**, who had just returned to Amesbury from Boston.

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Obadiah and Elizabeth Colby ownership: 1744-1749

Obadiah Colby (4), (1706-1749), Samuel, Jr. and Dorothy's fourth son, was born across the road in the homestead his grandfather Samuel Colby, Sr. had purchased for the use of Samuel, Jr. in 1695. In 1728, Obadiah, a blacksmith, married Elizabeth Gee of Boston, where they lived for the next several years and where at least four of their five children were born. By 1744, however, they had moved to Amesbury, and in November of that year Obadiah purchased 1½ acres on the west side of the highway to Amesbury Ferry from his father—the remaining portion of the "old orchard" land that Samuel, Jr. had inherited in 1716, and comprising the south portion of the original Macy-Colby property. The deed, however, makes no mention of any buildings on the land.

Five years later, Obadiah died. His estate inventory included the 1½ acres of land, but by that time a house, barn, and blacksmith shop stood upon it. **Elizabeth Colby**, who was forty years old when her husband died, inherited the property. She apparently remained in residence until their eldest son, Obadiah, Jr., came of age, and then may have returned to Boston. It is presumed that the present house, with its generously proportioned rear leanto and stylish early Georgian paneling and cabinetry, was built for Obadiah and his family about 1745. (See Section 7) While the builder is unknown, it has been speculated that Samuel Blaisdell, a joiner who lived close by, might have been responsible for the much of the woodwork.

The house also appears to have incorporated the foundation remaining from the original, smaller house of Thomas Macy. The Macy house had probably faced south—hence the presence of the chimney base positioned at the west end of the cellar—a chimney location that was common for a south-facing single-cell dwelling. (See Plan 2.) Obadiah Colby's larger Second Period center-chimney house is oriented to face the later road to the ferry, which passes the property to the east.

Deacon Obadiah Colby (5) ownership: ca. 1753-1814

Obadiah Colby, Jr. (1731-1814), was under 18 years of age when his father died in 1749. It is presumed that he remained at home with his mother and siblings for the next several years. A Colby family history reports that Elizabeth conveyed the homestead to him in 1753, probably in an unrecorded deed. He married Mary Merrill of Amesbury in 1756, and he is mentioned as the owner of the property in documents from at least 1762, when the layout of the road to the ferry was redefined.

Obadiah, Jr., like his father, made his living as a blacksmith and was a prominent citizen of Amesbury. In both 1776 and 1779 he served on the local Committee of Correspondence during the Revolutionary War. He was named a Deacon in the First Church, and served as Town Clerk in 1780, 1782, 1784, and 1786. In 1804 he sold a small piece of land at the southeast corner of the house lot "with the blacksmith shop standing thereon" to his son Obadiah Colby III, although he reserved "the right & privilege of using & improving said shop." Shortly before his death in 1814, he acquired about five acres of land lying directly west of his homestead from the heirs of a relative, Ichabod Colby. That piece, together with the homestead parcel, was left to his heirs upon his death.

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Hezekiah Colby (6) ownership: 1816-1844

Deacon Obadiah Colby's heirs divided his real estate in 1816. A younger son, **Hezekiah Colby** (1770-1844), received the parcel with the Macy-Colby house and barn. The second eldest son, **Obadiah (6)** (1763-1832), who owned the blacksmith shop at the time of their father's death, had built his own house on property just to the north which he obtained from the other heirs. After Obadiah (6) died, in 1833 Hezekiah purchased the old blacksmith shop and its tiny plot of land from the other heirs, thus reuniting it with the one-acre parcel on which the house and barn stood. It may have been during Hezekiah's ownership that the house was expanded with the building of the front vestibule and/or the main section of the northwest ell.

Hezekiah Colby never married. He had been a schoolmaster in his younger years, but by 1816 documents refer to him as a "trader," i.e. a storekeeper. He is known to have converted the old blacksmith shop to a store, but it is not known whether that renovation took place before or after he bought it from his brother's estate. The property that Hezekiah owned until his death in 1844 consisted of a long strip of land of about three acres extending west from the road that included the one-acre parcel with the house, barn and blacksmith shop/store standing at its east end. In his will he left the eastern house lot with the buildings to his younger brother William Colby. The long western portion he left to his sisters Betsy Colby Mansfield and Polly Colby Page.

Capt. William Colby (6) ownership: 1845

William L. Colby (1775-1850), a sea captain, was the third son and the youngest of the nine children of Obadiah and Mary (Merrill) Colby. He was apparently the captain of the ship from which a relative, Enoch Colby, was drowned on an ill-fated passage home from Labrador in the fall of 1806. He also served in the War of 1812. He inherited the east part of the homestead from his brother Hezekiah in 1844-45, but by the end of 1845 he sold the Macy-Colby House to his son and fifth child, Obadiah Colby (7) as he already owned and occupied the house of his maternal grandfather, David Merrill, on the east side of today's Main Street.

Obadiah Colby (7) ownership: 1845-1885

In 1845, the same year he purchased the Colby homestead from his father, **Obadiah Colby (7)** (1811-1892) also bought the long narrow piece of land to the west from his aunts Betsy and Polly. Three years later he married Mary Ann Patten Simpson, and in 1849 he again expanded his property by purchasing a broad strip of about four acres lying just south of his aunts' former land. In 1866, however, he sold most of the western property to the Town of Amesbury for the expansion of the Union Cemetery, retaining only a small piece of the four-acre parcel that lay directly southwest of his house and barn. It is likely that Obadiah made a few renovations to the house, such as the large-paned 6/6 windows, and perhaps added one or two of the closets.

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While Obadiah, like Hezekiah, is listed in the 1845 deeds as a "trader," it is likely that his store was not located on the property since the converted blacksmith shop is not mentioned there. He and Mary Ann had seven children. She died in 1881, and although he continued to live in the house until his death, in 1885 he transferred the ownership of the homestead and the remaining piece to the west to their son **William Colby, II**.

William Colby (8) ownership: 1885-1899

William Colby (1851-1909) was Obadiah and Mary Ann's third son. He married twice, had a total of nine children, and lived most of his life on the Colby homestead. Listed in census documents as a trimmer, he probably worked in one of the many factories operating in Amesbury or the surrounding area in the late 19th century.

In some years, William's household included members of three generations of the Colby family. Both William's father, Obadiah, and one of his two bachelor uncles, Moses L. Colby, occupied the house in their old age. At least one of them may have slept in the small bedroom that was partitioned off in the south end of the leanto garret. At various times the household also included other extended Colby family members. William's brother, Horace Mann Colby, lived there from at least 1896 to 1899, and his sister Mary and her husband Seth Gage had lived there earlier, together with their children. Luther Colby, the other "bachelor uncle," is also believed to have lived in the house for brief periods of time during William Colby's ownership.

Moses Colby (1822-1901), the youngest of William's uncles, is remembered as one of Amesbury's original "'49ers" during the California Gold Rush. He worked in the boot and shoe industry for at least part of his life, as in the early 1850s he was listed as a bootmaker when he shared lodgings in Boston with Luther. Luther Colby (1814-1894) was the most colorful of the late 19th-century occupants of the house. A well-known spiritualist during the heyday of the American spiritualist movement that began in the 1850s, he lived most of his adult life in Boston, where he was a printer, publisher, and the founding editor and publisher of *The Banner of Light*, a spiritualist weekly that began publication in 1857.

It was during William Colby (8)'s ownership that the bronze plaque honoring Thomas Macy was placed on the lawn in front of the house. The plaque was put up by the Amesbury Improvement Association, a group of citizens concerned with the preservation of the town's historic and scenic character, some of whom were soon to be associated with converting the Macy-Colby House to a museum.

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Moses L. Colby (7) (1899); and Bartlett Cemetery Association ownership: 1899-present
Early in 1899, ten years before his death, William Colby moved to the center of Amesbury and sold off the homestead in two parcels—the east portion with the house and barn to his uncle **Moses L. Colby**, and the remaining piece west/southwest of the house to the **Bartlett Cemetery Association**.

The Bartlett Cemetery Association, founded in March of 1899, was formed by a group of fifteen Amesbury businessmen, carriage manufacturers and other industrialists for the purpose of establishing a small new cemetery where they and their family members could be buried. Moses Colby was one of the incorporators of the association, and the site chosen for the cemetery was the remaining portion of the “aunts” land that lay directly south of the Union Cemetery and southwest of the Macy-Colby House.

The 1.35-acre cemetery, which was laid out with a circular road ringing a landscaped monument area near the top of the hill behind the Macy-Colby House, was later expanded to three acres in 1929. It is still owned and managed by the association.

When established, the cemetery was landlocked, with no access either from Main Street or through the Union Cemetery to the north. By the end of 1899 the association had purchased the rest of the Macy-Colby homestead, probably for the purpose of laying out an access drive from the east. Moses Colby, however, had purposes of his own in selling his family’s ancestral home to the cemetery association. As stated in the December 1899 deed, his main intent was to provide for the future of the Macy-Colby House (which he called the “Colby Macy House”) as a museum, and “. . . that the dwelling house above named shall be kept as a memorial of Moses L. Colby the grantor and his ancestors back to Anthony Colby”—i.e. a lasting memorial to the Colby family.

Macy-Colby House museum.

The transition of the Macy-Colby House to its new function as a historical museum in 1899 coincided with the establishment of one of the many regional antiquarian associations of the turn of the 20th century, the Josiah Bartlett Chapter of the Daughters of the Revolution. Not to be confused with the larger and more enduring Daughters of the American Revolution (D.A.R.), the national Daughters of the Revolution was a smaller “splinter” organization founded in 1893 after a disagreement over a change in the DAR constitution. Its chapters were concentrated primarily within the states that had been part of the thirteen original colonies. Some Amesbury families represented in its membership were also closely connected with the Bartlett Cemetery Association, and several founders of the local Josiah Bartlett chapter of the Daughters (ratified in 1899) were Colby descendants.

Within a year, the Macy-Colby House had become the headquarters and center of activity for the Josiah Bartlett Chapter of the Daughters, who held their first meeting there in June of 1900, and proceeded to furnish the building largely with Colby family possessions and memorabilia. Under the leadership of Mrs. Emma Perkins and Livinia Bartlett they held a formal opening of the museum in October 1900, with

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an "old-fashioned supper" attended by 150 people. Anna Colby had charge of the lighting with candles and oil lamps, since the house had no electricity—a state that still endures in all but the northwest ell.

Over the years the Daughters were to hold afternoon teas in the old house, put on harvest- and candlelight suppers, and host open-house days when the public was received. To assist them, the Cemetery Association renovated the former woodshed ell, installing an early 20th-century kitchen there. While the Daughters raised funds through some of their events, the initial maintenance and repair of the house was made possible by a bequest of \$2,500 that came to the Bartlett Cemetery Association upon Moses Colby's death in 1901. In making the bequest, Mr. Colby specified that the funds be used for the purpose of "the permanent embellishment, improvement, and maintenance of the house and grounds . . . known as the "Colby-Macy Property.""

While it is understood that Moses Colby paid for some restoration work before he died, it is not entirely clear what repairs or changes were made either slightly before or soon after the Cemetery Association took possession of the property and the Daughters assumed management of the house. Among the work reported to have been directed by Moses Colby was the replacement of some sills and flooring, some rebuilding of the chimney, and the restoration of hearths and fireplaces. It is also likely that details like the chamfered board along the fireplace wall of the old kitchen were added at about the same time.

Over the course of the 20th century, membership in the Daughters of the Revolution dwindled, and the national organization disbanded in the 1980s. In Amesbury at that time, the remaining members of the Josiah Bartlett Chapter of the Daughters welcomed other interested citizens in addition to Revolutionary War descendants, and formed a committee called The Friends of the Macy Colby House. Although the Bartlett Cemetery Association still owns the Macy-Colby House and property, the Friends group now manages the museum. In addition to regular museum hours and open houses for the public, among the activities hosted by the Friends are regular reunions of the 'Colby Clan,' the family association of the descendants of Anthony and Susanna Colby. The family association, of which 120 members visited in August 2000, continues to support the house with donations.

Archaeological Significance

Historic archaeological resources described above may contribute important information related to the early settlement of Amesbury, the architectural evolution of the Macy-Colby House, and the social, cultural, and economic growth of eight generations of the Colby family. Additional historic research combined with information derived from archaeological resources may contribute valuable information related to one of the earlier settlements in Massachusetts. That part of Salisbury west of the Powwow River was first settled in the 1640s, separated from Salisbury and incorporated as Salisbury New Town in 1666, and the name changed to Amesbury in 1668. Archaeological and historical resources associated with the settlement of the Macy-Colby House in 1652 may contribute important information that documents how individuals, families, and the Colony adapted to the very earliest years of European settlement in this area of Massachusetts. Archaeological and historical resources can be used to follow the evolution of the Macy-

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Colby farmstead as it developed through three centuries of settlement in Massachusetts and eight generations of the Colby family.

Additional historical research combined with information from archaeological resources may contribute definitive proof that the foundation beneath the existing Macy-Colby House was reused from the earlier 1652 structure. Historical documentation corroborated by artifactual evidence may exist that documents the date of construction for the fieldstone foundation and the later reuse of that structure as the partial foundation for the existing house. Patterns of artifact distribution around the extant house may contribute important information related to the orientation of the earlier structure and architectural features of the existing house no longer evident from a visual examination. Detailed analysis of the contents of archaeological features may contribute information related to the construction of both the 1652 and 1745 homes and the architectural characteristics of the structures. Similar information as described above may also be obtained for barns, outbuildings, and privies located on the property.

The location and careful mapping of the structures and archaeological features identified above may also contribute important information related to the spatial patterning of buildings on early New England farmsteads, and their relationship to similar homesteads in the early settlers country of origin. This information may be important to identify the internal configuration of early farmsteads in this area and their relative success or failure in a new land and environment. Understanding the patterning and relationship of buildings on early farmsteads may also help to understand later changes that occurred on these farms.

Additional historical research combined with archaeological studies may also contribute important information related to the social, cultural, and economic characteristics of eight generations of the Colby family and their lives in Amesbury. Documentary records may exist for different individuals and family occupations of those associated with the Macy-Colby House. The long-term occupation of the house by some of the more influential citizens and prominent families in Amesbury may increase the probability that Colby family records survive. The existence of written records related to the Colby family and occupations of the house combined with archaeological research increases the usefulness of both types of information by supplementing the gaps with each type of evidence. In addition to information derived from documentary sources, detailed analysis of the contents of occupational-related features may contribute important social, cultural, and economic information related to specific members of the Colby family and entire families that occupied the farm at different times. The identification of features and/or stratified deposits within single features may enable specific activities and periods of occupation to be associated with different individuals, their families, beliefs, and occupations over time. Occupational-related features (trash pits, privies, wells) located around the house may contain evidence related to the domestic activities of the occupants of the farmstead, while similar features located in the vicinity of the barns and blacksmith shop/store may contain evidence of the economic activities conducted on the farm. Detailed information related to the types and technology of agricultural production on the farm, the evolution of early New England agriculture, and 18th century blacksmithing technology might exist. Information may also survive that indicates the extent that the early occupations of the farm were self-sufficient and how that aspect of life changed through time.

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Archaeological resources may identify the types of goods that were imported and exported from the farm, and how the presence of traders in the Colby family influenced the types of goods accessible to the inhabitants.

While the information described above may contribute important evidence related to the social, cultural, and economic lives of the Colby Farm inhabitants and larger Amesbury settlement over time, unmarked graves may contribute similar information and important physical evidence of the health and pathologies that affected members of the Colby family and the larger Amesbury community. The proximity of the Colby-Macy farm to the Bartlett Cemetery and Union Cemetery indicates the potential for locating unmarked graves to the rear of the existing Macy-Colby lot. Unmarked graves could be the result of paupers, indigents, or other unknown persons buried around the periphery of the existing cemeteries. Unmarked graves could also result from marked graves whose markers have been lost or deteriorated. Detailed analysis of the burial context including the grave shaft, casket, and its artifact and skeletal contents, may contribute important information related to the social, cultural, and economic characteristics of the deceased. Osteological study of the skeletal remains may contribute information related to the stature, sex, and other physical characteristics of the deceased, including pathologies that affected that individual. Information obtained through analysis of unmarked graves associated with paupers, indigents, and unknown persons may contribute evidence related to the lives of less fortunate members of Amesbury society and how they were treated in death by the larger society. Unmarked graves may also contribute important evidence related to larger segments of the Amesbury community.

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Kyprianos, James. Architectural assessment report on the Macy-Colby House. September 7, 2000.

Lampl, Elizabeth. Draft National Register nomination for the Macy-Colby House, 1985.

Merrill, Joseph. *History of Amesbury . . . and Merrimac*. Haverhill: Franklin Stiles Press, 1880.

Redford, Sarah L. *History of Amesbury*. Amesbury: Whittier Press, 1968.

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Public records

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_____. Reconnaissance Survey Report: Amesbury. Boston: Mass. Historical Commission, 1985; revised 1997.

Essex County Probate Records.

Essex County Registry of Deeds.

Old Norfolk County Records.

Maps and plans

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(end)

Macy-Colby House
Name of Property

Essex, MA
County, State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.1 acres

UTM References See continuation sheet.

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. 19 342240 4745320
Zone Easting Northing

2. Zone Easting Northing

3. Zone Easting Northing

4. Zone Easting Northing

— See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne Forbes, consultant, with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, MHC

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date April 2008

street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone 617-727-8470

city or town Boston state MA zip code 02125

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Bartlett Cemetery Foundation c/o John Fuller

street & number 4 Lakeview Avenue

telephone

city or town Amesbury

state MA

zip code 01913

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Macy-Colby House
Amesbury (Essex), MA

Section number 10 Page 1

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the nominated property are those of Parcel 19 on Town of Amesbury Assessor's Map 77.

Boundary Justification

The National Register boundaries encompass the entire 1.1-acre parcel at 257 Main Street on which the Macy-Colby House is located.

(end)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Macy-Colby House
Amesbury (Essex), MA

Section number photos Page 1

PHOTOGRAPHS

Unless otherwise noted, all photographs are of the Macy-Colby House by Anne Forbes, 2006

1. View northwest, with main east façade and south elevation
2. East facade
3. North elevation of house, ell, and privy
4. North parlor ("hall")—fireplace wall, with view into entry
5. South parlor—fireplace wall
6. Northeast chamber—fireplace wall
7. Southeast chamber—fireplace wall with 19th-Century closet

Supplementary 4 x 6" photos

8. South elevation of privy, ell, and main house
9. View south along Main Street, with two ca 1900 hitching posts, cemetery sign, 1894 granite signboard with bronze plaque, ca. 1930 tercentenary sign
10. North parlor ("hall")—view northeast
11. South parlor—view southeast to corner "beaufat"
12. Leanto kitchen—view north to enclosed staircase
13. Attic framing—view northwest to joint of main rear plate, northwest chimney post and chimney girt. Showing rafter continuing west into leanto, and low purlin over vertical-board front wall of leanto

Supplementary 8 x 10 photo

14. View east-northeast, with south and west elevations. (Milton Kray, 2000.)

Photocopied historic photo

View of Macy-Colby House, barn and orchard, ca. 1900. Two men believed to be Moses Colby (left), and William Colby (rear, under tree.)

Sketch Map and Plans

Sketch map of Macy-Colby property

Plan 1: Macy-Colby House: first and second stories

Plan 2: Macy-Colby House cellar and conjectural Colby house of ca. 1654

Plan 3: Macy-Colby House with rear ell and privy

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Macy-Colby House
Amesbury (Essex), MA

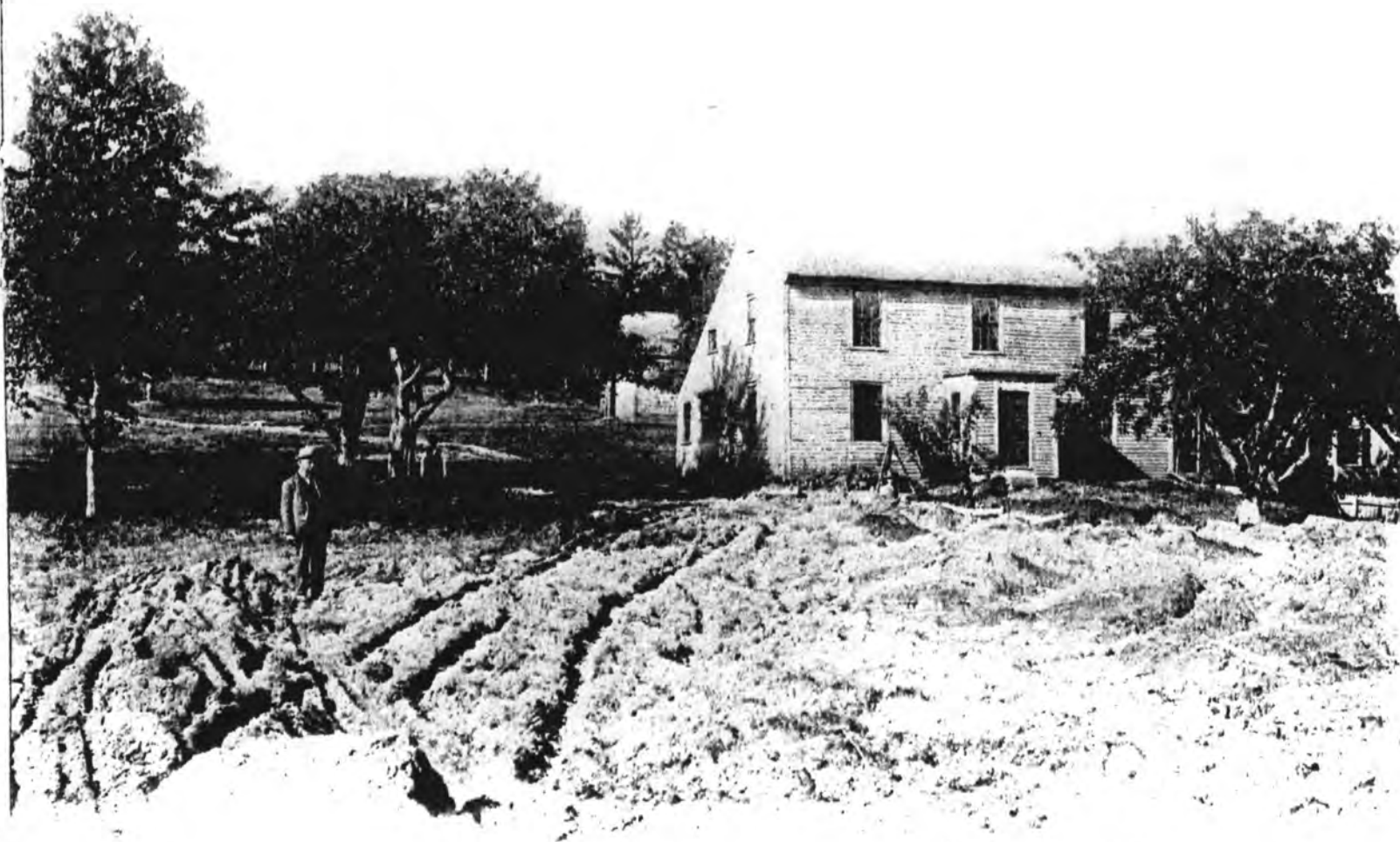
Section number data sheet Page 1

RESOURCE COUNT

C=contributing; NC=noncontributing
B=building; O=object; Si=Site
St=structure

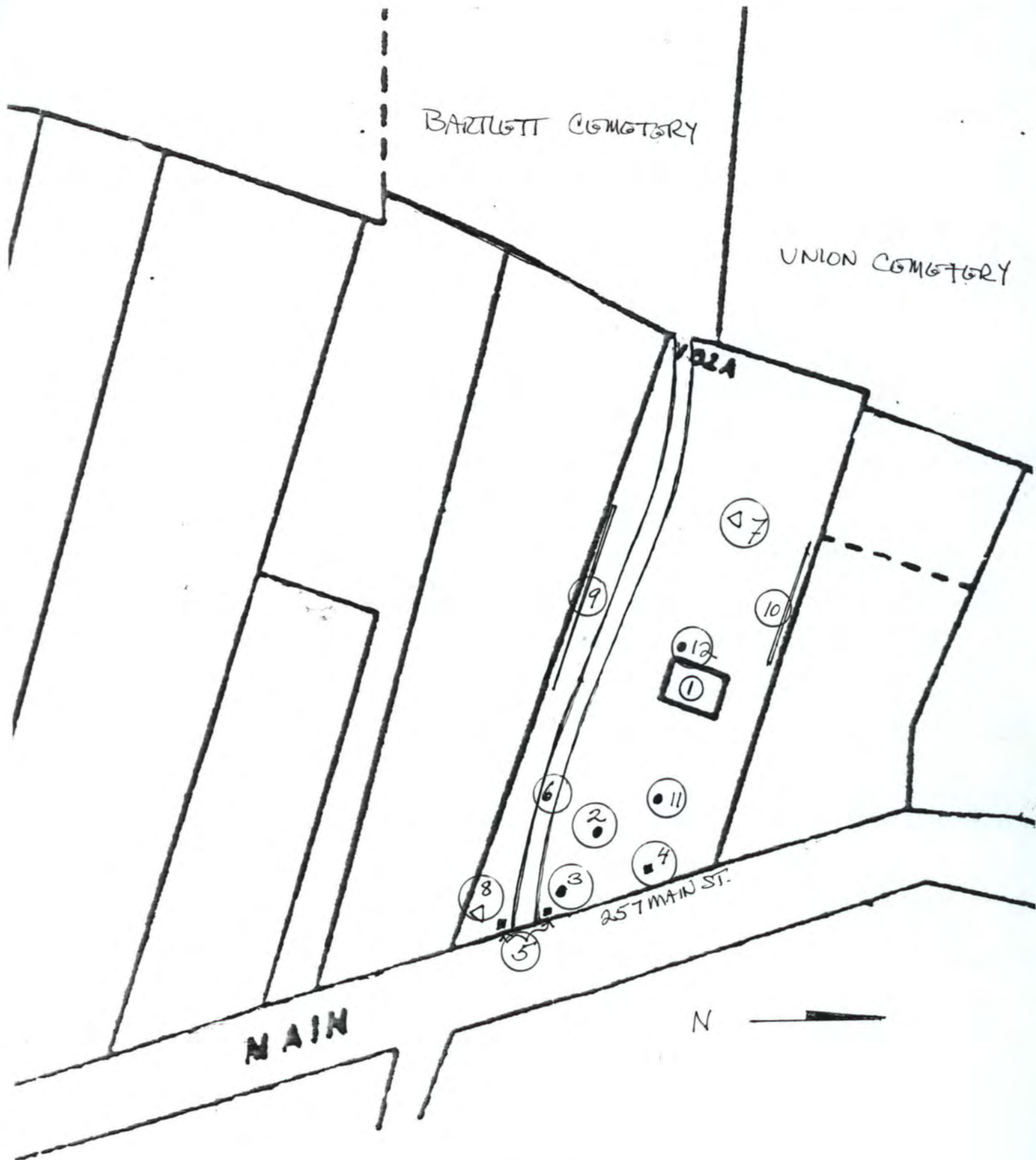
MAP#	NAME OR DESCRIPTION	DATE	STATUS	TYPE
1.	Macy-Colby House	ca. 1745 foundation ca. 1652	C	B
2.	Macy-Colby tercentenary sign	ca. 1930	C	O
3.	Bartlett Cemetery sign	late 20 th C.	NC	O
4.	Granite post/bronze plaque	1894	C	O
5.	Pair of hitching posts	ca. 1900	C	O
6.	Entry drive to cemetery	ca. 1900	C	St
7.	Colby barn site	unknown (pre-1900)	C	Si
8.	Site of blacksmith shop	ca. 1745	C	Si
9.	South boundary fence	late 20 th C.	NC	O
10.	North boundary fence	late 20 th C.	NC	O
11.	Flagpole	late 20 th C.	NC	O
12.	Patio with garden and stone wall	late 20 th C.	NC	St

TOTAL RESOURCE COUNT:	Contributing	Noncontributing
BUILDINGS	1	0
STRUCTURES	1	1
OBJECTS	3	4
SITES	2	0
	7	5



View of Macy-Colby House, barn, and orchard, c. 1900

Two men believed to be Moses Colby (left) and William Colby (rear)

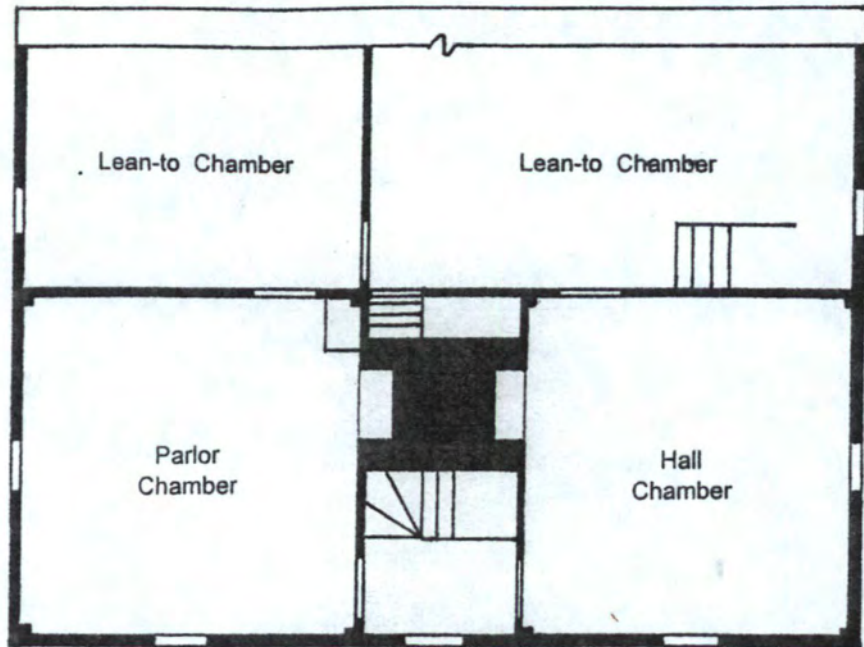


SKETCH MAP

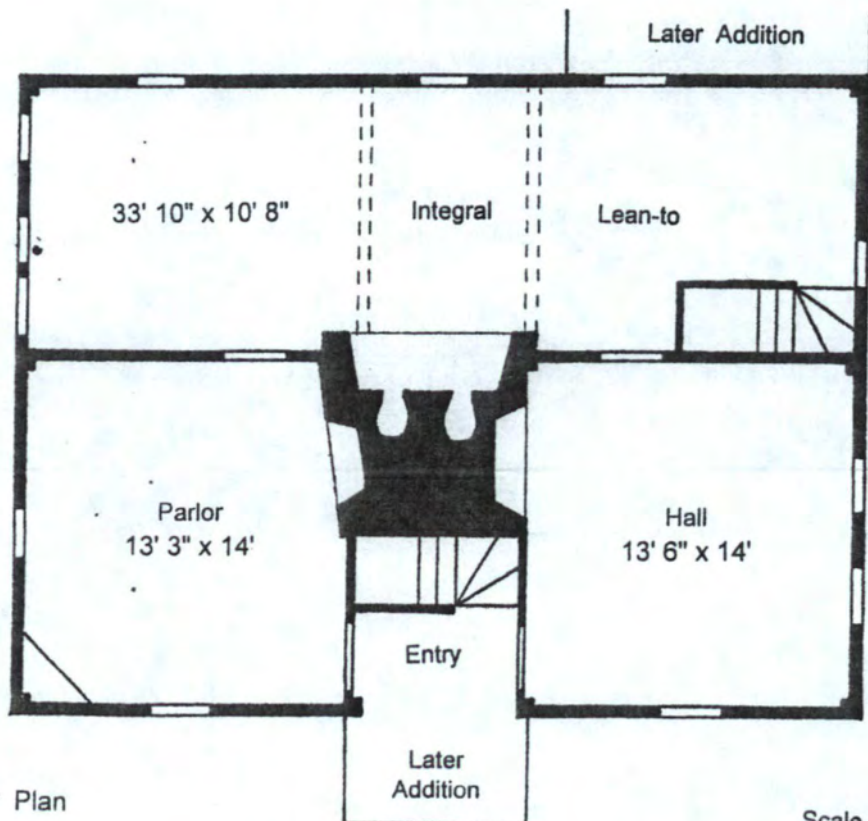
of MACY-COLBY PROPERTY

PLAN 1: MACY-COLBY HOUSE

FIRST and SECOND STORIES



Second Floor Plan



First Floor Plan

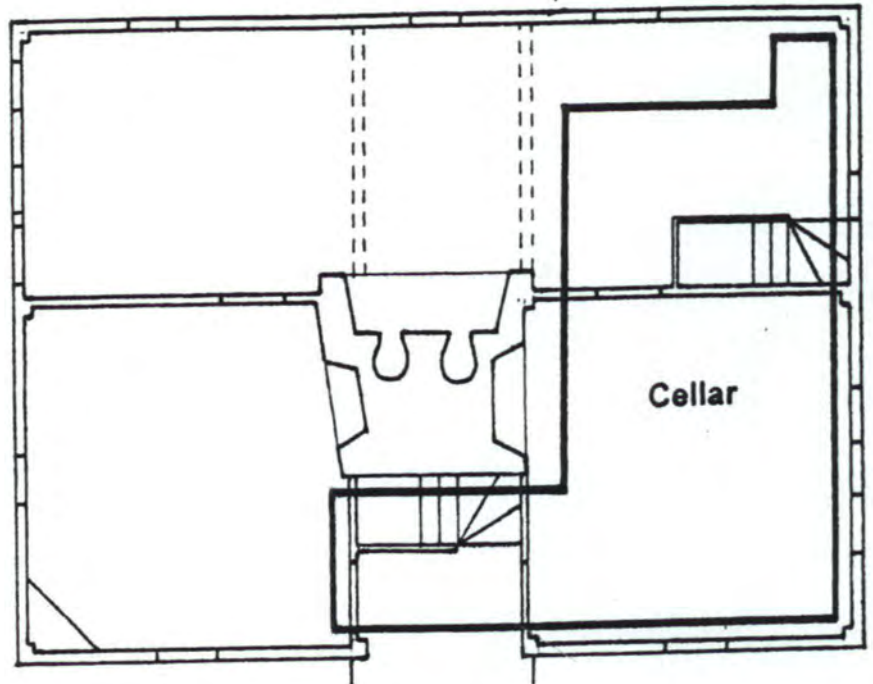
Scale



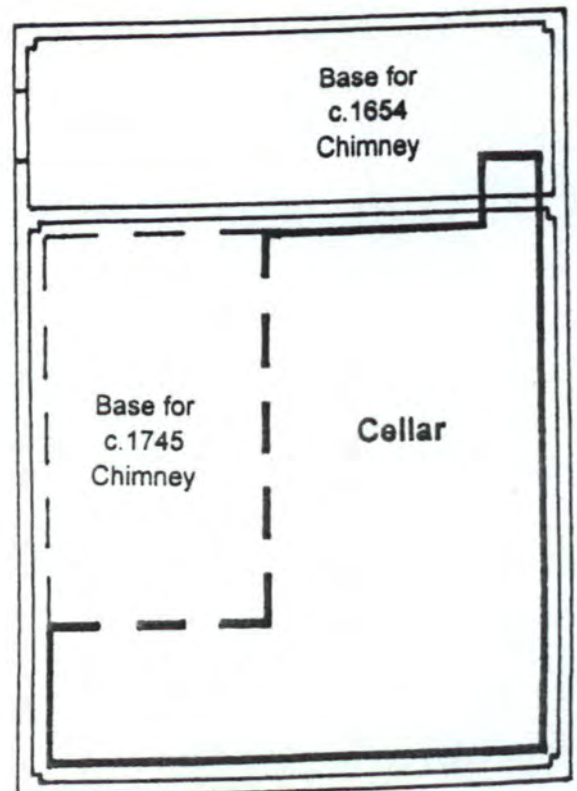
PLAN 2: MACY-COLBY HOUSE

CELLAR and CONJECTURAL COLBY HOUSE of c. 1654

Present c.1745
House, facing
East towards
the main road
established in
1719.



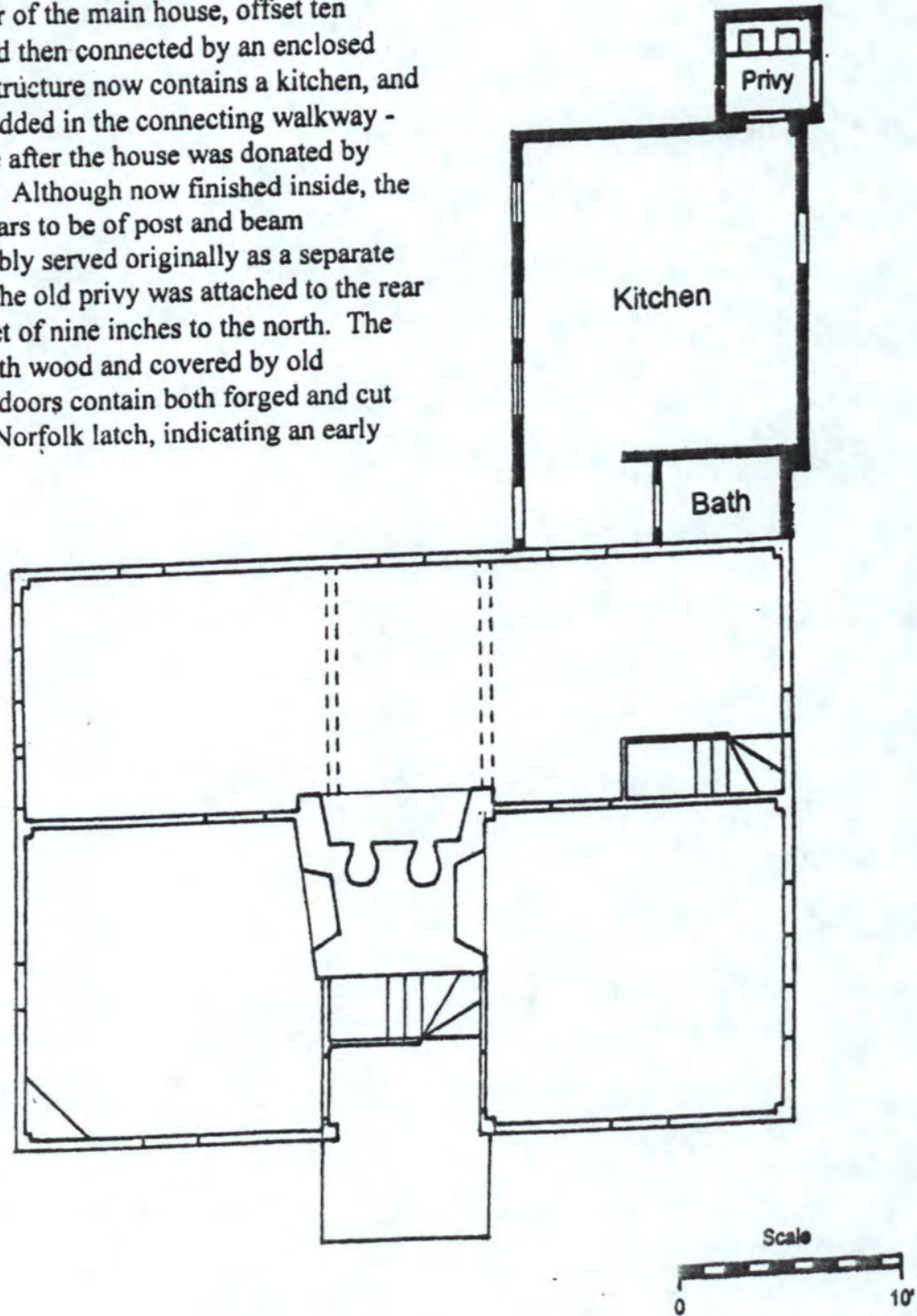
Conjectural c.1654 House, with
one great room facing South and
East, and chimney bay to West.



PLAN 3: MACY-COLBY HOUSE

with REAR ELL and PRIVY

There is no information on when the rear ell was added to the Colby house, though it was probably sometime during the first half of the 19th century. It consists of two separate structures that were combined and located about three feet from the rear of the main house, offset ten inches to the north, and then connected by an enclosed walkway. The main structure now contains a kitchen, and a bathroom has been added in the connecting walkway - both adaptations made after the house was donated by Moses Colby in 1899. Although now finished inside, the kitchen structure appears to be of post and beam construction. It probably served originally as a separate wood shed or shop. The old privy was attached to the rear of the ell with an offset of nine inches to the north. The interior is sheathed with wood and covered by old wallpaper. The privy doors contain both forged and cut nails, and an original Norfolk latch, indicating an early 19th century date.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Macy-Colby House

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Essex

DATE RECEIVED: 5/07/08 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/23/08
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/07/08 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/20/08
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 08000531

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: Y NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 6/16/2008 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A&C

REVIEWER Patrick Andrews DISCIPLINE Historian

TELEPHONE _____ DATE 6/16/2008

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



① MACY-COLBY HOUSE
AMSBURY, MASS.



② MACY-COLBY HOUSE
AMSBURY, MASS.



③ MACY-COBY HOUSE
AMESBURY, MASS.



④ MACY-COLBY HOUSE
AMOSBURY, MASS.



⑤ MACY-COBY HOUSE
AMESBURY, MASS.



⑥ MACY-COLBY HOUSE
AMESBURY, MASS.



⑦ MACY-COWBY HOUSE
AMESBURY, MASS



11 < > N/ N/ N-1

Creative Camera 0610

⑧ MACY-COLBY HOUSE
AMSBURY, MASS.



11 < > N/ N/ N-5

Creative Camera 0610

⑨ MACY-COLBY HOUSE
AMSBURY, MASS



11 < > N/ N/ N-2

Creative Camera 0610

⑩ MACY-COLBY HOUSE
AMESBURY, MASS.



11 < > N/ N/ N-2
Creative Camera 0610

① MARY-COLBY
THORSON
AMSBURY, MASS



11 < > N/ N/ N-4

Creative Camera 0610

(12) MACY-COLBY HOUSE
AMESBURY, MASS



11 < > N/ N/ N 1

Creative Camera 0610

⑬ MACY-COLBY HOUSE
AMSBURY, MASS.



Macy Colby House
257 Main St
Amesbury, Ma

Milton Kray 10/5/00
Macy Colby House

~~13 of 24~~ (14)

South side

INF N000 QNX0 NNN+ 1 9955

001

C:\8818\8818-A\AP-77.DWG

REVISIONS				
REV.	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DR. BY	CK. BY

WESTON & SAMPSON
ENGINEERS, INC.

AMESBURY, MASS.



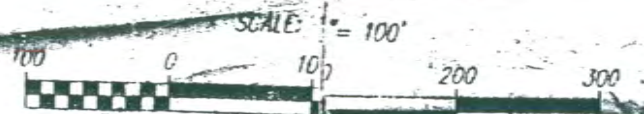
LEGEND

- ⑨ SUBDIVISION NUMBER
- 5 OLD PARCEL NUMBER
- 5 NEW PARCEL NUMBER
- * FOR ADDITIONAL PARCEL INFORMATION SEE ADJACENT SHEET
- - - PARCEL LINE
- - - PRIOR PARCEL LINE WITH COMMON OWNER

NOTE:
THE AREAS, BOUNDARIES, AND DIMENSIONS SHOWN ON THIS TAX MAP ARE DERIVED FROM AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS, GROUND SURVEYS, AND RECORDED PLANS, MAPS, DEEDS, AND WILLS, AND ARE INTENDED TO BE USED FOR PROPERTY ASSESSMENT PURPOSES ONLY AND NOT FOR CONVEYANCE.

64	65	66
76	77	78
87	88	89

INDEX





5' MARY COLBY HOUSE

42070-G7-TM-025

NEWburyport

MASSACHUSETTS –

NEW HAMPSHIRE

1:25 000-scale metric

topographic map

7.5 X 15 MINUTE QUADRANGLE

SHOWING

- Contours and elevations in meters
- Highways, roads and other manmade structures
- Water features
- Woodland areas
- Geographic names

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

1987

Produced by the United States Geological Survey in cooperation with Massachusetts Department of Public Works
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, USCE, and Commonwealth of Massachusetts agencies
Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1978. Field checked 1979. Map dated 1987
This area also covered by 7.5-minute, 1:24,000-scale maps: Newburyport East 1964 and Newburyport West 1964
Selected hydrographic data compiled from NOS Charts 13274 (1962), 13278 (1963), and 13282 (1978). This information is not intended for navigational purposes
Projection and 1000-meter grid, zone 19
Universal Transverse Mercator
10,000-foot grid ticks based on Massachusetts coordinate system, modified zone, and New Hampshire coordinate system
1927 North American Datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983, move the projection lines 6 meters south and 41 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks
There may be private buildings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map

CONTOUR INTERVAL 3 METERS

NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
CONTING ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER
OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER
DEPTH CLIVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET
DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO DATUMS IS VARIABLE
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 2.5 METERS

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225

CONVERSION TABLE		DECLINATION DIAGRAM		ADJOINING MAPS		
Meters	Feet	UTM		1	2	3
1	3.2808		UTM grid convergence (GM) and 1983 magnetic declination (MD) at center of map. Diagram is approximate.	4	5	6
2	6.5617			1	2	3
3	9.8425			4	5	6
4	13.1234			7	8	9
5	16.4042			10	11	12
6	19.6850			13	14	15
7	22.9658			16	17	18
8	26.2467			19	20	21
9	29.5275			22	23	24
10	32.8084			25	26	27

To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808
To convert feet to meters multiply by 0.3048

ISBN 0-607-23453-9
9 780607 234534

Topographic Map Symbols

Primary highway, hard surface	.....
Secondary highway, hard surface	.....
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface	.....
Unimproved road, dirt	.....
Route marker: Interstate, U. S. State	.....
Railroad: standard gauge, narrow gauge	.....
Bridge: drawbridge	.....
Overpass, viaduct, underpass	.....
Saltpit area: only selected landmark buildings shown	.....
House: barn; church; school; large structure	.....
Boundary:	.....
National, with monument	.....
State	.....
County, parish	.....
Civil township, precinct, district	.....
Incorporated city, village, town	.....
National or State reservation; small park	.....
Land grant with monument; found section corner	.....
U. S. public lands survey; range, township, section	.....
Range, township, section line: location approximate	.....
Fence or field line	.....
Power transmission line, located tower	.....
Dam; dam with lock	.....
Cemetery, grave	.....
Campground; picnic area; U. S. location monument	.....
Windmill; water well; spring	.....
Mine shaft; prospect; adit or cave	.....
Control: horizontal station; vertical station; spot elevation	.....
Contours: index; intermediate; supplementary; depression	.....
Distorted surface: strip mine, lava, sand	.....
Sounding; depth curve	.....
Personal lake and stream; intermittent lake and stream	.....
Rapid, large and small; falls, large and small	.....
Submerged marsh; marsh, swamp	.....
Land subject to controlled inundation; woodland	.....
Salt; mangrove	.....
Orchard; vineyard	.....

A pamphlet describing topographic maps is available on request



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

May 2, 2008

Mr. J. Paul Loether
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW, 8th floor
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

Macy-Colby House, 257 Main St., Amesbury (Essex), MA

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. The owners of the property were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30 to 45 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betsy Friedberg".

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Lars Johannessen, Amesbury Historical Commission
Anne Forbes, consultant
Bartlett Cemetery Association
Mayor Thatcher W. Kezer III, City of Amesbury
Joseph Fahey, Community & Economic Development
Kathy Colby, Friends of Macy-Colby House