

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

JAN 02 1990

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Photo (3"x3" or 3"x5", black and white) Indicate address of property on back of photo. Staple to left side of form.

Town Swansea, Mass. MRA
SWANSEA

Address 412 Old Warren Road

Historic Name Benjamin Cole House

Use: Present residence

Original residence/farmstead

DESCRIPTION

Date 1701

Source Wright, Hist. of Swansea

Style Georgian/Federal

Architect unknown

Exterior Wall Fabric clapboard

Outbuildings barn (ca. 1890),
garage (ca. 1950), misc. small sheds

Major Alterations (with dates) probable
remodeling (18th cent.), rear ell (ca. 1850)

Condition excellent

Moved no Date ---

Acreage approximately 4 acres

Setting Rural residential setting west of
Luther's Corner; house occupies a knoll
in a clearing; road moderately travelled

Recorded by R.M. Doodson/K. Flynn/K. Broomer

Organization Swansea Historical Commission

Date 1978/February 1986/November 1989

Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection(s).
Indicate north

(see attached map)

UTM REFERENCE 19 314350 4623320

USGS QUADRANGLE Fall River MA-RI 1967/1979

SCALE 1:25000

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The Cole House, 412 Old Warren Road, meets Criterion A as an intact farmstead reflecting the early agricultural settlement of Old Swansea and Criterion C as a well-preserved example of an 18th-century Georgian/Federal vernacular farmhouse. Retaining integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association, the Cole House is significant on the local level.

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

The oldest documented house in Swansea (1701), the Cole House is a 2½-story, gabled and clapboarded structure noted for its massive brick center chimney. This farmhouse, likely remodelled in the Federal period, has a symmetrical, five-bay, center-entry facade, a double-pile plan, and a 1½-story gabled rear ell with a secondary entry on the north side. The center entry, built out with a hipped roof enclosure marked by wide corner pilasters, contains a vertical board door with iron strap hinges set in a plain surround. Cornerboards and sill boards finish both main block and ell. Other detailing included dripboards on windows of the main block, 2/2 sash on the facade, and 9/6 sash on the sides. The rear ell, added ca. 1850, displays a square eave window over the entrance on the north side and a single double-hung window in the gable end of the west side.

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

The Coles of Swansea are descendants of James Cole of Plymouth, the first Cole to come to America. His grandson, Benjamin Cole (1678-1748), who was born in Swansea, married in 1701 and built this house. The house has a long association with agriculture in Swansea, owned first by the Coles and later by the Wilbur family, who operated the farm from the early 19th century until well into the 20th century. Oriented east on a colonial road through Old Swansea connecting Luther's Corner/Swansea Center with the present Warren, Rhode Island, the Cole house is a fine example of the dispersed, self-sufficient farmsteads that characterized Swansea settlement in the 18th and early 19th centuries. Dairy farming was the farm's focus, supplemented by market gardening in the late 19th/early 20th centuries.

Architecturally, the house is significant as the earliest extant house in Swansea. There are indications of remodeling later in the 18th century, including the treatment of the main doorway, as well as the double range of rooms arranged under a wide gable roof rather than in a lean-to format. The former is not commonly seen in center-chimney houses of southeastern Massachusetts until the 1730s and 1740s [MHC, 134].

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Bristol County records, Taunton, Mass. and Registry of Deeds, Fall River, Mass.
Assessors records, Swansea Town Hall, and 1849 map of Swansea, Swansea Public Library.
Cole Genealogy, E. B. Cole, 1635.
Wright, O. O. History of Swansea, 1917.
Mass. Hist. Comm. State Survey Team, Historic and Archaeological Resources of
SE Mass., 1982.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Swansea MRA
Bristol County, MASSACHUSETTS

Date Listed

Cover

~~Substantive Review~~Accept *Peter L. Savage* 02-16-90
Cover

1. Anthony, David M., House

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Arlene Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

2. Anthony, Harold H., House

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Arlene Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

3. Bark Street School

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Arlene Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

4. Barneyville Historic District

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Arlene Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

5. Bend of the Lane

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Arlene Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

6. Brown, John, IV, House

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Arlene Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

7. Buffington, Deacon, John, House

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Arlene Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

8. Church of Christ, Swansea

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Arlene Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

9. Cole, Benjamin, House

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Arlene Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

10. Colony Historic District

~~Substantive Review~~Keeper *Peter L. Savage* 02-16-90

Attest _____

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Cole, Benjamin, House

MULTIPLE NAME: Swansea MRA

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Bristol

DATE RECEIVED: 1/02/90 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/16/90
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 2/02/90 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 2/16/90
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 90000066

NOMINATOR: STATE

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: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 2/16/90 DATE Entered in the
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

* see comment on reverse
regarding Period of significance.

RECOM./CRITERIA A+C
REVIEWER Savage
DISCIPLINE Architectural History
DATE 2/16/90

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

CLASSIFICATION

___count ___resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

___historic ___current

DESCRIPTION

___architectural classification
___materials
___descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period

Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

___summary paragraph
___completeness
___clarity
___applicable criteria
___justification of areas checked
___relating significance to the resource
___context
___relationship of integrity to significance
___justification of exception
___other

*The period of significance
is appropriate → 1900 to include
the contributing c.1890 barn and
to reflect the farmstead's evolution
from the 18th through the
19th century.*

ps.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

___acreage ___verbal boundary description
___UTMs ___boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

___sketch maps ___USGS maps ___photographs ___presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

Phone

Signed

Date



412 Old Warren Rd.
Swansea, MA.

Benjamin Cole House (MHC # B20)

412 Old Warren Road
Swansea, Mass. MRA

1988

View SE (north side and ell)

PROPERTY MAP

TOWN OF SWANSEA

BRISTOL COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS

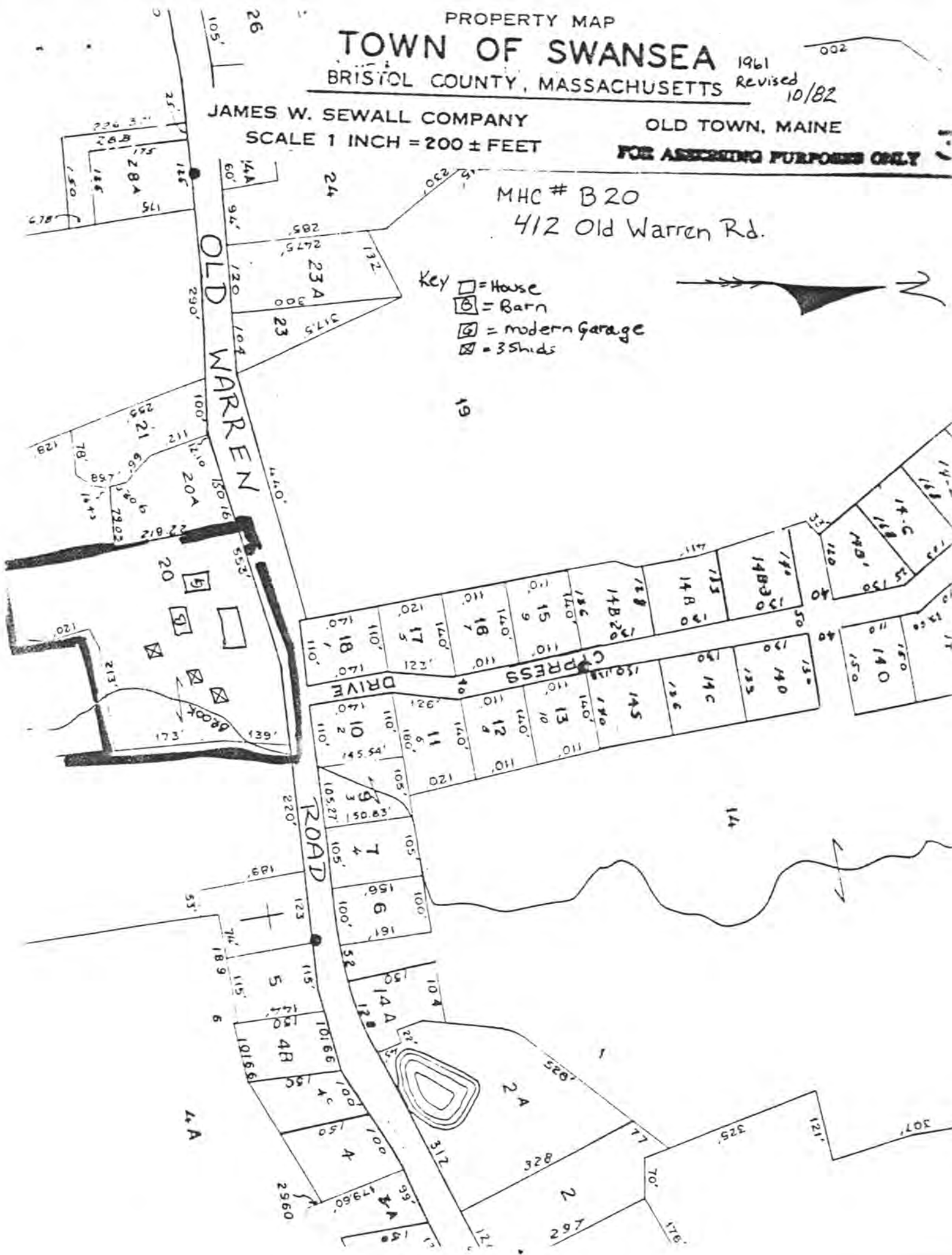
1961
Revised
10/82

JAMES W. SEWALL COMPANY
SCALE 1 INCH = 200 ± FEET

OLD TOWN, MAINE
FOR ASSESSING PURPOSES ONLY

MHC # B20
412 Old Warren Rd.

- Key
- = House
 - = Barn
 - = modern Garage
 - = 3 Sheds



Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000296