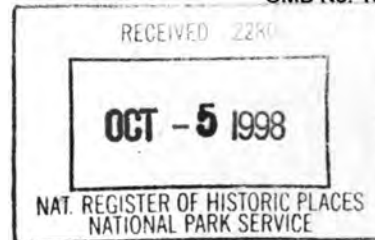


**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**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 JONAH WARREN HOUSE

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Location**

street & number 64 WARREN ST. \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city or town WESTBOROUGH \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity

state MASSACHUSETTS code MA county WORCESTER code 027 zip code 01581

**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.)

Judith B. McDonough  
Signature of certifying official/Title Judith B. McDonough, Executive Director  
Massachusetts Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Officer

9/28/98  
Date

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 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

JONAH WARREN HOUSE  
Name of Property

WORCESTER, MA  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

(Check only one box)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

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

**Number of Resources within Property**

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>		building
<u>1</u>		sites
<u>2</u>		structures
		objects
<u>5</u>		Total

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

RESIDENCE: single-family dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

RESIDENCE: single-family dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COLONIAL  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone, granite  
walls wood: clapboard  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof wooden shingle  
other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

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## 7. DESCRIPTION

The Jonah Warren House (c. 1720-27) and its free standing barn (before 1803) occupy a 1.24 acre site between Warren Street and Upton Road, where a preserved section of the Old Connecticut Path crosses the two. The Path has long served as one of the defining features of the property: when, for instance, the *Records of the Marlborough Proprietors* record the ownership and location of Jonah's dwelling and land in 1727, they do so in terms of the Path's location. Writing to William Dean Howells in the 1880s, the Reverend Hercules Warren Fay (owner of the house at the time) still gave directions to the property in terms of the same coordinates: "I live on the old Upton Road (of late known as Warren Street), near the Reservoir, at about a mile and a half from the village. South Street [Upton Road] also leads directly to the house, which stands at its crossing with the old Connecticut path." The immediate setting of the house was rural when Fay wrote, but much of the land that was then attached to the house was sold off between 1957 and 1986. The neighborhood is now suburban, but three other colonial or Federalist-era houses remain on the opposite side of Warren Street, a little closer to the town center.

In spite of the encroachment of newer houses on the lots surrounding it, the immediate site of the Jonah Warren House retains considerable integrity because the key structural elements of its 18th-century setting--the Path, its walls, and its barn--all remain. Set back 30 feet from Warren Street, the house faces west over a small front lawn that contains a well. The house's ell runs parallel to a 270 foot section of the Old Connecticut Path that runs west-east over the property (and is no longer a public way). Unpaved, two rods wide, flanked by stone walls, the path remains in much the same condition it must have evinced in the late 18th or early 19th century. Additional stone walls--along Warren Street, between the house and barn, and so forth--further articulate the property's boundaries and internal divisions. Finally, the English-style barn, which is set back approximately 25 feet from the eastern end of the house, helps to preserve a real sense of the setting's original agricultural character.

A. The Old Connecticut Path

The Old Connecticut Path began as an east-west Native American trail between the Massachusetts Bay and the Connecticut River valley. The word "Connecticut" in the name of the path relates to the river, not the state, which did not exist in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In *The*

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*Great Trail of New England* (1940), Harral Avres points out that the Path was not straight, but instead routed travelers through high (and therefore dry) land, easy fords over rivers, and important Native American settlements like Hassanamesit (Grafton, Massachusetts), which was the principal seat of the Nipmuck tribes. The importance of the Old Connecticut Path is suggested by its appearance on the earliest maps of New England, such as those of Woodward and Saffery (1642) and Philip Lea (1690s), which indicate the Path and its "controls" (sites along the way that would be easily recognized by travelers). In the early 1700s, the Path was a "public way" of regular width (two rods wide) and was suitable for carts. By the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Path would have been bordered in many places by stone walls and would have had built-up stone fords and bridges over streams. In *The Bay Path and Along the Way* (1919), Levi Badger Chase describes the route that the Old Connecticut Path took through this section of Westborough: it ran through the Warren property to Mount Pleasant (p. 190), he says, then to Fay Mountain, and on towards Hassanamesit (Grafton).

When Jonah Warren purchased his land from the Marlborough proprietor Thomas Rice in 1720, he bought one parcel that was bounded on the south by the Path and another that was bounded on the north by it. In the language of the *Records of the Marlborough Proprietors* from 1727--in which, as early New England maps indicate, "Quaboag" and "Quaboago" refer to parts of the Connecticut River Valley--the first parcel that Jonah bought was "butted and bounded on the south by parcels of meadow and by the cartway which was the old path or Roadway to Quaboag and it is every way else bounded by the common land," while the second parcel was "the meadow which also lyeth on the south side of that which was the old path or Roadway leading towards Quaboago, as it there lyeth butted and bounded on the north by the afforesaid old path, and is bounded on the south by a Pond [Sandra Pond]; and on the East and West, by the Common Upland" (p. 318). Once Jonah began farming these two parcels of land together, the Old Connecticut Path naturally passed through his farm, and he evidently chose to build his house upon it.

The building of the new Upton Road and the new Upton-Grafton road in the 1830s made the Warren's section of the Path irrelevant for most traffic. Although the family continued to use it to access their barn and house, they did not update it. This accounts for its unusually authentic appearance today: it is two rods wide, flanked by stone walls for much of its length, and, where a little brook runs in the spring, it traverses a built-up ford constructed from slabs of local granite. The short portion of the Old Connecticut Path on the property is the only

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section of the Path remaining in Westborough that is preserved in such condition. Most sections of the Path that continued to be traveled (both in Westborough or elsewhere) were incorporated into modern paved roads, and the sections that did not continue to be traveled simply disappeared.

B. The House

The house itself is among the earliest and best-preserved examples of 18th-century domestic architecture in Westborough. Documentary evidence places the construction of at least some part of the house between 1720 (when the parcel of land was bought by Jonah Warren) and 1727 (when the Records of the Marlborough Proprietors mention the house itself). Since it is known that Jonah was one of the men who built the timber frame of Westborough's second meeting house (1749), it is possible that he helped construct his own house.

The house plan is rectangular with a side ell. A plan of the ground floor is attached. The main block of the house is two and a half stories high, as is the ell. There is an additional one story block, also of early date, that extends back from the ell. The main block of the house is slightly asymmetrical. It is four bays wide (37 feet) and three bays deep (25 feet). The ell extends back an additional three bays (26 feet), so that the side of the house forms a continuous wall of 51 feet, while the one-story block extends yet another 23 feet. At 15 feet, the ell is not as deep as the main block. The main block has a large, centered chimney in front of the ridge, while the ell has an interior chimney that emerges near the ridge of the roof between the second and third bays.

The architectural features of the house are described in detail below, and there is a summary of features that probably belong to each period at the end of this section. To aid logical organization of the details, it may be useful to suggest how the house might have looked in each of the three periods. The main block of the house was probably built towards the beginning of the first period, and it may be the dwelling mentioned in the *Records of the Marlborough Proprietors* for 1727. The timber frame suggests that the house had an overhang that was deeper than the one we see today, and that the house was two stories high. The kitchen/hall was located in a front room and the bake oven was in the rear of the fireplace. 2-panel doors probably predominated. In the second period, perhaps in the 1740s, the house was

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significantly altered to conform to newer Georgian tastes. The overhang and the house's asymmetry were partially disguised, and the original fenestration was probably replaced by the early double-hung windows that exist today. Thus, the western facade (including the doorway) probably attained something like its appearance today. Except where remnants survive in odd places, floor-to-ceiling wainscoting was replaced by plaster above the chair rail. 4-panel doors became dominant, and two exterior doors likely date from this period. The oven was moved to the side of the fireplace. In the third period, the ell was probably constructed, perhaps when Aaron Warren took over the property from his father in 1780. The schedules of the Direct Tax of 1790 indicate that the house was a two-story building, but there is insufficient information to show whether the ell had been built by then. The ell contained a new kitchen, which nevertheless retained a typical 18<sup>th</sup> century fireplace, side beehive oven arrangement. A room in the main block was altered to accommodate a new staircase and hall that provided access to the ell. The ell connected the main block to the one-story block, but the framing and foundation of the one-story block suggest that it is older than the ell and possibly as old as the main block. The one story block also has a separate cellar that contains the apparent foundation of a chimney wall, so it is likely that the one-story block was originally a small, separate building with its own chimney.

**The House Frame and Facades**

The house has a post-and-beam frame with wooden sheathing, covered by wooden clapboards. The roof is of side-gable form, and is covered by wooden shingles. The house frame rests on a stone foundation that is free from mortar. Large rectangular granite blocks carry the sills; smaller, irregular granite slabs make up the walls of the cellar. An unusual granite tunnel, 23 feet in length, leads from the cellar to the backyard. The 51' continuous wall on the south side of the house, which resulted from the building of the ell, was given architectural treatment that makes it as prominent a facade as the (west-facing) facade of the main house. The house thus appears to have two fronts, an earlier one facing onto Warren Street and a later one facing onto the Old Connecticut Path. This suggests that both roads were important, and that the house was effectively sitting on a corner in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The most notable feature of both the west- and south-facing facades is that the second story of the house overhangs the first story by 4 inches. However, the original overhang was deeper, at least on the west facade of the house. If boards covering the corner post of the house are removed, a deeper framed (not hewn) overhang is exposed. The overhanging girt currently

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extends 8 inches beyond the first-story corner post. It appears that, in order to make the house conform better to styles that took over after 1725, the house's deeper framed overhang was masked, resulting in the small overhang that we see today. On the north-west and south-west corners of the house, the first-story corner posts were padded out 8 inches with lumber, and then the corners were encased in boards that extend the entire two stories. The corner posts thus appear to be continuous two-story posts, although the bottom of each apparent post hangs out over the foundation. The overhang was also reduced by using unusually thick sheathing beneath the clapboards on the first story of the house. This transformation probably occurred around 1740 or 1750 because certain window frames on the ground floor were specially built to accommodate the unusually thick sheathing. These window frames are characteristic of 1740-50 (Kelly, p. 93 and Plate XIX). The overhang on the south side of the house appears always to have been less deep than the overhang on the west side, and it is possible that the small overhang we see today is the original. It is likely that the entire original overhang was similar to that of the late 17<sup>th</sup> century Ross Tavern (analyzed by Abbott Lowell Cummings in *The Framed Houses of Massachusetts Bay* [1979], p. 77). In the Ross Tavern, the second-story corner posts were seated upon the overhanging girt, the overhang was about 10" deep (shallower on the gable side) and adorned with a molding.

The overhang on the Warren house is adorned with a molding, which is echoed by a similar, prominent molding along the cornice at the top of the second story. All of the windows in the main block and ell (with the exception of a few replacements) are of an early double-hung form. They have 6-by-8 inch lights and fixed upper sashes. Most have two identical sashes, each with 12 lights. Many of the panes retain old glass. If casement windows existed in the main block, they were probably replaced by double-hung windows when the overhang was transformed. The only remaining frames in the house that could have held casement windows are in the one story block.

The front door is of a 5-panel type typical of the 1740s, with 4 vertical panels surmounted by a horizontal panel. It is reinforced by  $\frac{3}{4}$ " sheathing on the inner side and retains 36" wrought-iron strap hinges with simple leaf-shaped ends. The front door opens into a single-story vestibule that projects from the west facade of the house. To either side of the door are two Doric pilasters, and top of the vestibule is adorned with bold moldings. Small double-hung windows (6 lights over 9 lights) in the side walls of the vestibule admit light. A virtually identical vestibule may be found on the Fisher House in Westborough, located about 2 miles

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away (58 South Street). The two families knew one another well. Nathan Fisher, for instance, was an executor of Aaron Warren's will.

The Interior of the Main Block

The small front hall contains a captain's staircase, which makes a tight 180° turn in front of the chimney and has no handrail of any kind (a characteristic of early houses). Short lengths of the chimney girts and a bridging summer beam are revealed in the opening for the staircase. These elements of the frame are encased in beaded boards, as are most pieces of the frame that would otherwise be evident in the house's interior. The hall also contains a small closet beneath the stairs, which is open at the back so that the chimney and beehive oven can be seen. (The closet has no back because it was made useless when the beehive oven was moved, as described below.) The central chimney is constructed from hand-made bricks, and it is supported by both an arch and a wooden frame in the cellar. The arch, which is similar to that pictured by Thomas Hubka (*Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn* [1984], p. 42), is constructed from granite, surmounted by a platform made up of 12" square beams placed side by side. The arch is open on one end and would have provided a cool storage place.

The front hall opens, on the south side, to the dining room, which was originally the kitchen of the main house. Hubka notes that the practice of locating the kitchen in one of the front rooms is an earlier practice in New England than locating the kitchen behind the central chimney. The fireplace in the room is lined by granite blocks and was originally about 8 feet wide. It had a bake oven in its rear wall, the entrance to which is now bricked up. The bake oven was moved quite early on from the rear of the fireplace to its left side, resulting in the beehive bake oven and 6 foot fireplace that we see today. Hart (pp. 5-9) states that such rearrangements of kitchen fireplaces typically occurred before the mid-18th century. Such timing would make sense for the Warren House because it means that the original kitchen plan (rear oven, front room of main block) would have prevailed from about 1720 to the 1740s, and the second kitchen plan (side oven, front room of main block) would have prevailed from the 1740s to the building of the ell between 1770 and 1800. The third kitchen plan remains evident in the ell today; it is described below. The fireplace contains an early wrought-iron crane that probably dates from the rearrangement of the oven. The wrought-iron eye of the earlier crane (the one that predated the rearrangement) can also be found in one granite wall of the fireplace.

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Most of the fireplace wall of the dining room (original kitchen) is paneled from floor to ceiling with stile-and-rail, feather-edged wooden paneling. The fireplace surround is a mitred molding set into the paneling, with a mantel shelf above it. This paneling may date from the fireplace rearrangement (1740s, approximately) or it may date from the moving of the kitchen into the newly built ell (somewhere between 1770-1800). The other walls of the room have plastered walls above wainscoting, which has horizontal joints and is made from beaded board. The chair rails of the wainscoting are on a level with, and continue, the molding beneath the windows. The wainscoting has only wood and exterior sheathing beneath it. Kelly (*The Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut*, pp. 146-47) notes that this was a popular form of wainscoting to combine with plastered walls up until about 1750. He states that later wainscoting was typically built *over* plastered walls, whereas early wainscoting has only wood beneath it. The dining room contains three 12-over-12 windows.

The room has two 2-panel doors, a form that was in use from about 1700 to 1725 (Hart, pp. 2-7). Another 2-panel door that may have belonged in the doorway between the front hall and the dining room remains (loose) in the house, but it was replaced with a 4-panel door (a form in use from about 1725 to 1790). This replacement probably occurred early on, and was carried out so that the front hall would have a 4-panel door on each side. Most of the other doors in the house are of the 4-panel form. The doors in the dining room have noteworthy, early brass thumb latches with leaf ends. Kelly (pp. 194-95) notes that such hardware was imported from England in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. The Warrens evidently reserved brass hardware for their best rooms, since with the exception of the dining room and the parlor, all of the original hardware in the main block is of wrought iron.

The interior door hinges in the dining room and rest of the main block of the house are generally of the wrought-iron HL type, although the HH type appears on one parlor door. The thumb latches in the house are generally of the type called Suffolk. A variety of shapes is represented, but most are not shop-made. The ell contains a few shop-made Norfolk latches, which were popular from 1800 to 1840.

The dining room and the rest of the house have floors made of wide pine planks up to 19 inches across, nailed with rose-headed wrought nails. On the first floor, all of the original floors in the main block are exposed. Elsewhere, individual rooms have newer wide pine flooring that was simply nailed on top of the original flooring. The newer flooring is not

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continuous (the original flooring was left exposed in hallways and minor rooms), and the original flooring can be seen in every room if a newer floor board is lifted.

The parlor opens off the north side of the front hall. All four walls have plaster and wainscoting, similar to the non-fireplace walls of the dining room. The parlor fireplace has a mantel that is a variant of the Georgian mantel, popular in the 1770s (and pictured by Frederick Kelly, *Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut* [1924], p. 163). On either side of the fireplace opening is a fluted pilaster; these support an architrave, frieze and cornice. The top member of the cornice forms a six inch deep mantel shelf. The mantelpiece is particularly handsome because the fluted pilasters flare slightly from their bases and they are echoed by a panel in the center of the frieze that resembles two triglyphs surrounding a blank metope. The parlor was evidently kept locked at times (perhaps at night) because its door has an iron box lock of a basic 18<sup>th</sup> century type. The parlor has a large hearth stone of red granite (which differs from the pink granite that predominates on the property), and contains three 12-over-12 windows.

The keeping room occupies the area behind the central chimney. It communicates with both the parlor and the dining room. Most of its walls are plastered from floor to ceiling, but the fireplace is surrounded by a wall that has floor-to-ceiling wainscoting made of simple vertical boards. The fireplace itself has a granite hearth stone and a simple surround of mitred molding. The keeping room has three 12-over-12 windows.

The remaining area on the ground floor of the main block of the house is occupied by the south hall. This is the hall onto which the main door of the south facade opens. This hall was probably remodeled when the ell was added to the house. It contains a left-handed staircase that has straight runs of stair and two small landings. Much larger than the front staircase but still small, the south staircase is handsome, with a handrail and turned newel posts made of tiger maple wood, neatly pegged together with tiny wooden pegs. Underneath the stairs, behind an unusually low 2-panel door, is a closet. The closet is interesting because it preserves floor-to-ceiling wainscoting made from horizontal beaded boards. It may be the remnant of a room that was initially entirely surfaced with wood wainscoting, as many rooms were prior to 1730 (Kelly, pp. 145-6). In the far corner of the closet, in a area that has been difficult to reach since the stairs were built, some very old paint is preserved. The paint is light pink in color, much like that described by Frank Welsh as having been used between

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1730 and 1760 in Philadelphia (the Philadelphia paint contained white lead, calcium carbonate, haematite, and yellow ocher; "The Early American Palette," pp. 77-84). Most of the woodwork and paneling in the rest of the house has received many coats of paint, although scraping has shown that the bottommost coat of paint in the main block of the house is light pink or a very dark green in several places. Of course, these colors may be the deteriorated versions of other colors.

The exterior of the south doorway has, on either side of the door, a narrow, fluted pilaster, then a small panel surmounted by a narrow window made up of 6" wide lights stacked vertically, and then a pair of fluted pilasters. The door currently in the doorway is not original; the patented Carpenter box lock on it was not sold until 1820. There is a tradition that another door, preserved loose inside the house, is the original door. The door in question is certainly an early 5 panel door reinforced by sheathing on the inner side and retaining 34" wrought iron strap hinges with leaf ends.

Cut-off tenons which remain embedded in the keeping room floor suggest that the room initially may have been divided into two. Thus, the original floor plan of the main block of the house may have been: a small front hall, a kitchen in the front room on the south side, a parlor in the front room on the north side, a small room with no fireplace in the back on the north side, a keeping room directly behind the central chimney, and a room with no fireplace in the back on the south side. This would have been a standard floor plan for an early 18<sup>th</sup> century house, located in eastern Massachusetts and belonging to a well-off family.

The second story of the main block of the house replicates the floor plan just described (including the division of the current keeping room into two rooms). Windows in the second story are generally over corresponding first story windows or doors. The second story has a small front hall, a bedchamber in the front room on the south side, a bedchamber in the front room on the north side, a small chamber with no fireplace in the back room on the north side, a larger room directly behind the central chimney, and a hall in the back room on the south side. The front hall contains a small 4-panel door, behind which is the attic staircase, which makes a tight 90° turn so that it fits in front of the central chimney.

Each of the bedchambers has a fireplace and walls that are plastered from floor to ceiling. The bedchamber on the south side has a early fireplace surround with a mitred molding surmounted

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by a cabinet built into the wall, in the space around the chimney. This bedchamber also has a tiny closet with a two panel door built into the corner of the room. The bedchamber on the north side has no closets or cupboards. It does, however, have a distinguished early fireplace surround with a vigorous "roll" or bolection molding, mitred at the corners and surmounted by a plain panel and mantel shelf. The proportions of the surround and excess exposure of brick makes it clear that this firebox was reduced in size, probably by lining its interior with new brick walls. Although other fireboxes in the house may also have been reduced in size, this and the firebox in the original kitchen are the ones that show the most obvious signs of reduction.

The small room in the back on the north contains one window, but is otherwise plain. The room over the keeping room was divided into bathrooms (see below) and a hallway. The hallway contains floor-to-ceiling wainscoting on one wall, as well as the door of a closet that encloses the irregular space behind the chimney. The second story south hall contains the upper part of the south staircase, which has already been described.

The Ell

The ell opens out of the south hall. On each of its stories, it contains a large (two bay) room that communicates with a small (one bay) room. The rooms are separated by the wall that contains the ell chimney. For instance, the ground floor contains the kitchen and the back kitchen, which are separated by a deep wall of masonry that contains a fireplace, a beehive oven, and a set kettle. The fireplace and the oven open into the kitchen. The set kettle and the mass of the beehive are located in the back kitchen. The set-kettle was an invention of Benjamin Thompson of Woburn, Massachusetts (Count Rumford) and was a common addition to the kitchens of well-off New Englanders between 1800 and 1840. It provided a ready supply of hot water for cooking or cleaning purposes (Rumford documents, Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities). Its awkward placement suggests that the set kettle in the Warren house was probably added as an afterthought. The door of the kitchen bake oven appears to be original. It is of a cast-iron design that was popular in the 1780s (*Historic American Buildings Survey: Massachusetts*). The kitchen contains two 12-over-12 windows (south facade) and an 8-over-12 window (north facade). The back kitchen contains two 12-over-12 windows, and doors that lead to the backyard and the one-story block. The floor incorporates a full-size trap door, beneath which may be found a flight of stairs leading to the cellar.

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There is a bedchamber over the kitchen of the same dimensions as the kitchen, and a bedchamber over the back kitchen of the same dimensions as the back kitchen. The first of these two bedchambers has a closet in the thickness of the chimney wall, to the south of the chimney. The second bedchamber has a similar closet to the north of the chimney.

The One-Story Block

The two original doors in the one-story block appear to be early. The first is a 33" wide board-and-batten door made up of three beaded boards with two 9" wide battens. This door has 19" long, wrought-iron strap hinges with round ends, but its other "hardware" is not made of iron, but of an extremely hard wood, carved into a simple thumb latch. The wooden thumb latch is attached to the door with wooden pegs (some pegs have been replaced by metal screws). The other door has a similar board and batten construction, but is smaller and has strap hinges with diamond-shaped ends. More interestingly, it has a wooden box lock with an iron mechanism. Such wooden box locks were already considered clumsy and insecure by 1750, when iron box locks became readily available and popular.

The one-story block has one small double-hung window (6 lights over 8 lights) and two windows that are 18 inches wide by 20 inches high. Each of the latter two windows was designed to hold a simple, single sash. The interior walls of the one-story block are covered by modern wood paneling, but a large closet in one corner of the room offers us an unobstructed view of the house frame. The post-and-beam construction is typical of early 18<sup>th</sup>-century work: we see a neatly hewn 8"-by-8" corner post that has a plate, end tie beam, and principle rafter tenoned onto it (in that order). There are small braces (2½ feet long) joining the corner post to the plate and to the end tie beam. All the joints are secured by long pegs. The one story block has a major rafter, minor purlin roof, a small version of the roof of the main block (described below). The cellar of the one-story block is separate from that of the rest of the house, and what appear to be the remains of a chimney foundation occupy the western quarter of the little cellar. The one story block may have been an outbuilding or even a little house built by Jonah as a temporary place to live during the construction of the main block of the house.

The Roof

The attic of the house is unfinished, so the roof is exposed to view. Rather than replacing the

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original roof when the ell was attached, the Warrens simply cut a triangle out of the roof of the main block. The roof of the main block has a major-rafter, minor-purlin system, which is typical of 18<sup>th</sup> century dwellings in the eastern half of northern New England (Hubka, p. 41; Cummings, pp. 98-100). However, the roof is rather individual within this class. The major rafters are hewn oak timbers, as we would expect. However, there is only one minor purlin, that at the ridge: a beautifully hewn, large timber that runs the entire length of the main block. The purlin is a roughly tear-drop shaped, non-equilateral pentagon. The major rafters are tenoned into each other, and each one of these joints lies in a specially shaped trench in the purlin. The joints are secured with long pegs. Because there is a single purlin, the chimney does not rise through the ridge, but just in front of it.

Summary

Many of the architectural details described above are difficult to date precisely. However, a number of features are characteristic of the first part of the 18th century (1720-1740):

- the framed overhang
- the location of the kitchen/hall in a front room
- the original arrangement of the bake oven in the rear wall of the fireplace
- the tight captain's staircase with no hand rail
- 2-panel doors in the original kitchen/hall
- remnants (in closets, etc.) of floor-to-ceiling wainscoting made of beaded board.

A major architectural overhaul of the house in the middle period (1740-70) is suggested by other features:

- the evident disguising of the framed overhang;
- the movement of the bake oven from the rear to the left of the fireplace, evinced by the bricked up opening of the original oven, the remaining eye of the original crane, and the now useless closet under the captain's staircase;
- the doorway of the west facade and the loose exterior door that is said to have been removed from the south facade;
- the moldings and fenestration of the west facade, north facade, and the part of the south facade that predates the ell;
- plaster combined with window sill-height wainscoting that has no plaster under it;
- the fireplace surrounds in the keeping room and two bedchambers in the main block; possibly the fireplace wall in the current dining room.

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The mantel in the parlor may have been a 1770s replacement, or it may have been part of the larger architectural campaign that included the building of the ell in the third period (1770-1800). A number of features are characteristic of this period:

- the doorway of the south facade;
- the staircase in the south hall;
- the arrangement of the kitchen in the ell and the bake oven door;
- possibly the fireplace wall in the current dining room.

Characteristic 19<sup>th</sup> century improvements include:

- the reduction of the firebox in the north bedchamber in the main block;
- the introduction of the set kettle in the back kitchen of the ell;
- some shop-made Norfolk latches;
- the laying of new wide-pine floors on top of the original floor in some rooms;

The well was evidently built in 1850, since that date is carved upon one of granite cap stones.

Major construction apparently ended with the building of the ell, probably because, unlike their predecessors, the 19<sup>th</sup> century families who lived in the house were small and did not farm intensively (see below). Hercules Warren Fay was said to have enjoyed the old-fashioned qualities of the house, and he and his children apparently made no major changes during their tenure (1867 to 1957).

#### Alterations

When the house was willed to Robert Dekker in 1957, a number of alterations were made. A screened porch was added in the angle formed by the main block and the ell. The exterior clapboards were replaced with new wooden clapboards. Sills were replaced and extra joists were added to help support the ground floor. Plumbing, electricity, and hydronic baseboard heat were added. In general, great care was taken that the fabric of the house not be unduly disturbed. For instance, pipes and major wiring were generally placed inside of closets, and minor wiring was snaked inside the old walls. Some posts were given a second encasement designed so that a small space would be left for pipes and wires between the original and new encasements. The interior walls of the one story block were paneled over with pine paneling.

Two bathrooms were installed in the second-story room behind the central chimney, and another bathroom was added in the one story block. The windows in these bathrooms are all

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replacements. The kitchen received the most architecturally significant changes. The plaster walls were paneled over with pine; exposed beams were added (by the simple expedient of attaching old wooden beams to the underside of the structural beams that were under the plaster in the ceiling); and three windows were replaced, altering the fenestration of the south facade. Fortunately, the plaster walls remained, and the original windows were kept in the cellar. In 1997, some of these changes were reversed. The windows, which were too decayed to use, were copied exactly, and the south facade was restored to its original appearance (known from pre-1957 photographs). The modern paneling was removed and the plaster walls are visible again.

In 1964, the Johnsons, who owned the house after the Dekkers, had the central chimney reinforced where it is exposed in the attic and repointed above the roof line. Cement blocks replaced part of the central chimney arch in the cellar. The ell chimney was made to accommodate a tile-lined flue for the furnace, which occupies part of the ell beehive oven. In the 1980s, three plaster ceilings were replaced with blueboard by the then owners, the Gannons.

### The Barn

The property also retains its barn, a one-and-a-half story building (55 feet by 26 feet) of post-and-beam construction set on a granite foundation similar to that of the house. The date of the building is uncertain, but the framing members are hewn and a receipt for repairs to the barn survives from 1803. Its design is that of an early "English barn" with a major-rafter, minor purlin roof. The barn is built against a bank, so that the south side of the barn is level with its yard, while the north side is half a story above grade. In the middle of the north side, a ramp slopes up from the yard to the ground floor of the barn, while on each end of the north side, there is a ramp that slopes down from the yard to the floor of the cellar. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, granite slab cellars and ramp/bank construction were features of finely made barns (Hubka, p. 55). Animal pens, constructed from huge granite slabs, remain in the cellar of the barn.

The barn was never converted from an English barn to a New England barn, a procedure that involved moving the major access doors from a side wall to a gable wall. Most heavily worked barns in New England were converted between 1800 and 1840, and Hubka (pp. 54-60) notes that unconverted English barns are characteristic of early farms that had already ceased

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intensive agriculture by the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This accords with the Warren family history, since none of the 19<sup>th</sup> century owners depended primarily on farming for their income.

The barn was still being used for gathering in the harvest as late as 1905. Unfortunately, it was subsequently allowed to fall into serious disrepair. It is now being slowly restored, and as much of the original fabric as possible is being preserved.

**Archeological Description**

Despite 20<sup>th</sup>-century suburban growth patterns in Westborough and in the neighborhood of the Hoxby-Warren House, the property still retains much of its 18<sup>th</sup>-century rural setting and potential for both prehistoric and historic archaeological sites. No prehistoric sites are currently recorded on the nominated property, however, sites may be present. Currently, sixty-five sites are recorded in the town of Westborough with two sites in the general area (within one mile) of the Hoxby-Warren House. Major concentrations of prehistoric sites are recorded nearby the property in the vicinity of Lake Hoccomocco, Lake Chauncy and in the Westborough Cedar Swamp National Register Historic District located approximately one to two miles north to northeast of the Hoxby-Warren House. A portion of the Old Connecticut Path, a regionally important Native American trail later used as a Colonial path and carriage way, also runs from east to west across the property. Environmental characteristics of the property also support its sensitivity for prehistoric resources. Much of the property exhibits locational criteria including good drainage, level to moderate slope and close proximity to wetlands (within 1000 feet) which are favorable for many types of prehistoric sites. Given the above information, the size of the property (1.24 acres), and limited historic period development, a high probability exists for locating prehistoric sites on the property.

There is also a high probability for locating historic archaeological resources on the Hoxby-Warren House property. Structural remains may exist from at least one barn and other possible outbuildings dating to the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Documentary records indicate the existing barn dates to before 1803 and was constructed from two structures, both of which may have been located on the property. Outbuildings may have been important for agricultural functions or for shoe and straw hat manufacture which also may have been important on the property. Archaeological evidence of occupational related features (trash pits, privies, wells) should also survive on the property. Unsystematic digging and construction have identified 19<sup>th</sup>-century

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trash deposits containing ceramics, glass, and farm implements in several areas of the property including the area of the single story addition. Earlier deposits should also exist. Archaeological evidence of privies should also be present although none have been identified to date. One well has been identified in the front yard area dating to 1850 or earlier. It is unknown whether or not this well dates to the original house construction or whether an additional well is present. Stone walls are also present on the property.

(end)

JONAH WARREN HOUSE  
Name of Property

WORCESTER, MA  
County and State

**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.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

AGRICULTURE

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

**Period of Significance**

CA. 1720-1948

**Significant Dates**

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Hercules Warren Fay

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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## 8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Jonah Warren House is one of the finest and best-preserved examples of 18th-century domestic architecture in Westborough. It and its occupants have also been associated with events of importance to local history, including the early settlement and governance of the town, the religious and political controversies of the Great Awakening and the American Revolution, and the town's eventual transformation into a center for dairy production and the manufacture of shoes, boots, and straw hats. As Keith Stavely has remarked, the Reverend Ebenezer Parkman, the town's minister from 1724 to 1782, stood "at the center of the theological, spiritual, and cultural crosscurrents of eighteenth-century New England." Because his diaries are among the most complete and informative of the records that survive from 18th century New England ministers, and because he knew Jonah Warren, his children, and their neighbors very well, we can locate the house's early occupants with unusual precision within those broader religious and cultural crosscurrents. The house's long association with the Warrens and Fays means that it has been connected with a number of prominent citizens in Westborough's history, but three of these merit special mention: Jonah Warren, Aaron Warren, and Hercules Warren Fay. Jonah played an important role in the town's early settlement. His son Aaron (a cordwainer who shipped his wares to the South and the Caribbean) helped pave the way for what would become Westborough's major industry besides straw hat manufacturing. And Aaron's great grandson, Hercules Warren Fay, became Westborough's most distinguished man of letters (after Parkman himself) and part of the literary circle of Henry James and William Dean Howells. The house is, therefore, eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A, B, and C at the local level.

The Jonah Warren House was built on the *Old Connecticut Path*. Originally a Native American trail, this was the path followed to Connecticut by the scout John Oldham (1630) and later by the Reverend Thomas Hooker (1636) and his congregation from Newtown (now Cambridge, Massachusetts). Westborough's location at the intersection of important Native American trails made it an attractive site for settlement. Early surveyors laid out grants, farms, and house lots to either side of the path. Although the "westerly part" of Marlborough made unsuccessful attempts in both 1688 and 1702 to achieve greater autonomy, Westborough did not finally separate from Marlborough until 1717. Even then, the *Records of the Marlborough Proprietors* continued to record activities in Westborough.

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Jonah Warren (1700-1780) and his wife Elizabeth Seaverns (1700-1775) moved from Watertown to Westborough in 1719. On November 20, 1720, Jonah bought a 35 acre parcel of land for 33 pounds from Thomas Rice, Sr, recorded as the present town's first colonial inhabitant. Presumably, Jonah built his house shortly after purchasing the land. A dwelling was certainly built by 1727, when it was mentioned in the *Records of the Marlborough Proprietors*.

Between 1719 and 1745, Jonah and Elizabeth had 13 children. Jonah was a tanner by trade, but he also sold wooden shingles (probably cut from the nearby cedar swamps, where he owned land), beef, and salt fish. At various times, Jonah served as a tything man, constable, moderator, or surveyor of highways for the town. On a few occasions, he petitioned the Reverend Ebenezer Parkman, or spoke to him informally, about upholding conservative, Puritan mores in the face, for instance, of secular incursions on the sabbath. He may have been friendly with, or simply lived near, a Native American named Abimaleck. We know that he went to the wigwam of the man's daughter to pray over her dead child--and went for Parkman to do the same. Jonah was one of the men in charge of building the timber frame for the second meeting house of 1749, and he also bought a pew spot in it. Rev. Parkman frequently visited the house to pray and deliver sermons. His visits were especially common in the 1770s, when Jonah and Elizabeth were aging and suffering from "great and Sore Troubles." Jonah died in 1780. On March 1, Rev. Parkman wrote: "Notwithstanding the Rain and very difficult travelling, I went a.m. to the funeral of old Mr. Jonah Warren, who expired in the eightieth-year of his age--many people attended. I prayed--ventured to come home on foot. The snow and ice made it dangerous to ride." A few days later, Parkman preached a sermon on the pious Jonah using the text 1 Thes. 4:14 : "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

While a number of the children of Jonah and Elizabeth led interesting lives, the case of the unfortunate Sarah (1734-74) sheds particular light on the social construction of madness and faith in a small town in Massachusetts in the aftermath of the Great Awakening. Sarah was a young girl during the Great Awakening, and although Parkman successfully limited the spread of enthusiasm in Westborough, Jonathan Edwards and various disciples preached to the town, and a number of girls experienced spiritual raptures. To what extent Sarah may have been influenced by such examples of intense enthusiasm is difficult to say, but by the time she was twenty, she had become troubled by a conviction of her own damnation, showed signs of being

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"disordered of mind," and had tried to kill herself several times. Jonah often requested Parkman to arrange fast days for her, but Sarah was averse to being prayed over. During one fast, she bolted from the house and disappeared into the forest. She appears to have recomposed herself for a while, for three years later, she married Seth Morse in the house of her parents. Since Morse had lived with Parkman, he presumably knew of her history. The young couple moved to the Asher Rice-Captain Seth Morse House, which still stands about a mile away from the Jonah Warren House. They seem to have lived without incident until 1774. Then, the day after Parkman delivered a sermon intended to inculcate a true sense of sin in his congregation, he was summoned to their house. Sarah had tried to kill herself by swallowing "copperas" (hydrous sulphates). She told Parkman that she knew his sermon (on Acts 26:20) was "directly to her--She had now no Business to stay here any longer--No Desires of Good, etc." A month later, she slashed her throat with a razor while Parkman was preaching his Sunday sermon. Two doctors were able to sew her windpipe and the flesh of her neck back together as townspeople looked on. Although Sarah occasionally let Parkman pray for her or "discourse" with her, she always insisted that it was strictly for the comfort of her husband and children. Parkman thought her "a Miserably tempted, frantic Woman." With her case in mind, he preached a sermon on Jonah's prayer from the belly of the whale (Jonah 2:1-10), "out of the belly of hell cried I *and* thou heardest my voice." On the same day, Sarah split her throat open by coughing, and the doctors were unable to stitch it back together again. Ten days later, Parkman "found no great alteration as to the State of her Mind, except that she is thought somewhat more insane." He thought that his prayers were no longer "so much against her will, as heretofore," but she was "not rational enough to discourse with." When she died the next day, Parkman noted that her "real Frame [of mind] could not be known." Although Jonah and Elizabeth lost other children to untimely deaths, Sarah's plight seems to have been the greatest of their sore troubles. Since we have a fairly extensive record of the comings and goings of neighbors, doctors, and ministers occasioned by Sarah's condition, not to mention the particular Biblical texts that the ministers thought appropriate to her case, Sarah's story sheds considerable light on aspects of social history that are frequently impossible to reconstruct from the sorts of political and legal records that survive in greater abundance.

It was Jonah's son Aaron (1727-1803), however, who would be the next occupant of the Jonah Warren house. In 1778, he moved back to Westborough. By that time, his mother was dead, and his father was very ill. As a young man, Aaron had worked for and lived with Rev.

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Parkman. By 1748, he was making shoes in Upton, the town just south of Westborough. In 1753, he married Mary Bond (1732-1816), and together they had ten children. By 1757, Aaron owned tanning vats and a tanhouse on Fowler Street, Upton. He made everything from women's dress pumps to men's boots; he was, in other words, in the vanguard of the shoe-making industry that would prove so important to Upton and Westborough in the nineteenth century. He did not, however, fight in the Revolution because his services as a tanner were in and of themselves valuable to the cause. It was his younger brother Lieut. Levi Warren (b. 1741) who would distinguish himself as one of Westborough's prominent military leaders in the Revolution.

Although Aaron was already serving as a selectman, town viewer, and surveyor of highways in Westborough in 1782, he appears to have held onto a residence in Upton until 1790. By 1800 he and his wife were living alone in the Jonah Warren House. In heading up the committee that divided Westborough into six "squadrons" or school districts in the mid 1780s, Aaron began a tradition of supporting education in Westborough that his son David would continue. It is an interesting measure of the family's social mobility that whereas Jonah had signed his documents as a "yeoman," Aaron styled himself a "gentleman."

An inventory of the furnishings in the Jonah Warren House that went into probate when Aaron died in 1803--and that therefore excluded the possessions granted directly to his wife, who survived him--included: beds and hangings (\$49.08), an eight-day clock (\$35.00), a desk and book-case, a case of drawers, a looking glass, ten chairs, a round table, two clothes chests, a "bible & other books & pamphlets," pewter, and many practical items from the kitchen and barn, including a "riding chaize" (\$55.00). All told, Aaron was worth \$10,000 when he died. The ell of the Jonah Warren house was probably added while Aaron lived there. Aaron's wife, Mary, lived on at the house until 1816.

Westborough would shortly undergo a number of changes that would alter the complexion of the town. In 1825, the Baptists refused to pay taxes, causing a formal separation of church and state. Their church, built between 1825 and 1830, was the first building in town devoted exclusively to religious uses. In 1834, the main church of Westborough split into two congregations--Unitarian and Evangelical--because of theological controversies. The establishment of the Unitarian church may be seen as the logical result of the "progressive" theological movement that was already apparent in Westborough in the 18th century, when

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Jonah and his son Aaron (both conservative Calvinists) staunchly opposed it; its founding in 1834 may, however, bear more than a coincidental relationship to the creation of the Boston-Worcester railroad in the same year, for as Nathaniel Hawthorne implied in his short story "The Celestial Railroad," Unitarianism appealed to the rationalistic and improving instincts of the age of the railroad. With time, largely as a reflection of the town's growing and diversifying population, Adventist, Methodist Episcopal, and Catholic churches would also be built. The Catholic church was presumably supported by the 447 Irish immigrants who were living in the town by 1855.

During this period, the town expended considerably energy on building new roads or improving old ones--to Worcester, Boston, Grafton, Upton, Northborough, and so forth--but it was the location of the Worcester-Boston railroad line through the center of town that had the greatest effect on Westborough. The railroad stimulated both agricultural and industrial production. J.A. Fayerweather began collecting and marketing the milk of local farmers, who in turn formed a Milk Producers co-operative and a cheese factory. By 1875, Westborough ranked second in Worcester County for milk production. The railroad also spurred the town's growth as a center for the production of straw hats, boots and shoes, and sleighs. Aaron Warren made an early contribution to the boot and shoe industries of Upton and Westborough by expanding his network of trade relations out to the West Indies and the southern states. Warren was at the vanguard of the trade's *commercialization*, but the *industrialization* of boot and shoe manufacturing was led by the next generation. By 1832, 5 shops employing 140 men were producing \$65,000 worth of boots and shoes in Westborough. Along with both the town's new wealth and the influx of new inhabitants, many of them not well educated, came an increased attention to various schemes for "improvement," from formal schooling, to various fairs and societies devoted to the promotion of better farming and manufacturing techniques, to plans for the provision of work for the poor, to the reestablishment of the public library on a sounder footing.

Unfortunately, we know less about the inhabitants of the Jonah Warren House during these years than we do about the people who lived in the house during the rest of its period of significance. Nevertheless, we do know that they participated in these changes in a number of ways.

It was David (1772-1863), the third son of Aaron and Mary Warren, who took over the house

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in 1816. He was married to Phoebe Waterman of Rhode Island. We know that David lived as a "gentleman," that he was looked upon as a prominent citizen of the town, and that he derived some of his income from the farm attached to the Jonah Warren House, but we are uncertain what other sources of supplementary income he had. He does not appear to have entered the boot and shoe trade like his father. We do know that he occasionally served as a tything man, that he was reputed to be well educated, and that he took an active interest in promoting education in the town. Not only did he serve on school committees; he was also founding president of the "Union Library Society," which was formed in 1807 in an attempt to revitalize a cooperative library society first begun in 1773.

The construction of the railroad in 1834-35 had an immediate effect on the setting of the Jonah Warren House, for it precipitated the construction of the present Upton Road in 1836. That meant that the present Warren Street (previously the old Upton Road) ceased to be a major thoroughfare. The net result of these changes is that a house that had once been located at the intersection of two extremely important roads no longer faced any heavily trafficked route at all (although it could, and still can, be readily accessed from the new Upton Road). Another result is the preservation of the Old Connecticut Path in what is essentially its late 18th and early 19th-century state.

The only child of David and Mary, Mary Waterman Warren (1799-1858), married Josiah Fay (1797-1869) in 1838. David Warren deeded them the farm before removing to Cranston, Rhode Island. Josiah was the son of John Fay (1748-1837) and Mehitabel Brigham (1758-1844). Although the large Fay family made many contributions to Westborough, including pioneering the straw hat industry, the branch whence Josiah sprang were most heavily invested in dairy farming. Relatives of Josiah owned a large dairy farm across the street that existed (in other hands) up until about 1990, and Josiah, too, appears to have derived some income from the dairy industry. He also farmed the land around the Jonah Warren house and in other locations of Westborough, where he grew hay, alfalfa, and corn. In 1847, he was one of three men who built the main road to Northborough, thus contributing to the town's more general project of improving routes of communication and travel. It is also known that he had a pool of capital that he lent at interest in the 1850s. Since the first banks in Westborough were not founded until 1864 and 1869, the existence of such private venture capital must have been vital to the town's industrial development. In 1862, the house was taxed for its house, a barn, a small house, 80 acres of farm land, 34 acres of pasture and wood land, 20 acres of wood land,

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11 acres of sprout land, and a few horses, oxen, cows, and pigs. At the end of his life, Josiah's assets ranked him in the top 1.5% of taxpayers in Westborough. It is interesting to note, however, that what had been one of the most expensive houses in town in Aaron's day now contributed little to the value of Josiah's estate; its valuation was less than one tenth that of the largest mansions built by the new industrialists of the Victorian period. By the end of the century, the Fays would be known as gentleman farmers; they enjoyed considerable prestige because they were an old family in the town and because they were well educated, but they were certainly not as well off as the new industrialists.

Hercules Warren Fay (1841-99), their eldest child, inherited the property. Hercules had been born in the house and would live there for much of his life. It was at Harvard College that he met the men who would remain his dearest friends: T.S. Perry (a literary critic and historian), John Fiske (an American historian and the author of works on evolution and philosophy), and John Richard Dennet (a literary critic and an assistant professor of rhetoric at Harvard). After graduating from Harvard, Hercules attended, and subsequently graduated from, the General Theological Seminary of New York City. An ordained Episcopal clergyman, his first post was as the assistant rector of St. John's Church, Brooklyn, N.Y. He then became the rector of a church in Flatbush, N.Y. In 1867, he suffered the first of two "sun strokes" from which he never fully recovered. He was nevertheless able to live in England for a year after this setback, and even to marry Miss Elizabeth Johnston, niece of Professor Johnston of the General Theological Seminary, in 1869. He subsequently took charge of Episcopal churches in West Newton and Nantucket. His wife died in 1879. In 1888, Hercules himself took to his bed because of his illness.

If Hercules' vocation was the church, his avocation was literature. His private library was reputed to be extensive, with particularly deep holdings in works of theology and ancient lore. He was a peripheral part of the literary circle of William Dean Howells and Henry James and a regular contributor to periodicals like *The Nation*. Even after he was bed-ridden in the 1880s, he continued his literary work.

William Dean Howells also visited Hercules at the house before writing *Annie Kilburn* (1888), a novel set in "Hatborough," a fictionalized Westborough. When later sent some photographs of Hercules by a mutual friend, he called them "splendid pictures of a splendid man," whose face was "Tolstoyan, Titanic." Because many of Hercules' literary essays were published in

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetJonah Warren House  
Westborough (Worcester Co.), MASection number 8 Page 8

periodicals without attribution, it would be difficult to reconstruct his entire corpus of writings. He was remembered in death by the *Chronotype*, however, as a "remarkable man" and "remarkably brilliant scholar" who was also an "exceedingly kind hearted man" who "counseled his children to be kind to the animal kingdom, of which he was very fond." Tax assessment records from 1898 indicate that the property had changed little since 1862. With Hercules' death in 1899, the house's period of significance comes to a close.

Hercules' four children inherited the house. It was the eldest who farmed the land, but the best known was Harold John Warren, president of Submarine Signal Co., and a pioneer in the development of Supersonic Electronic Detection Devices. His company developed the only effective submarine detectors used by the U.S. and British navies in the World War I. When the last of Hercules' children died in 1957, the house passed out of the hands of the immediate family. Most of the land originally attached to the house was sold off between 1957 and 1986, but the house itself is in an excellent state of preservation. The property retains a barn, which was in existence in 1803, several old stone walls, and a 270 foot section of the *Old Connecticut Path* that remains much as it must have looked in the late 18th century or early 19th century.

**Archaeological Significance**

Although several prehistoric sites have been recorded in the Westborough area, relatively few have been systematically studied resulting in limited interpretative value for known sites. This information indicates that any surviving sites in the town could potentially be significant, especially those with integrity indicating the potential for systematic study. Prehistoric sites in this area can contribute to a greater understanding of Native American subsistence and settlement patterns along the eastern edge of the Massachusetts uplands and the relationship of those sites to sites in the coastal lowlands. Prehistoric sites in this area can also be used to test hypotheses relating to prehistoric settlement and subsistence in neighboring riverine drainages. The Hoxby-Warren House lies within the Sudbury area of the larger Concord/Sudbury/Assabet/Merrimack River drainage. The Blackstone River drainage lies in neighboring towns to the south and west. Prehistoric sites in this area may contain information indicating the extent to which these drainages and their cultural/natural resources influenced the social, cultural, and economic systems of people who lived in the area.

(continued)

**United States Department of the Interior  
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Historic archaeological resources described above have the potential to document structural and land use changes that have occurred on the property during its occupation as well as the social, cultural and economic changes that characterized the occupants. Construction features associated with different portions of the house can help document exactly when the house was constructed as well as when specific changes were implemented to the original construction. Archaeological survey and testing of the area around the house and barn can locate additional outbuilding sites and determine to what extent earlier structures may have been incorporated into existing structures such as the barn. This form of testing can also locate the types of occupational related features which were present and their precise locations. This data may determine whether the existing well dates to the original construction of the house or whether an additional well is present. The location of privies can also be determined. Bathroom facilities, plumbing, electricity and heat were not installed until 1957 indicating other means of providing these services were present until recently. Detailed analysis of the contents of occupational related features can also provide important information especially relating to the inhabitants of the house. This information can range from studies including the general health and lifestyles of the inhabitants to specific information relating to their family structure and social and economic status in the town. The analysis of trash areas can also help these studies as well as contributing information on the nature and relative importance of agriculture to the farm and families over time and the importance of manufacturing items such as shoes and straw hats.

**(end)**

JONAH WARREN HOUSE  
Name of Property

WORCESTER, MA  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 1.24 acres

**UTM References See continuation sheet.**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1. 19	285140	4680440	3. 19	285300	4680400
Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
2. 19	285300	4680470	4. 19	285190	4680360
Zone	Easting	Northing	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 Blair and Caroline Hoxby, owners, with Betsy Friedberg, MHC, NR Director

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date September 1998

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 Blair & Caroline Hoxby

street & number 64 Warren Street telephone 508-898-3180

city or town Westborough state MA zip code 01581

**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. NPS Form 10-90 OMB No.

1024-0018  
(Rev. 10-90)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

Jonah Warren House  
Westborough (Worcester Co.), MA

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(continued)

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**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

**Boundary Description**

The property is plot 100 on Westborough property map 10 (1997), lying between Upton Road and Warren Street.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary retains the remnants of the original Warren farmstead as it currently stands, and includes a portion of the original Old Connecticut Path.

(end)

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Jonah Warren House  
Westborough (Worcester Co.), MA

Section number photo Page 1

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**PHOTOGRAPHS**

Taken by Blair Hoxby, 1997.

Negatives are the property of the photographer

1. Oblique view of the house, seen from Warren Street (camera facing NE). The Old Connecticut Path passes through the granite posts in foreground.
2. Old Connecticut Path (camera facing W) with house in background
3. Barn (camera facing SW)

(end)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Warren, Jonah, House

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Worcester

DATE RECEIVED: 10/05/98      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 10/20/98  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 11/05/98      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/19/98  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 98001331

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    \_\_\_\_\_ DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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



Jonah Warren House

64 Warren St.

Westborough, MA 01581

Blair Hoxby, 5/14/94, photographer

Negative, property of Blair Hoxby 2 of 24

Oblique view of house, seen from Warren St.

The Old Connecticut Path passes through the granite posts seen toward the bottom of the picture.

PHOTO 1



Zonal Warren House

64 Warren St.

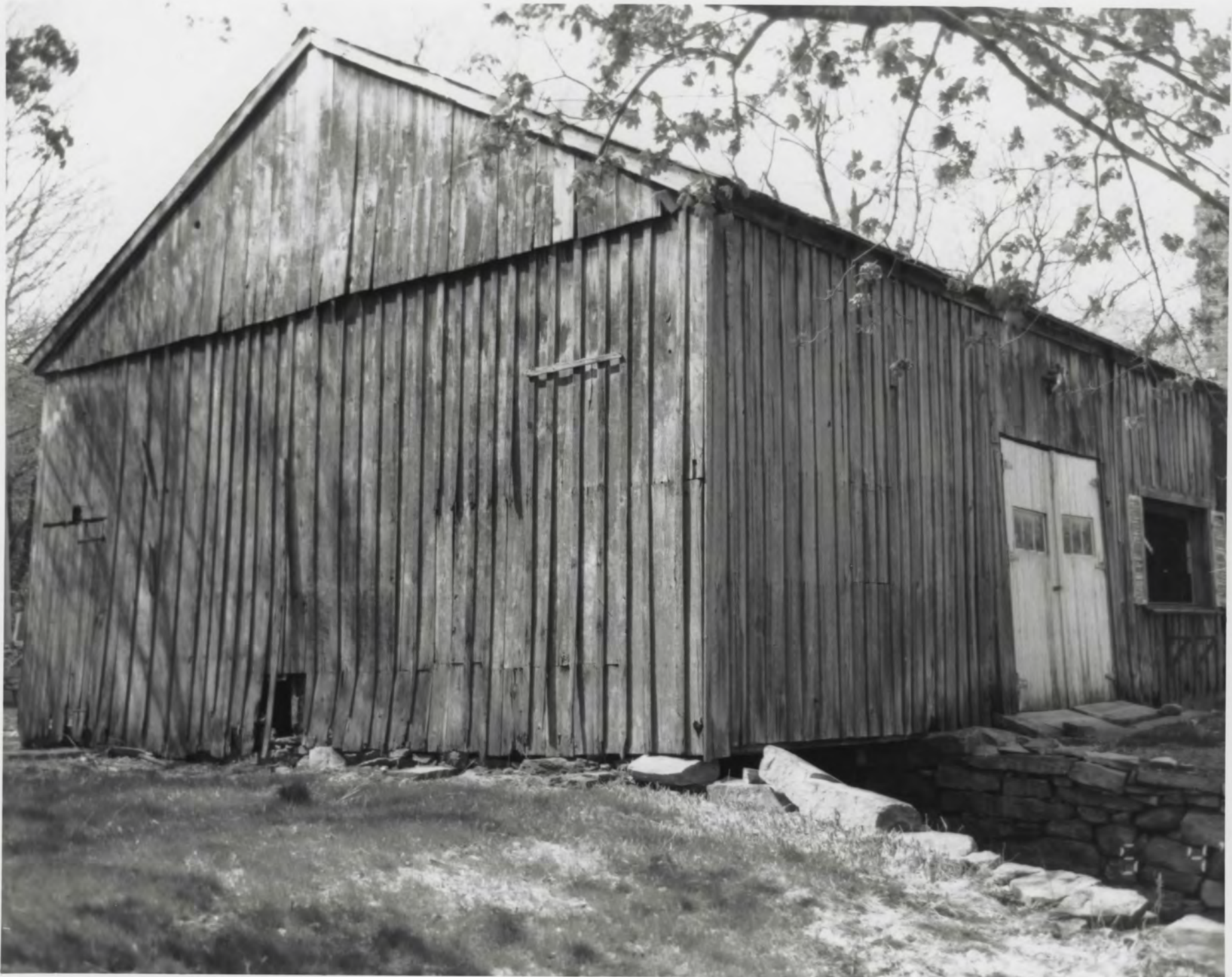
Westborough, MA 01581

Blair Hily, photographer, 5/14/99

Negative property of Blair Hily, 11 of 24

Old Connecticut Path, looking east-west,  
with the Zonal Warren House in the  
background.

PHOTO 2



The Genah Warren House

64 Warren St.

Westborough, MA 01581

Blair Aply, photographer, 5/4/97

Negative, property of Blair Aply 21 of 24

Barn of the Genah Warren property, looking south-west  
The house itself is located beyond the barn in this view.

PHOTO 3

JONAH WARREN HOUSE AND BARN

# Milford MASSACHUSETTS

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



1982

Produced by the United States Geological Survey in cooperation with Massachusetts Department of Public Works  
 Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey  
 Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1960. Field checked 1981. Map edited 1982  
 Supersedes Milford and Grafton 1:25,000-scale maps dated 1968 and 1969

Projection and 1000-meter grid, zone 19: Universal Transverse Mercator  
 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Massachusetts coordinate system, mainland zone. 1927 North American Datum  
 To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 6 meters south and 40 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks  
 There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map  
 CONTOUR INTERVAL: 3 METERS  
 NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929  
 CONTROL ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER  
 OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.3 METER

THIS MAP COMPLES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

CONVERSION TABLE		DECLINATION DIAGRAM		ADJOINING MAPS		
Meters	Feet	MAGNETIC		1	2	3
1	3.2808	15° 15'		1	2	3
2	6.5616	15° 15'		4	5	
3	9.8424	15° 15'		6	7	8
4	13.1232	15° 15'				
5	16.4040	15° 15'				
6	19.6848	15° 15'				
7	22.9656	15° 15'				
8	26.2464	15° 15'				
9	29.5272	15° 15'				
10	32.8080	15° 15'				

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

UTM grid convergency (GN) and 1983 magnetic declination at center of map  
 Diagram is approximate

1: Worcester North  
 2: Middleborough  
 3: Framingham  
 4: Westover South  
 5: Middlesex  
 6: Cheshire  
 7: Franklin

FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092

### Topographic Map Symbols

- Primary highway, hard surface
- Secondary highway, hard surface
- Light duty road, hard or improved surface
- Unimproved road; trail
- Route marker: Interstate; U. S.; State
- Railroad: standard gage; narrow gage
- Bridge: drawbridge
- Fourbridge: overpass; underpass
- Built-up 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
- Well; water well; spring
- Mine shaft; prospect; adit or cave
- Control: historical station; vertical station; spot elevation
- Contours: index; intermediate; supplementary; depression
- Distorted surface: strip mine, lava, sand
- Bathymetric contours: index; intermediate
- Perennial lake and stream; intermittent lake and stream
- Rapids, large and small; falls, large and small
- Submerged marsh; marsh, swamp
- Land subject to controlled inundation; woodland
- Sink; meadow
- Orchard; vineyard

A pamphlet describing topographic maps is available on request



JONAH WARREN HOUSE  
 64 WARREN ST  
 WESTBOROUGH  
 (WORCESTER CO.) MA



**LEGEND**  
 PARCEL NUMBERS ..... 1  
 ADJACENT MAPS ..... 2  
 MATCH LINE .....

REVISIONS BY:  
 GUERARD SURVEY CO. & ASSOC.  
 11 SUMMER ST., WESTBOROUGH, MASS.  
 For Assessment Purposes  
 Not to be used for Conveyances

REVISIONS AFTER  
 1/1/88 BY:  
 CHRISTINE L. MCULTY

Revision Date	Lots Changed
7/22/83	88, 87, 131, 132, 137-141
3/14/84	5, 6A, 63, 63A
1/1/86	47, 48, 63, ADDED 152-154
9/1/88	100, 100A, 140-147
1/1/88	99, 137, 142, ADDED 83B, 99A
1/1/88	15, 16, 18, 19, ADDED
1/1/88	BEAT 5, ADDED
	CONNECTICUT PATH & GABLE RIDGE ROAD

Revision Date: 7/8/89  
 Lots Changed: 184, 184A, 63A/MS Altered

PROPERTY MAP  
 TOWN OF WESTBOROUGH  
 WORCESTER COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS  
 PREPARED BY  
 JAMES W. SEWALL COMPANY OLD TOWN, MAINE  
 SCALE 1 INCH = 400 ± FEET

Revised To  
 January 1, 1997



**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

October 2, 1998

Ms. Carol Shull  
National Register of Historic Places  
Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
Mail Stop 2280, Suite 400  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240



Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

Jonah Warren House, 64 Warren Rd., Westborough (Worcester Co.), 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: Blair & Caroline Hoxby  
Jacqueline Tidman, Chair, Westborough Historical Commission  
Joan Bentley, Chair, Westborough Board of Selectmen  
James Robbins, Chair, Planning Board