

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Sheffield Plain Historic District  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number roughly one-half mile of U.S. Route 7 south N/A not for publication  
city, town Sheffield from Cook Rd. intersection N/A vicinity  
state Massachusetts code 025 county Berkshire code 003 zip code 01257

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>23</u>	<u>5</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>27</u>	<u>9</u> objects
			<u>9</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A  
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.  See continuation sheet.

Valerie A. Talmage  
Signature of certifying official  
**Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical Commission;**  
State or Federal agency and bureau State Historic Preservation Officer

Date May 11, 1988

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

5. 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:) \_\_\_\_\_

Melanie Lynn Entered in the National Register 6-23-88  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**6. Function or Use** Sheffield Plain Historic District, Sheffield, Massachusetts

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwellingDomestic/secondary structureFunerary/cemeteryCommerce/specialty store

continued

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwellingDomestic/secondary structureDomestic/multiple dwellingCulture/monument/marker

continued

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Mid-19th Century: Greek RevivalEarly Republic: FederalColonial: GeorgianEarly 20th c.: Bungalow

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stonewalls woodroof asphalt

other \_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Sheffield Plain Historic District, Sheffield, Massachusetts, is a rural, residential area of twenty-seven acres located on U.S. Route 7 in north-central Sheffield. The district comprises most of the buildings of Sheffield Plain, a tract of fertile upland between Hubbard Brook to the west, and the Housatonic River about 400-500 yards to the east. Encompassing buildings on both sides of Route 7 as well as the town's earliest extant structure on adjacent Cook Road, the residential district was largely built in two phases, ca. 1733 - 1792, and ca. 1810 - 1858. One early 20th-century bungalow was constructed toward the end of the period of significance. Route 7, the primary north-south highway through town, connects and defines the settlements at Sheffield Plain and Sheffield Center approximately one mile to the south. The linear Sheffield Plain district, which extends along Route 7 about 1 1/2-mile south from the intersection with Cook Road, is distinguished from mid- to late 20th-century construction to the north, and a sudden decline in settlement to the south. Swampy land bordering the Housatonic River and a railroad line precluded development of land to the east and west, respectively.

The district includes the earliest settlement core and first town center of Sheffield. The original settling committee's allotment of land to the earliest proprietors is reflected in the district's compactness and the generally regular (twenty-five to forty-five feet) setback of houses from the road. The major open space is a triangular plot of land at the northern end of the district where Cook Road meets Route 7. This plot is the site of the old Training Ground and is believed to be the location of the town's first meetinghouse. Twenty-eight buildings (twenty-three contributing, five noncontributing), four contributing sites (including two early cemeteries), and four objects are included in the district. Of the contributing buildings, eighteen were built as residences. House types include capes, cottages, larger farmhouses, and bungalows; all are 1 1/2- or 2 1/2-story frame houses with clapboard siding. The majority of buildings represent vernacular interpretations of the Georgian, Federal, and Greek Revival styles.

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Function or Use

Historic Functions continued

Commerce/professional

Defense/training ground

Commerce/restaurant

Agriculture/agricultural outbuilding

Current Functions continued

Commerce/specialty store

Social/meeting hall

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The Sheffield Plain Historic District maintains a high degree of architectural integrity. Facades remain unchanged for the most part, and additions to existing buildings consist primarily of rear ells and porches. The only losses of original buildings are the partial destruction by fire of an early tavern in the 1920s, and the relocation to Sheffield Center of a ca. 1820 law office threatened by demolition in 1974. Intrusions are modest and do not diminish the integrity of the district to a significant degree. Among them, a garden and flower shop (ca. 1950) is small and unobtrusive and the American Legion Hall (1968) sits well back from the highway. The most significant modern intrusion is the traffic on Route 7, a well-travelled highway that passes through Berkshire County from the Connecticut to the Vermont borders. All of the district's contributing buildings are now residences; two serve as apartment or boarding houses, and four are also used as antique shops. The resources of the Sheffield Plain Historic District demonstrate the gradual growth, with little change, of Sheffield Plain over a period of two hundred years.

The earliest building type to appear in the district are residences known as Cape Cod houses. These houses of rectangular massing are 1 1/2 stories, with gable roofs and interior chimneys. The two oldest structures on Sheffield Plain, built ca. 1726 and ca. 1740 and now ells for later houses, appear to have been built originally as Cape Cod houses. Another cape, once the ell of the burned Stage Tavern, is now a residence. Two other capes have been maintained as residences since their construction.

The Augustus Stone House (#11, MHC #35, Photo 5) is the best-preserved of the district's capes. Built in 1761, the 1 1/2-story frame house has a gable roof with a rebuilt center chimney, clapboard siding, and thin corner boards. Windows contain double-hung, 12/8 sash. The center entrance of the three-bay front has a simple door surround with cornice. The Stone House has been considerably extended in the rear to include an attached barn, summer kitchen, and garage, all built at an unknown date.

A second cape on the west side of Route 7 is the former kitchen ell of the Stage Tavern. Construction of the cape-type ell (#9, MHC #36, ca. 1790) is believed to have predated the 2 1/2-story main portion of the tavern that burned in the 1920s. The tavern's original pine-paneled keeping room remains in the existing building. This three-quarter cape has a four-bay facade with a second-bay entry that is shielded by an entry porch with a gable roof. The house has been extended with a 1 1/2-story addition to the rear. The third cape was constructed ca. 1805 at the southern end of the district. Unlike the two earlier capes, the Abner Hubbard House (#14, MHC #147), a three-bay cape, is oriented gable-end to the road. A two-story addition with a one-story Italianate porch was added to the south side, ca. 1865.

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A progression to larger farmhouses in Sheffield Plain's residential architecture was first seen with the construction of the Noble-Barnum House (#1, MHC #9, Photo 1), which incorporates the 1 1/2-story frame house built ca. 1726 by Matthew Noble, Sheffield's first white settler. This structure is believed to be oldest extant house in Berkshire County. The original house, whose center chimney contains a large kitchen fireplace and a beehive oven, was retained as an ell when Noble built a 2 1/2-story frame house facing Cook Road to the south in 1760. This farmhouse has a five-bay facade and a single-pile, central passage plan. Windows generally contain double-hung, 12/12 sash, and the fifty-inch wide entrance is lighted with a six-light rectangular transom. The house has thin corner boards, and prominent frieze boards may be evidence of a later effort to update the house during the Greek Revival period.

The Elijah Hubbard House (#12, MHC #118, Photo 7) is a Georgian House with a larger plan, double- instead of single-pile. Built ca. 1770 by the grandson of Rev. Jonathan Hubbard, the 2 1/2-story frame house has clapboard siding, thin corner boards, a gable roof, and a brick center chimney with five fireplaces and a bake oven. Windows contain 6/6 sash, and the front entry has glazed sidelights and a blind semicircular fanlight. There is evidence that the house was divided by deed in 1814, which may explain the enclosed rear staircase and a double kitchen entry.

Another Georgian house that has been considerably enlarged at the sides and rear is the Rev. John Keep House (1774, #25, MHC #37). Built by Sheffield's second minister, the frame building is similar to the Hubbard House -- 2 1/2 stories, five-bay facade, double-pile plan, gable roof with brick center chimney--but the door surround of the entry has been altered. Additions include wings to the north and south, and a rear shed roof addition to the east. The brick center chimney has a built-in smoke chamber on the second floor.

Earliest of the Greek Revival houses in the Sheffield Plain district is the Rev. Jonathan Hubbard House (#23, MHC #7, Photo 3), which includes as an ell the second oldest (ca. 1740) structure on Sheffield Plain. The ell has a five-bay front, center chimney, and porch that appears to have been added later. In 1810, the present 2 1/2-story frame house was built facing Route 7. The new house has a three-bay facade with entry in the southernmost bay, and two interior chimneys. The pedimented gable with wide entablature is a design feature that would be repeated several times in the construction of later Plain houses along Route 7. Windows have 6/6 sash, and an elliptical attic window appears in the gable. Ornament on the Hubbard House is primarily confined to the entry, where an entry porch consists of a pedimented gable roof supported by two Doric columns.

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Variations on the three-bay, pedimented gable front of the Rev. Hubbard House include the William Hubbell House (#16, MHC #84, ca. 1815), the John B. Bush House (#24, MHC #83, ca. 1827) and the Francis Crippen House (#24, MHC #83, ca. 1827). Entrances in all three Greek Revival houses are located in the southernmost bay of the three-bay facades. The Hubbell House entrance is flanked by pilasters, the Crippen House entrance is yielded by a ca. 1880 bracketed door hood, and the original pedimented entry porch of the Bush House has been enclosed.

A Greek Revival house of a unique type in the district is the Return E. Jones House (1829-1835, #5, MHC #6). The farmhouse is a 2 1/2-story frame building of rectangular massing with a shallow hipped roof and clapboard siding. The center entrance of the three-bay east facade has a classical door surround with pilasters supporting a wide entablature inset with small rectangular attic windows. A one-story porch with a hipped roof spans the length of the north (five-bay) elevation. The Jones House is stylistically similar to the Sheffield Town Hall (MHC #93), a larger, brick building constructed in 1840 at Sheffield Center one mile south of the Plain.

Six Greek Revival cottages were built in the Plain district in the first half of the 19th century. Each is a 1 1/2-story building oriented gable end to the street, and having a three-bay facade with a center entrance. The earliest cottage, built as a law office (ca. 1820, MHC #8) has a pedimented gable in the manner of the Plain's larger Greek Revival farmhouses. Threatened by demolition in 1974, the cottage was moved to the grounds of the Sheffield Historical Society at Sheffield Center. Adjacent to the Law Office Site (#17) are the district's best preserved cottages, the Shoe Shop (#18, MHC #88, Photo 4) and the Lucius Little Office (#19, MHC #88, Photo 4), both now used as residences. The Jonathan Graham House (#15, MHC #70, Photo 6) included a blacksmith shop, carriage shop, and coal shed. The basement still retains the original double forge used by Jonathan Graham, a blacksmith who lived in the carriage house portion of the building. During a remodeling in 1949 a six-foot frame opening for carriages was discovered in front of the house. The attached garage was added in 1949. Two other cottages across the highway from each other, the Lewis Parsons House (#20, MHC #69) and the Bush-Crippen House (#8, MHC #146) have been expanded with additions. The Bush-Crippen House especially was substantially remodeled, ca. 1875, when a jerkin-head roof, eave brackets, a Romanesque arch double window, and a pair of bay windows were added.

Two vernacular farmhouses in the northern end of the district near the Old Training Ground are Federal style houses in massing with Victorian porches. Each of the buildings is frame, 2 1/2 stories, with gable roofs, center chimneys, clapboard siding, and round attic windows in the gable ends. The Wheeler House (ca. 1845, #2, MHC #81) has a five-bay facade and a one-story bracketed porch wrapped around the east (Route 7) and south (Cook Road) elevations. Other distinguishing details seen for the first time on the Plain

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are eave brackets, aprons beneath the first floor windows, and a bay window on the south elevation. The building is currently an apartment house. South of the Training Ground, the Douglas House (1853-1858, #4, MHC #80) is similar to the Walker House but has a three-bay front. A two-story, Italianate porch was added to the center entrance on the north side at an unknown date, most likely the third quarter of the 19th century.

The last contributing building in the district is a 1 1/2-story frame bungalow, the Irving Shook House (ca. 1910, #7). Shook's son, Douglas Shook, built a bungalow similar to his father's immediately to the south after World War II (ca. 1947, #H). Neither bungalow has a porch. The latter house was constructed after the end of the district's period of significance.

Other noncontributing buildings in the Sheffield Plain district are compatible in size, scale, and materials with contributing buildings. In addition to the Douglas Shook House, the two most substantial buildings of recent construction are the Law Garden Shop (ca. 1950, #G) and the American Legion Hall (1968, #D). Their wood-frame construction blends with the architectural character of the district's 18th- and 19th-century buildings. Similarly, the Noble-Barnum garage (1974, #A) and the William Hubbell garage (ca. 1950, #I) are frame, secondary structures that do not detract from the architectural integrity of the district as a whole.

The historic district includes three more contributing sites in addition to the Law Office Site discussed above. The Old Training Ground and First Meetinghouse Site (ca. 1735, #3, Photo 3) constitutes a geographically definable area at the northern end of the district where Cook Road meets Route 7. The town's first meetinghouse, demolished in the second half of the 18th century, is believed to have been constructed where the American Legion Hall is today. The open space between the first meetinghouse and Route 7 was used as the militia training ground until the town's militia company disbanded in 1836. The Plain Cemetery (#13, MHC #800, Photo 8) at the southernmost end of the district is the town's oldest burial ground, with nearly 300 gravestones dating from 1759 to 1902. The Plain Cemetery unfortunately contains many shattered stones. The Noble-Kellog Cemetery (#22, MHC #804), the town's second burial ground, contains approximately fifty gravestones that range from 1769 to 1974.

Two commemorative objects on the Training Ground, a deactivated howitzer (#E, Photo 2) and a memorial marker (#F, Photo 2), were placed there ca. 1980. While they were not present during the period of significance, they are in keeping with the historically military nature of that site. A flagpole erected southwest of the Noble-Barnum House in 1976 does not detract from the appearance of the house. Finally, a street marker at the northwest corner of the Route 7 intersection with Cook Road (#C, ca. 1980) does not diminish the visual qualities of the streetscape in the vicinity of that intersection.

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### Archaeology Description

While no prehistoric sites are currently recorded in the district, it is highly likely that sites are present. Four prehistoric sites have been recorded in the general area (within one mile). The physical characteristics of the district, a well-drained terrace overlooking the Housatonic River, Schenob Brook, and large wetlands immediately to the west, would have made this an attractive area for native settlement and subsistence activities. Given the large size of the district and controlled historic development, it is highly probable that sites are present.

There is also a high potential for significant historical archaeological remains on the property. Controlled testing and excavation may indicate whether outbuildings and occupation-related features (trash pits, privies, wells) survive with 18th- and 19th-century residential, business, religious, and civic structures still extant in the district. Structural remains may also survive of 18th- and 19th-century buildings that no longer exist above ground.

**8. Statement of Significance** Sheffield Plain Historic District, Sheffield, Massachusetts

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
Exploration/settlement  
Social history  
Community development

Period of Significance  
ca. 1726-1920

Significant Dates

Cultural Affiliation  
N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Sheffield Plain Historic District, Sheffield, Massachusetts, is a well-preserved linear village of residences and small commercial establishments constructed in the 18th and 19th centuries. The district extends approximately 1/2-mile along U.S. Route 7 between the Housatonic River and Hubbard Brook. Sheffield Plain was the town's early core settlement from 1733 until 1760, when a new meetinghouse was constructed at Sheffield Center, a developing crossroads community located one mile south of the Plain. An ensuing shift in the town's institutional and commercial focus from the Plain to the Center furthered the predominantly residential development of the Plain, with the majority of residential buildings in the district constructed between 1810 and 1858. A few small commercial establishments, all since converted to residences, also date to the Plain's growth period in the first half of the 19th century. Twenty-three buildings and four sites contribute to the district's architectural and historical integrity. The district includes the town's old training ground and the first town burial grounds. The relationship of buildings and sites to each other, to the highway, and to the landscape reflects the earliest patterns of development when land was first allocated to proprietors by the original settling committee. Retaining integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association, the Sheffield Plain Historic District fulfills Criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places and is significant on the local level.

The town of Sheffield is located in the southwestern corner of Massachusetts and, with a land area of 31,150 acres, is the second largest town in Berkshire County. Sheffield is in the Housatonic River Valley between the steep hills of the Taconic Range to the west, and the rough hilly land and low hills of the Berkshire Barrier to the east. Settlement of the town lagged behind its neighbors to the east until 1724, when a fertile tract of land eighteen miles long and twelve miles wide was purchased from the Mohican Indians for "Four Hundred and Sixty Pounds, three Barrels of Sider and thirty quarts of Rum." The Purchase, which comprised the entire southwestern corner of Massachusetts, included all of the present towns of Sheffield, Great Barrington, Egremont and

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Mount Washington to the south and much of Alford, Stockbridge, West Stockbridge, and Lee to the north. Two townships were carved from the purchased area, the Upper Housatonic Township to the north and the Lower Housatonic Township, contiguous with the Massachusetts-Connecticut boundary line, to the south. The lower township included the present town of Sheffield.

Matthew Noble was the first white settler of Sheffield, having come from Westfield in the fall of 1725. After spending the winter with the friendly Indians, he returned to Westfield in the spring and brought back to Sheffield his sixteen-year-old daughter, Hannah. Noble built his house ca. 1726, on the highest ground, currently known as the intersection of U.S. Route 7 and Cook Road. Preeminent in the affairs of the Lower Housatonic Township, Noble issued the warrant for the first town meeting, held on Sheffield Plain in January 1733. Several members of the Noble family were elected to positions-- including town clerk, constable, and fence viewer-- in the new Town of Sheffield, which was incorporated on June 22, 1733.

Land was allocated by a court-appointed settling committee to those petitioners who were judged most likely to establish a permanent settlement. The settling committee was partial to the Sheffield Plain due to its fertile soil, flat terrain, and plentiful supply of timber for building. The Plain, and area of high ground drained by the Housatonic River and Hubbard Brook, had good moisture conditions because of its location in a triangle bordered by the river, the brook, and a pond (now Mill Pond) to the northwest, which also supplied fish and waterfowl for sustenance. A dam constructed later in the century on Hubbard Brook generated water power for a saw and grist mill south of the Plain settlement.

For the purpose of land allocation, the Lower Housatonic Township was partitioned into five divisions, three of which fell within the present boundary of Sheffield. The remaining two, later known as the North Parish of Sheffield, were incorporated as the Town of Great Barrington in 1761. Shares in the Lower Township were sold to thirty-nine prospective settlers, and a lottery was then conducted to determine impartially where each proprietor's land would be located. Care was taken to ensure that each proprietor received a fair share of both meadow and upland. The strip-like arrangement of lots gave each settler narrow frontage along the road that passed north to south through the township (now Route 7). The settlers were allowed no more than three years to build and occupy a suitable dwelling and to cultivate the prescribed amount of land, twelve acres. Most of the houses constructed on Sheffield Plain were situated within forty-five feet of the road.

The earliest development of the Sheffield Plain settlement was tied to its establishment as a meetinghouse location. Construction of a meetinghouse (ca.

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1735) on the Plain gave the sparsely settled new town its earliest institutional focus. The meetinghouse is believed to have been built just west of the Training Ground. The town's first minister, Rev. Jonathan Hubbard, was the only minister to occupy the pulpit in the first meetinghouse. A native of Sunderland, he was chosen minister for life and ordained in Sheffield in 1735, an event made notable by the presence of the eminent theologian Jonathan Edwards of Northampton and Samuel Hopkins of Springfield. Rev. Hubbard's House, constructed ca. 1740, remains in the historic district today as the ell to a later Greek Revival house.

Under Rev. Hubbard's ministry the farming community of Sheffield grew until it was the most populous in the county during the French and Indian War of the mid-18th century. The town's militia, comprised of local farmers, was well represented on expeditions to Crown Point (New York) and other localities, and showed equal strength in numbers during the Revolution as parts of the Berkshire regiment, which fought in Roxbury during the siege of Boston in 1775-1776. Sheffield militiamen drilled on the Training Ground on the Plain from the town's early days until 1836, when the infantry company was disbanded.

Sheffield Plain continued to develop primarily as a residential area once the institutional and commercial focus of the town shifted to Sheffield Center in the third quarter of the 18th century. The Center, located approximately one mile south and separated from the Plain by Hubbard Brook, was the new location for a much larger second meetinghouse constructed in 1760. The first meetinghouse on the Plain was then demolished, sometime before the Revolution. The Plain continued to be home to Sheffield's ministers, however, into the early nineteenth century.

Three more houses were constructed on the Plain in the 1760s and early 1770s, including the Noble House addition, the first of the historic district's large farmhouses (#1, MHC #9, Photo 1). Sheffield's second minister, the Rev. John Keep, built a manse (#25, MHC #37) across the main road from the vacated first meetinghouse in the northern end of the historic district. Rev. Keep resided at the manse for twelve years. His successor and Sheffield's third minister, Rev. Ephraim Judson, occupied the manse from 1791 to 1813. Rev. Judson was a popular and persuasive preacher, during whose ministry sixty members were added to the church roles. By the mid-1770s, the Plain's two cemeteries were officially recognized by the town. The earliest grave at the Plain Cemetery (#13, MHC #800, Photo 8) at the southernmost end of the historic district is dated 1759. Land for the Noble-Kellog Cemetery (#22, MHC #804) at the center of the district was bequeathed by Elisha Noble. The earliest grave in the cemetery is dated 1767, and Sheffield's first three ministers, all former residents of the Plain, are buried there.

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In the late 18th century, the north-south road through the Plain and the Center was a segment of the stagecoach route between Hartford (Connecticut) and Albany (New York). Two taverns were built on the Plain for accomodation of travelers. Southernmost of the two was the Stage Tavern, purchased in 1797 by Eli Ensign, who operated the inn through the early 19th century. The Stage Tavern, a popular gathering place for the local militia, burned in the 1920s; its kitchen ell is extant as a residence (#9, MHC #36).

During the first half of the 19th century, the town of Sheffield experienced its largest population growth and the Plain its most rapid development. In 1801, the Twelfth Massachusetts Turnpike Corporation received a franchise to build a road from the Connecticut border northwesterly across Sheffield and Egremont to the easterly end of the Hudson Turnpike. The section that passed through the Plain is now Route 7, and the turnpike corporation appears to have incorporated the older existing road through the Plain that was laid out at an unknown date. In the next forty years the Plain community flourished with the construction along the turnpike of substantial farmhouses and a number of small shops. A general store (no longer extant), lawyer's office (moved), blacksmith shop, carriage shop, coal shed, and shoe shop were all functioning at the southern end of the Plain district by the late 1830s. Most of these residential and commercial buildings survive in residential uses, and are the principle character-defining features of the historic district.

The Plain also served as the location of two area schools in the northern end of the historic district in the 19th century. Sheffield Academy, a wood-frame Greek Revival style building, was constructed on the Training Ground and first meetinghouse site, ca. 1840, following the disbanding of the militia. The school remained in operation through the town's peak population period in the mid-19th century. Vacated in 1869, the school building was purchased by Cyrus French who moved it to the Center in 1871 and converted the building to a variety store. The district #7 grammar school next occupied the site until the building was destroyed by fire in 1903. The appearance of this school is unknown. The Training Ground remained as open space until the late 1960s, when the American Legion Post 340 constructed a meeting hall at the western end of the lot.

Sheffield Plain experienced a limited amount of new residential construction following the opening of the Housatonic Railroad (later the New York, New Haven, and Hartford), which operated through the town beginning in 1842. The tracks, which run west of the Plain, still carry freight traffic. From 1858 to the early 20th century, however, there was no new construction on the Plain. The roads emanating from the Plain were still dirt roads with minimal traffic. Small shops and stores relocated from the Plain one mile south to Sheffield Center, which became a flourishing crossroads community. The Sheffield Academy building was moved to the Center, and the town's railroad depot was built there.

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Historically, settlement on the Plain corresponded with the strength of the town's subsistence farming economy. Farming remained the town's principal business through the end of the 19th century. Yet, the population in Sheffield steadily declined after a peak of 2,769 persons in 1850. Industrial centers developed in towns north of Sheffield such as Pittsfield and North Adams in the third and fourth quarters of the 19th century, during which time the population in Berkshire County shifted dramatically in favor of the more industrialized towns and away from the older farming communities. The first new house to appear in the Plain historic district in about fifty years was constructed prior to the town's population nadir--1,435 persons in 1920.

The period of significance ends in 1920, when the predominantly agricultural emphasis of the historic district began to give way with the beginning of tourism and the subdivision of small-scale farms. The rising popularity of automobile travel since the 1920s linked Sheffield to the larger Berkshire region tourist circuit, and prompted the opening of many antique shops in the town. A steady increase in Sheffield's population since 1920 is due to the town's attraction as a retreat from city life, and more recently, to the establishment of two plastics companies that employ a large number of local residents. Sheffield's current population approaches its mid-19th-century peak.

A virtual halt in building activity on the Plain for nearly a century, and the Plain's enduring residential character, have contributed to the overall maintenance of the historic district's architectural and historical integrity. The appearance of the district's resources has not changed since the accompanying photographs were taken, some in the late 1970s. Since ca. 1950, a limited amount of new construction has occurred in the Plain district, but this construction has been sympathetic with the spirit of the district's 18th- and 19th-century buildings. Active preservation efforts have included the relocation of the ca. 1820 Law Office of Parker L. Hall, a lawyer who represented the town in the state legislature for two terms, and who opened a law office on the Plain ca. 1822. The office was moved to the grounds of the Sheffield Historical Society at the Center in 1974 to save the building from demolition. Today, Sheffield is a widely known antiques center, and the Sheffield Plain Historic District reflects the town's rural and historic charm.

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Archaeology Significance

Since patterns of prehistoric occupation in Sheffield are poorly documented, any surviving sites would be significant. Sites in this area may contribute to our understanding of prehistoric settlement and subsistence along the interior Housatonic drainage and the relationships of people in that area to native population to the west in New York or to the east in the Connecticut River Valley.

Historic archaeological remains described above have the potential for providing detailed information on the changing social, cultural, and economic patterns that characterized rural life in the oldest town in Berkshire County. Remains may exist detailing Sheffield's initial settlement as a frontier town, later 18th-century changes in the town's internal focus of settlement, and changes in Sheffield as industrial towns grew to the north.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Sheffield Plain Historic District,  
Sheffield, Massachusetts

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Major Bibliographic References

Unpublished sources

Sheffield Congregational Church Records. Files in Bushnell-Sage Library, Sheffield, Massachusetts.

Published sources

Brigham, Harry H. Historical Address on the Two Hundredth Anniversary of the First Meeting House in Sheffield. Sheffield: Howden Print Shop, 1935.

Child, Hamilton, Compiler. Gazetter of Berkshire County, Mass., 1725-1885. 1940

History of the County of Berkshire, Mass. By Gentlemen in the County, Clergymen, and Laymen (ed. by David D. Field). Pittsfield: Samuel W. Bush, 1829.

Preiss, Lillian. Sheffield: Frontier Town. North Adams, MA: Excelsior Printing Company, 1976.

Sheffield, Town of. Centennial Celebration of the Town of Sheffield, Berkshire County, Mass., by the secretaries appointed by the town Sheffield, 1876.

Taylor, Charles J. History of Great Barrington. Great Barrington: Berkshire Courier, 1862.

Wright, Harry Andrew, ed. Indian Deeds of Hampden County. Springfield, MA, 1905.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 1

Sheffield Plain Historic District,  
Sheffield, Massachusetts

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Geographical Data

UTM References

Quad: Ashley Falls  
Scale: 1:25000

<u>Point</u>	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
A	18	635830	4664590
B	18	636010	4664210
C	18	636080	4664880
D	18	636000	4664830
E	18	635800	4664420
F	18	635720	4664390
G	18	635670	4664480

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the Sheffield Plain Historic District are outlined on the attached composite assessors map prepared for the Sheffield Historical Commission. The district runs approximately 1/2-mile south along Route 7 from the Cook Road intersection, and follows existing property lines or a line of convenience approximately 200 feet from either side of Route 7.

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

# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 2

Sheffield Plain Historic District  
Sheffield, Massachusetts

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## Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Sheffield Plain Historic District were chosen to include the greatest concentration of 18th- and 19th-century residential and commercial buildings in the historic linear settlement. To the south lies Hubbard Brook and, one mile south, Sheffield Center. Buildings of mid- to late 20th-century construction line Route 7 to the north. The Housatonic River flows to the east and the Pennsylvania Central Railroad tracks run near the district's western boundary.

DISTRICT DATA SHEET  
SHEFFIELD PLAIN HISTORIC DISTRICT  
SHEFFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

<u>MAP #</u>	<u>LOT #</u>	<u>MHC #</u>	<u>HISTORIC NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>DATE OF CONSTRUCTION</u>	<u>STYLE</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	<u>RESOURCE</u>
1	32/4	9	Noble-Barnum House	Cook Road	1760 (ell, 1726)	Georgian	C	B
A		---	garage		1974	---	NC	B
B		---	flagpole		1976	---	NC	O
2	32/5	81	Wheeler House	Route 7	1845	mixed/Federal	C	B
C		---	Street Marker	Route 7	ca. 1980	---	NC	O
3	31/1	---	Old Training Ground/First Meetinghouse site	Route 7	1735	---	C	Si
D	31/1	---	American Legion Post 340	Route 7	ca. 1968	---	NC	B
E	31/1	---	Deactivated Howitzer	Route 7	ca. 1980	---	NC	O
F	31/1	---	Memorial Marker	Route 7	ca. 1980	---	NC	O
4	31/22-23	80	Lucy A. Douglas House	Route 7	1853-1858	mix/Federal	C	B
5	31/21	6	Return E. Jones House	Route 7	1829-1835	Greek Revival	C	B
G	31/19	---	James Law Garden Shop	Route 7	ca. 1950	---	NC	B
6	31/17	87	John B. Bush House	Route 7	1827	Greek Revival	NC	B
H	31/16	---	Douglas Shook House	Route 7	ca. 1947	Bungalow	NC	B
7	31/16	---	Irving Shook House	Route 7	ca. 1910	Bungalow	C	B
8	31/15/W	146	Bush-Crippen House	Route 7	ca. 1858	Greek Revival	C	B
9	31/11/W	36	Stage Tavern ell	Route 7	ca. 1790	Federal	C	B

## SHEFFIELD PLAIN HISTORIC DISTRICT/2

<u>MAP #</u>	<u>LOT #</u>	<u>MHC #</u>	<u>HISTORIC NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>DATE OF CONSTRUCTION</u>	<u>STYLE</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	<u>RESOUR</u>
10	31/104/W	---	Peek-Cassidy House	Route 7	ca. 18101	Federal	C	B
11	31/9/W	35	Augustus Stone House	Route 7	1761	Georgain	C	B
12	31/8/W	118	Elijah Hubbard House	Route 7	ca. 1770	Georgian	C	Si
13	31/7/W	800	Plain Cemetery	Route 7	mid-1770s	---	C	B
14	31/15/E	147	Abner Hubbard House	Route 7	ca. 1805	Federal	C	B
15	31/14/E	70	Johnathan Graham House	Route 7	1835	Greek Revival	C	B
16	31/13/E	84	Willaim Hubbell House	Route 7	ca. 1815	Greek Revival	C	B
I		---	garage		ca. 1950	---	NC	B
17		8	Site of Parker Hall Law Office	Route 7	ca. 1820	---	C	Si
18	31/11/E	88	Shoe Shop	Route 7	ca. 1835	Greek Revival	C	B
19	31/11/E	88	Lucius Little Office	Route 7	ca. 1835	Greek Revival	C	B
20	31/10/E	69	Lewis Parsons House	Route 7	1843	Greek Revival	C	B
21	31/17	---	barn		ca. 1850	---	C	B
22	31/9/E	804	Noble-Kellogg Cemetery	Route 7	mid-1770s	---	C	Si
23	31/8/E	7	Rev. Johnathan Hubbard House	Route 7	1810 (e11,1740)	Greek Revival	C	B
24	31/6/E	83	Francis Crippen House	Route 7	1827	Greek Revival	C	B
25	31/4	37	Rev. John Keep House	Route 7	1774	Georgian	C	B
26		---	carriage house		ca. 1920	---	C	B

## SHEFFIELD PLAIN HISTORIC DISTRICT/3

<u>MAP #</u>	<u>LOT #</u>	<u>MHC #</u>	<u>HISTORIC NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>DATE OF CONSTRUCTION</u>	<u>STYLE</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	<u>RESOURC</u>
27	32/7	86	Asher Hubbard House	Route 7	1830-1840	Greek Revival	C	B

Vacant (open) lots: 36/6/W, 31/14/W, 31/20/W

KEY

C = contributing, NC = noncontributing  
 B = building, O = object, Si = site

The accompanying assessor's map is a composite of four maps. Some lot numbers repeat on both sides of Route 7 (i.e., 6 to 15 from north to south on the east side, and 6 to 15 from south to north on the west side). Therefore, duplicate lot numbers have been indicated as follows:

31/15/W = Map 31, Lot 15, West side of Route 7

31/15/E = Map 31, Lot 15, East side of Route 7

## NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITHIN DISTRICT

	<u>contributing</u>	<u>noncontributing</u>
Buildings	23	5
Sites	4	0
Objects	0	4
<u>Total</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>9</u>

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Sheffield Plain Historic District  
Bershire County  
MASSACHUSETTS

MAY 24 1989

Working No. \_\_\_\_\_

Fed. Reg. Date: 2/7/89

Date Due: 6/23/88 - 7/8/88

Action:  ACCEPT 6-23-88

\_\_\_\_\_ RETURN \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ REJECT \_\_\_\_\_

Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Entered in the  
National Register

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review:  sample  request  appeal  NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_

Discipline \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: \_\_\_\_\_ technical corrections cited below  
\_\_\_\_\_ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

---

**8. 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

---

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

---

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal boundary description and justification \_\_\_\_\_

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

---

**12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification**

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_\_\_ national      \_\_\_\_\_ state      \_\_\_\_\_ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature \_\_\_\_\_

title \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

---

**13. Other**

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Sheffield National Register Historic  
Districts

Cook Road, off Route 7  
Sheffield, MA 01257

Photographer: James N. Parrish, 510 Egremont Rd., Gt. Barrington, MA 01230

Date: Fall 1978

Location of negative: As above

Photograph # 1 of 25, Neg. # 4/14

View to Northwest of Shears-Richmond House  
Plain District

NOBLE-BARNUM HOUSE  
(RESOURCE # 1, MAP# 32/4)

SHEFFIELD PLAIN HIST. DISTRICT  
SHEFFIELD, MA

PHOTOGRAPHER: JAMES N. PARRISH

NEGATIVE: JAMES N. PARRISH  
GT. BARRINGTON, MA

FALL 1978

VIEW NW

PHOTO 1



Sheffield Center National Register Historic  
Districts

Main Street, Route 7  
Sheffield, MA 01257

Photographer: James N. Parrish, 510 Egremont Rd., Gt. Barrington, MA 01230

Date: 1985

Location of negative: Same as above

Photograph # 2 of 25, Neg. #RC 1985  
View to West of training ground, Plain  
District

OLD TRAINING GROUND/FIRST  
MEETINGHOUSE SITE  
(RESOURCE # 3, MAP # 3V1)

SHEFFIELD PLAIN HIST. DISTRICT  
SHEFFIELD, MA

PHOTOGRAPHER: JAMES N. PARRISH  
~~FALL 1978~~ 1985

NEGATIVE: JAMES PARRISH  
GT. BARRINGTON, MA

VIEW SW, INCLUDING COOK ROAD/  
ROUTE 7 INTERSECTION

PHOTO 2



TQUES

Sheffield National Register Historic  
Districts

Main Street, Route 7  
Sheffield, MA 01257

Photographer: James N. Parrish, 510 Egremont Road, Gt. Barrington, MA 01230

Date: 1979

Location of negative: As above

Photograph # 3 of 25, Neg. # 29/7a  
View to East of Jonathan Hubbard House  
Plain District

REV. JONATHAN HUBBARD HOUSE  
SHEFFIELD PLAIN HISTORIC DISTRICT  
SHEFFIELD, MA

PHOTOGRAPHER: JAMES N. PARRISH  
1979

NEGATIVE: JAMES PARRISH  
GT. BARRINGTON, MA

VIEW E  
PHOTO 3



Sheffield National Register Historic  
Districts  
Main Street, Route 7  
Sheffield, MA 01257

Photographer: James N. Parrish, 150 Egremont Rd., Gt. Barrington, MA 01230

Date: 1985

Location of negative: As above

Photograph # 4 of 25, Neg. # RC 85  
View to South on Sheffield Plain, Route 7  
Plain District

VIEW SON ROUTE 7,  
SHEFFIELD PLAIN HISTORIC DISTRICT  
SHEFFIELD, MA

PHOTOGRAPHER: JAMES N. PARRISH  
1985

NEGATIVE: JAMES PARRISH  
GT. BARRINGTON, MA

VIEW S ON ROUTE 7 SHOWING  
(LEFT TO RIGHT) LITTLE OFFICE,  
SHOE SHOP, WM. HUBBELL  
GARAGE AND HOUSE

PHOTO 4



Sheffield National Register Historic  
Districts  
Main Street, Route 7  
Sheffield, MA 01257

Photographer: James N. Parrish, 150 Egremont Rd., Gt. Barrington, MA 01230  
Date: 1979  
Location of negative: As above

Photograph # 5 of 25, Neg. # 29/13a  
View to Southwest of Lewis Leffingwell  
House from Route 7 *Augustus Stone Hse?*  
Plain District

AUGUSTUS STONE HOUSE  
SHEFFIELD PLAIN HISTORIC DIST.  
SHEFFIELD, MA

1979

PHOTOGRAPHER: JAMES PARRISH  
NEGATIVE: JAMES PARRISH  
GT. BARRINGTON, MA

VIEW SW  
PHOTO 5



Sheffield National Register Historic  
Districts

Main Street, Route 7  
Sheffield, MA 01257

Photographer: James N. Parrish, 150 Egremont Rd., Gt. Barrington, MA 01230

Date: 1979

Location of negative: As above

Photograph # 6 of 25, Neg. # 29/14a  
View to East of Jonathan Graham House  
from Route 7  
Plain District

JONATHAN GRAHAM HOUSE  
SHEFFIELD PLAIN HISTORIC DISTRICT  
SHEFFIELD, MA

PHOTOGRAPHER: JAMES PARRISH  
1979

NEGATIVE: JAMES PARRISH  
GT. BARRINGTON, MA

VIEW E  
PHOTO 6



Sheffield National Register Historic  
Districts

Main Street, Route 7  
Sheffield, MA 01257

Photographer: James N. Parrish, 150 Egremont Rd., Gt. Barrington, MA 01230

Date: Fall 1978

Location of negative: As above

Photograph # 7 of 25, Neg. # 4/12

View to Northwest of Elijah Hubbard House  
from Route 7

Plain District

ELIJAH HUBBARD HOUSE  
SHEFFIELD PLAIN HISTORIC DIST.  
SHEFFIELD, MA

PHOTOGRAPHER: JAMES N. PARRISH  
FALL 1978

NEGATIVE: JAMES PARRISH  
GT. BARRINGTON, VTA.A.

VIEW NNW (AUGUSTUS STONE  
HOUSE IN DISTANCE)  
PHOTO 7



Sheffield National Register Historic  
Districts  
Main Street, Route 7  
Sheffield, MA 01257

Photographer: James N. Parrish, 150 Egrem-  
ont Rd., Gt. Barrington, MA 01230

Date: 1979

Location of negative: As above

Photograph # 8 of 25, Neg. # 38a/34a

View to West in Plain Cemetery from  
Route 7

Plain District

PLAIN CEMETERY  
SHEFFIELD PLAIN HIST. DISTRICT  
SHEFFIELD, MA  
PHOTOGRAPHER: JAMES N. PARRISH  
1979  
NEGATIVE: JAMES PARRISH  
GT. BARRINGTON, MA

VIEW W FROM ROUTE 7  
PHOTO B

## Missing Core Documentation

Property Name	County, State	Reference Number
Sheffield Plain Historic Distric	Berkshire, Massachusetts	88000881

The following Core Documentation is missing from this entry:

- Nomination Form
- Photographs (#s: 9-25)
- USGS Map

SHEFFIELD PLAIN  
HISTORIC DISTRICT  
SHEFFIELD, MASS.  
ASHLEY FALLS QUAD  
1:25,000

A 18 635830 4664590  
B 18 636000 4664210  
C 18 636080 4664880  
D 18 636000 4663830  
E 18 635800 4664420  
F 18 635720 4664390  
G 18 635670 4664480



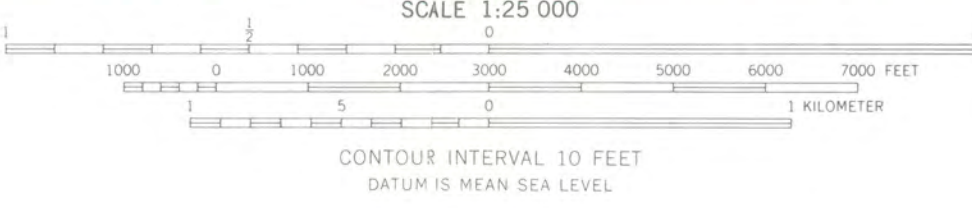
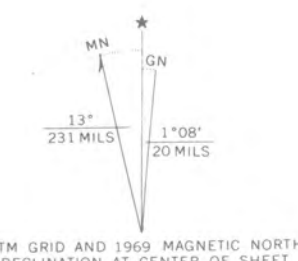
CONVERSION  
SCALES



To convert feet to meters  
multiply by 3.048

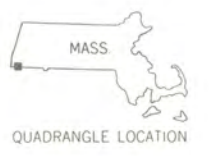
To convert meters to feet  
multiply by 3.2808

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS, USC&GS, Massachusetts Harbor and Land Commission,  
Massachusetts Geodetic Survey, and Connecticut Geodetic Survey  
Topography in Connecticut by planimetric surveys 1944  
Topography in Massachusetts by photogrammetric methods and by  
planimetric surveys 1946. Aerial photographs taken 1942  
Revised 1958  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grids based on Massachusetts coordinate system,  
mainland zone, and Connecticut coordinate system  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid,  
zone 18  
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines  
visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———  
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———  
U.S. Route ——— State Route ———



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with  
Connecticut Highway Department from aerial photographs  
taken 1969. This information not field checked

ASHLEY FALLS, MASS.-CONN.  
N4200-W7315/7.5  
1958  
PHOTOREVISED 1969  
AMS 6368 III SE-SERIES V814

MAP 32  
BLOCK 4

MAP 31  
BLOCK 3

MAP 31  
BLOCK 2

MAP 32  
BLOCK 1

MAP 31  
BLOCK 1

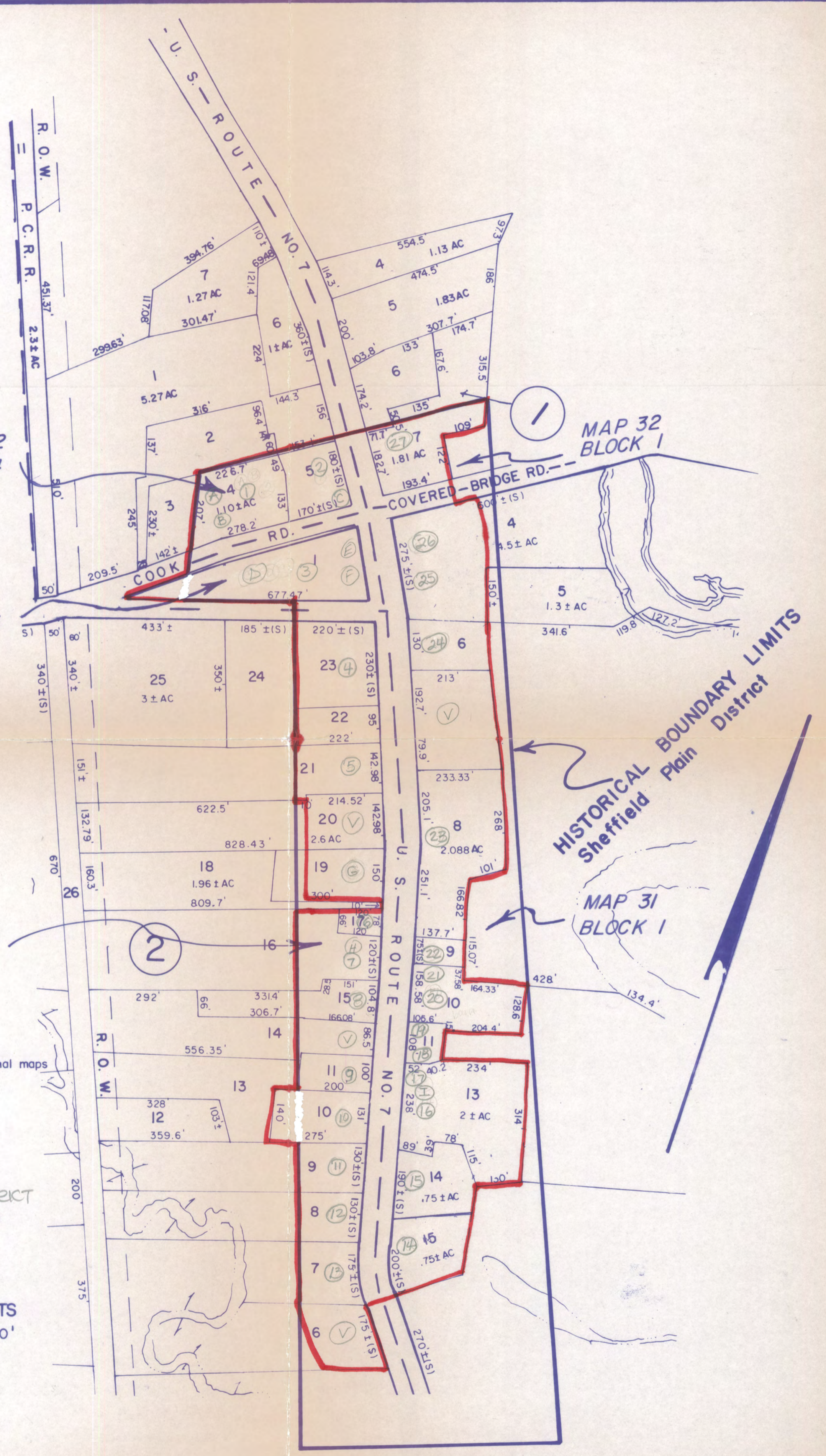
HISTORICAL BOUNDARY LIMITS  
Sheffield Plain District

NOTE - Photographic reproduction of original maps

SHEFFIELD PLAIN HISTORIC DISTRICT  
**TOWN OF SHEFFIELD**

COMPOSITE OF TAX MAPS  
31, 32

SHEFFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS  
NOVEMBER 1986 SCALE: 1" = 200'





May 16, 1988

Carol Shull  
National Register of Historic Places  
Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
P.O. Box 37127  
Washington, DC 20013-7127

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed you will find the nomination forms for the following properties:

Boston, Ozias Goodwin House; 7 Jackson Avenue

Melrose, Melrose Public Library; 63 West Emerson Street

Northampton, Fort Hill Historic District; 124, 130, 134, 135, 144,  
and 148 South Street

Peabody, George Peabody House; 205 Washington Street

Sheffield, Sheffield Plain Historic District; roughly 1/2-mile of  
U.S. Route 7, south from Cook Road intersection

They have been voted eligible by the State Review Board and have been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. Owners were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30-75 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment. No comments have been received to date.

Sincerely,

Betsy Friedberg  
National Register Director  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

BF/es

Enclosure

MAY 24 1988

Massachusetts Historical Commission, Valerie A. Talmage, *Executive Director, State Historic Preservation Officer*  
80 Boylston Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02116 (617) 727-8470

Office of the Secretary of State, Michael J. Connolly, *Secretary*