

PH0006360 HB NO 47M

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Mass.	
COUNTY: Essex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
APR 11 1972	

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Rocky Hill Meetinghouse + Parsonage

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION** Congressional District # 6

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Portsmouth Road and Elm Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Amesbury

STATE: Mass. CODE: 25 COUNTY: Essex CODE: 009

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Comments

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
The Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities

STREET AND NUMBER:  
141 Cambridge Street

CITY OR TOWN: Boston STATE: Massachusetts CODE: 20

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Essex Registry of Deeds, Southern District

STREET AND NUMBER:  
32 Federal Street

CITY OR TOWN: Salem STATE: Massachusetts CODE: 20

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Inventory of the Historical Assets of Massachusetts

DATE OF SURVEY: 1965  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Office of the Secretary, State House

CITY OR TOWN: Boston STATE: Massachusetts CODE: 20

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Massachusetts  
COUNTY: Essex  
ENTRY NUMBER: APR 11 1972  
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## 7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed.
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Rocky Hill Meetinghouse (1785) stands like an austere Puritan sentinel on a rocky ledge overlooking Elm Street about fifty feet to the south. Behind and slightly to the west of the building stands the five-bay, two-story parsonage which was built about the same time as the meetinghouse. This center-chimneyed clapboard residence was moved to its present location from nearby in order to save it from demolition by Route 495.

The white clapboard Meetinghouse is two stories high and crowned by a pitched roof, unbroken by chimneys. The seven-bay front facade of the building is divided into two three-bay units by a two-story entrance porch whose pitched roof intersects the building just below the cornice line.

Located on the south facade of the porch, the main door is framed by Doric pilasters. These support an entablature with a dentilled cornice. This cornice is echoed on a slightly larger scale in the pedimented gable of the porch and again on an even larger scale under the eaves of the long facades of the building. In the center of each of the five-bay gabled ends of the building is a supplemental doorway. These doors are framed by Tuscan pilasters and topped by a simple entablature and pediment. On the first story the sash windows are longer than those on the second. On the long facades those on the first story are capped by undecorated cornices. The subtle use of decorative details, the framings of the doors, the dentilled cornices and pediment, and the capped windows are typical of these meetinghouses and lend a natural elegance to these simple rectangular buildings.

The interior of the Meetinghouse remains practically unaltered. In the auditorium, the principal structural timbers of the building project from the walls and have been left unpainted. Around three sides of the room a gallery is carried on wooden columns which have been marbleized. Boxed pews and benches are unpainted and the sides of the pews are pine panelled. In contrast to the simplicity of the room is the richly carved and panelled pulpit which rises from its position opposite the main entrance as the focal point of the Meetinghouse. Behind it, the roundheaded pulpit window is framed between two marbleized pilasters which support an entablature. A pentagonal sounding board with an ogee roof projects from the top of this entablature.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Massachusetts	
COUNTY Essex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	APR 1 1972

(Number all entries) Amesbury, Rocky Hill Meetinghouse

6. Existing Surveys: Historic American Buildings Survey  
N.P.S., Off. of Archeology & Hist. Preservation  
801 19th Street, Washington D.C.  
Federal Survey: Date: 1937



**B. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century            |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1785

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                      | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian            | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |   | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |   | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Rocky Hill Meetinghouse, constructed in 1785, is a fine example of a country meetinghouse and the least altered of any eighteenth century meetinghouse in Massachusetts. On that basis both the Meetinghouse and its neighboring parsonage have been certified as a Massachusetts Historic Landmark.

Rocky Hill was formerly the west parish of Salisbury (now in Amesbury). The parish separated from the older part of Salisbury in 1716 and built its first meetinghouse, which stood north of the present one. When that first building became beyond repair, the parishioners voted to build the new meetinghouse in Rocky Hill. The church exterior is the type most representative of New England meetinghouses: a simple rectangle with dentil course at the cornice, covered by a pitched roof, with the main entrance on the long facade of the building, opposite the pulpit.

The parish began to decline shortly after the new meetinghouse was completed. Since there were no funds available for modernizing the building, the interior of the Rocky Hill Meetinghouse has remained virtually unchanged. The auditorium retains its original high pulpit with pentagonal sounding board, box pews, deacon's desk and the gallery on three sides supported by simple Doric pillars.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Rose, Harold Wycliffe, The Colonial Houses of Worship in America, New York, Hastings, 1963.  
 Sinnott, E. W., Meeting Houses and Churches in Early New England, New York, McGraw Hill, 1963.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE				
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	0	'	"	0	'	"	42°	51'	01"
NE	0	'	"	0	'	"	71°	54'	39"
SE	0	'	"	0	'	"			
SW	0	'	"	0	'	"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **c. five acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: **Anne Wardwell, Survey Director**

ORGANIZATION: **Massachusetts Historical Commission** DATE: **October 15, 1971**

STREET AND NUMBER: **Office of the Secretary, State House**

CITY OR TOWN: **Boston** STATE: **Massachusetts** CODE: **20**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: John F. Donovan  
 Secretary of the Commonwealth, Chairman  
 Massachusetts Historical Commission  
 Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: **March 18, 1971**

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

Robert M. Utley  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: **APR 11 1972**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:  
William H. Huntley  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: **APR 11 1972**

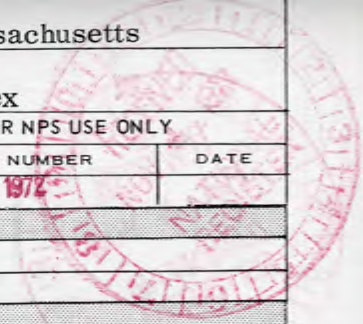
SEE INSTRUCTIONS



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE Massachusetts	
COUNTY Essex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
APR 1 1 1972	



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

<b>1. NAME</b>			
COMMON:		Rocky Hill Meetinghouse	
AND/OR HISTORIC:			
<b>2. LOCATION</b>			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
Portsmouth Road and Elm Street			
CITY OR TOWN:			
Amesbury			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Massachusetts	20	Essex	009
<b>3. PHOTO REFERENCE</b>			
PHOTO CREDIT:		Anne Wardwell	
DATE OF PHOTO:		February 1965	
NEGATIVE FILED AT:		Massachusetts Historical Commission	
<b>4. IDENTIFICATION</b>			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.			
68-77 Rocky Hill Meetinghouse South facade			

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE Massachusetts	
COUNTY Essex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 2181 I 1 84W	DATE APR 1 1972

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Rocky Hill Meetinghouse

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

Portsmouth Road and Elm Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Amesbury

STATE:

Massachusetts

CODE

20

COUNTY:

Essex

CODE

009

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE:

U. S. G. S. Newburyport West, Mass. - N. H.

SCALE: 1 : 24,000

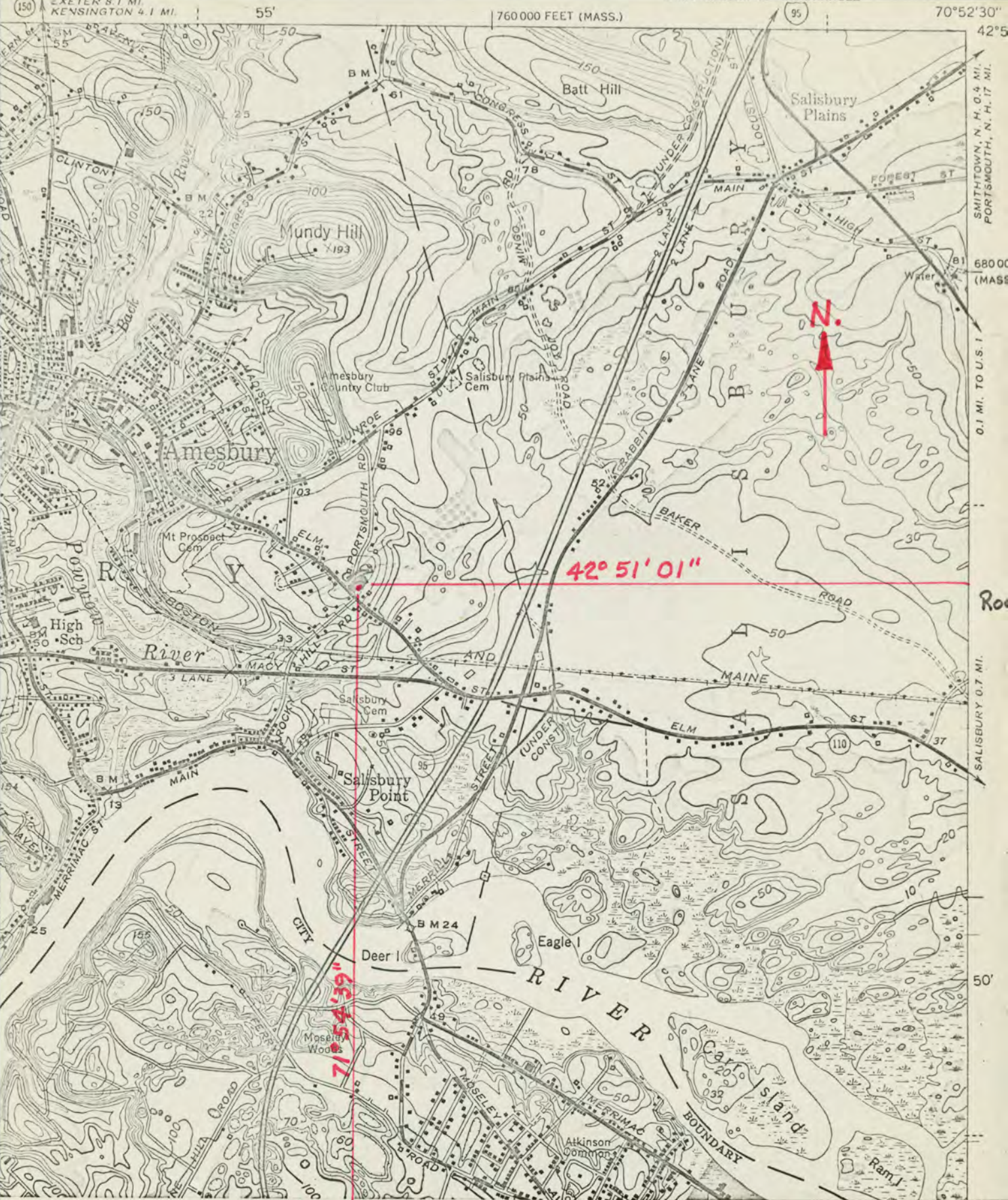
DATE: 1952

4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.





UTM corrected 12/17/07  
 19/343892/4745992

U.S.G.S. 71-1/2' Quadrangle  
 "Newburyport West, Mass.-N.H."  
 Scale: 1:24,000 (1952)

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered APR 11 1972

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
North Easton Railroad Station	North Easton Bristol County
Pilgrim Hall	Plymouth Plymouth County
Rocky Hill Meetinghouse and Parsonage	Amesbury Essex County
French Cable Station	Orleans Barnstable County
Isaac Davis Trail	Acton, Concord Middlesex County

Also Notified

Hon. Edward M. Kennedy  
Hon. Edward W. Brooke  
Hon. Margaret M. Heckler  
Hon. Hastings Keith  
Hon. Michael J. Harrington  
Hon. Robert F. Drinan  
Director, Northeast Region

State Liaison Officer  
Hon. John F. X. Davoren  
Secretary of the Commonwealth  
Chairman, Massachusetts Historical  
Commission  
Office of the Secretary  
State House  
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

4/5/72

HR  
NRowland:mm

MS

**ROCKY HILL MEETINGHOUSE AND PAR-  
SONAGE (25-74-00057-00). Amesbury, Essex  
Co. Private ownership (SPNEA). An example  
of Country Meetinghouse, built in 1785. Work  
to include reroofing to original cedar shingle.  
\$5,250.00.**