

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination FormSee instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only

received OCT 13 1983

date entered

1. Name

historic Bowers School

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number 411 Water Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Clinton

N/A vicinity of

state Massachusetts

code 025

county Worcester

code 027

3. Classification

Category

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

Ownership

☐ public☒ private☐ both

Public Acquisition

☐ in process

N/A being considered

Status

☐ occupied☐ unoccupied☒ work in progress

Accessible

☐ yes: restricted☒ yes: unrestricted☐ no

Present Use

☐ agriculture☐ commercial☐ educational☐ entertainment☐ government☐ industrial☐ military☐ museum☐ park☐ private residence☐ religious☐ scientific☐ transportation☒ other: Vacant

4. Owner of Property

name Gerald Hardy

street & number 366 Chace Street

city, town Clinton

N/A vicinity of

state Massachusetts

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registry of Deeds

street & number 2 Main Street

city, town Worcester

state Massachusetts

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Inventory of the Historic Assets of
title the Commonwealth # 90has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date July 1978

☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Massachusetts Historical Commission

city, town Boston

state Massachusetts

7. Description

Bowers School, Clinton, MA

Condition

☒ excellent
☐ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date 1892

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Bowers School stands approximately in the center of its original $\frac{1}{2}$ acre lot on the south side of Water Street in Clinton. Asphalt paved parking lot and playyard surround the building which is set back 75' from the street on a slight rise. Early settlement of this area centered around the mills along the nearby Nashua River; today the school is surrounded by a residential neighborhood of one and two family houses, dating primarily from the late nineteenth century.

Built originally as a small one-room frame school house in 1847, the Bowers School was completely remodelled in 1892 to its present form. The building rises two stories from a low foundation of fieldstone (below grade) and cut granite to a combination gable and hip roof covered in gray Vermont slate. The main body of the building is executed in red brick laid in running bond. In plan, the building is rectangular with a large two-story projecting entrance pavilion on the north elevation facing Water Street. A massive brick chimney rises from the center of the main block.

The symmetrically aligned fenestration consists of rectangular windows arranged in pairs and triplets set in sharply cut openings with sandstone lintels (wide) and sills (narrow). Truncated rectangular windows with brick lintels light the basement. A major decorative feature of the building is its brick cornice, consisting of three courses: bracket-like corbelling, a broken band of sawtooth pattern, and a continuous line of corbelling at the roofline.

The facade (north) is dominated by the central entrance pavilion. The entry itself consists of double doors recessed in a large plain rectangular opening and flanked by round arched windows and surmounted by two pairs of rectangular windows. Centered in the roof flank is a low triangular glazed dormer. The entry treatment appears to result from a 20th century rebuilding.

The side elevations of the central pavilion contain paired windows at mid-story height. The flanking sections of the main body contain paired windows at each story. The east and west elevations are identical, containing one window opening with three sets of sash on each floor. The south elevation has four openings with paired windows on each story and a central fire exit and steps (iron) at the upper level.

The interior of the school is divided into two classrooms on each floor, each equal in size ($27\frac{1}{2}'$ square). The large entry foyer contains two stairways leading to the upper floor. Storeroom, maintenance and toilet facilities are located in the basement.

8. Significance

Bowers School, Clinton, MA

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
☐ prehistoric	☐ archeology-prehistoric	☒ community planning	☐ landscape architecture	☐ religion
☐ 1400–1499	☐ archeology-historic	☐ conservation	☐ law	☐ science
☐ 1500–1599	☐ agriculture	☐ economics	☐ literature	☐ sculpture
☐ 1600–1699	☒ architecture	☒ education	☐ military	☐ social/
☐ 1700–1799	☐ art	☐ engineering	☐ music	☐ humanitarian
☒ 1800–1899	☐ commerce	☐ exploration/settlement	☐ philosophy	☐ theater
☐ 1900–	☐ communications	☐ industry	☐ politics/government	☐ transportation
		☐ invention		☐ other (specify)

Specific dates 1847, 1892

Builder/Architect Joshua Thissell (1892 reconstruction)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Bowers School was designed in 1892 by local architect Joshua Thissell. Thissell employed a standard period scheme for small scale schools, but elevated the Bowers School above the norm by employing brick rather than wood as a construction material. Additionally, the Bowers School was used as a model for subsequent turn of the century schools in Clinton. Most importantly, the Bowers School reflects the rapid growth of industry and population in 19th century Clinton. Built on the site of one of Clinton's five mid-19th century schools (none of which survive), this one directly reflects the community's late 19th century development. Retaining integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association, the Bowers School thus meets Criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

The Bowers School is located in an area which was originally part of Lancaster, later part of Millville and Clintonville, and eventually incorporated as Clinton in 1850. During the early part of the nineteenth century, Clintonville, which was situated on a mill stream, began to develop its own identity as industries prospered. By 1800 Clintonville contained two districts of the Lancaster School Committee. The community continued to grow, outstripping Lancaster, and by 1850 the newly incorporated town of Clinton boasted five schools which were turned over to the new town by Lancaster.

The Bowers School originated in 1847 on land donated to the town by Sidney Harris, a descendant of the area's first white settlers. The school known as the Harris Hill School; was built to house students during the 1847-48 academic year. At this time the school committee embarked on a bold new educational policy: this primary school adopted a graded three tier system and mandatory examination. Such a curriculum was a new idea in the educational field as well as a radical concept for the factory workers whose children attended the school and who viewed education as having much less importance than earning a living. Although records from the era indicate a high degree of popular resentment towards this early example of government intrusion into people's daily lives, the system later became the model followed by other school districts in the area.

The town's industrial base and population expanded rapidly during the late nineteenth century so that by 1892 eleven school buildings had been erected. The Bowers School underwent a few renovations during this period: it was painted in 1868; in 1879 a new coal stove replaced wood stoves; in 1885 a new outhouse was added.

By 1892 the population of the district had outgrown the school, so the Bowers School was extensively rebuilt to accommodate the expanding population. The resulting building, designed by Joshua Thissell, was lauded for providing a healthy atmosphere and became a model for other schools built in this period. In 1892 the School Committee commented that:

"Not one of the school buildings of the Town is so well arranged with respect to that very important requirements, light, as is this. The plan of placing the school-rooms on the south side... is in accordance with the best principles..."

9. Major Bibliographical References

Reports of the School Committee, Lancaster, 1842-1880.

Lancaster School Committee Records, 1844-1867.

Ford, Andrew Z., History of the Origin of Clinton, MA, 1653-1865, W.J. Coulter Press, Clinton, MA.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .5

Quadrangle name Clinton, MA

Quadrangle scale 1:25000

UTM References

A

1	9	2	8	0	1	8	0	4	6	9	9	5	8	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Beginning at a stake on the south side of said road, the northwest corner of the lot, about 54 feet northwesterly from a white oak tree on said lot, and running thence s. 82° 45' E., 132 feet to a corner; thence s. 74° 0' W., 165 feet to a corner; thence

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code
N/A			

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Virginia A. Fitch, Preservation Planner
Mari L. Myer, Preservation Assistant, and Mr. Gerald Hardy.

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date August 1983

street & number 294 Washington Street telephone (617) 727-8470

city or town Boston state Massachusetts

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Potom L Weseloh 9/30/83
State Historic Preservation Officer
title Massachusetts Historical Commission date

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 11/10/83

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places
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date entered

Continuation sheet Bowers School, Clinton, MA Item number 8

Page 1

The architect responsible for the 1892 renovations, Joshua Thissell (1823- ?), moved to Clintonville from Lowell, Massachusetts in 1847, after studying engineering with a Mr. Bennett of Lowell. He was responsible for the majority of the civil engineering done in Clinton for a period of several years after that. Also an architect, he drew plans for many of the buildings which were erected in the town during the latter half of the nineteenth century. In 1858 he became a justice of the peace. Little else is known about his life.

The school was eventually named for Rev. C.M. Bowers, who served as author, newspaper editor, educator, long-term school committee member, advocate of a system similar to the modern Kindergarten, and minister of First Baptist Church for 50 years.

**United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation sheet Bowers School, Clinton, MA Item number 9

Page 1

Parkhurst, W.E. ed., Clinton Historical Society Papers, Vol. 1 (1900), W.J. Coulter Press, Clinton.

Clinton Courant, W.J., Coulter Press, Clinton.

Annual Town Reports of the Town of Clinton, W.J. Coulter Press, Clinton, 1850-1893.

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Continuation sheet Bowers School, Clinton, MA Item number 10

Page 1

N. $82^{\circ} 45'$ w., 132 feet to a corner; and thence N. $7\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$ w., 165 feet to the place of beginning.

Containing half an acre of land by survey of J. Thissell, October, 1847, the original lot set aside for the school.

See also enclosed Assessor's Map of the Town of Clinton.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Bowers School
Worcester County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. OCT 13 1983

Fed. Reg. Date: 2-5-85

Date Due: 11/10/83 — 11/27/83

Action: ☒ ACCEPT 11/10/83

Entered in NHR
National Register ☐ RETURN

Federal Agency: _____

- ☐ 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

- ☐ excellent
☐ good
☐ fair

- ☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

- ☐ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one

- ☐ original site
☐ moved date _____

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

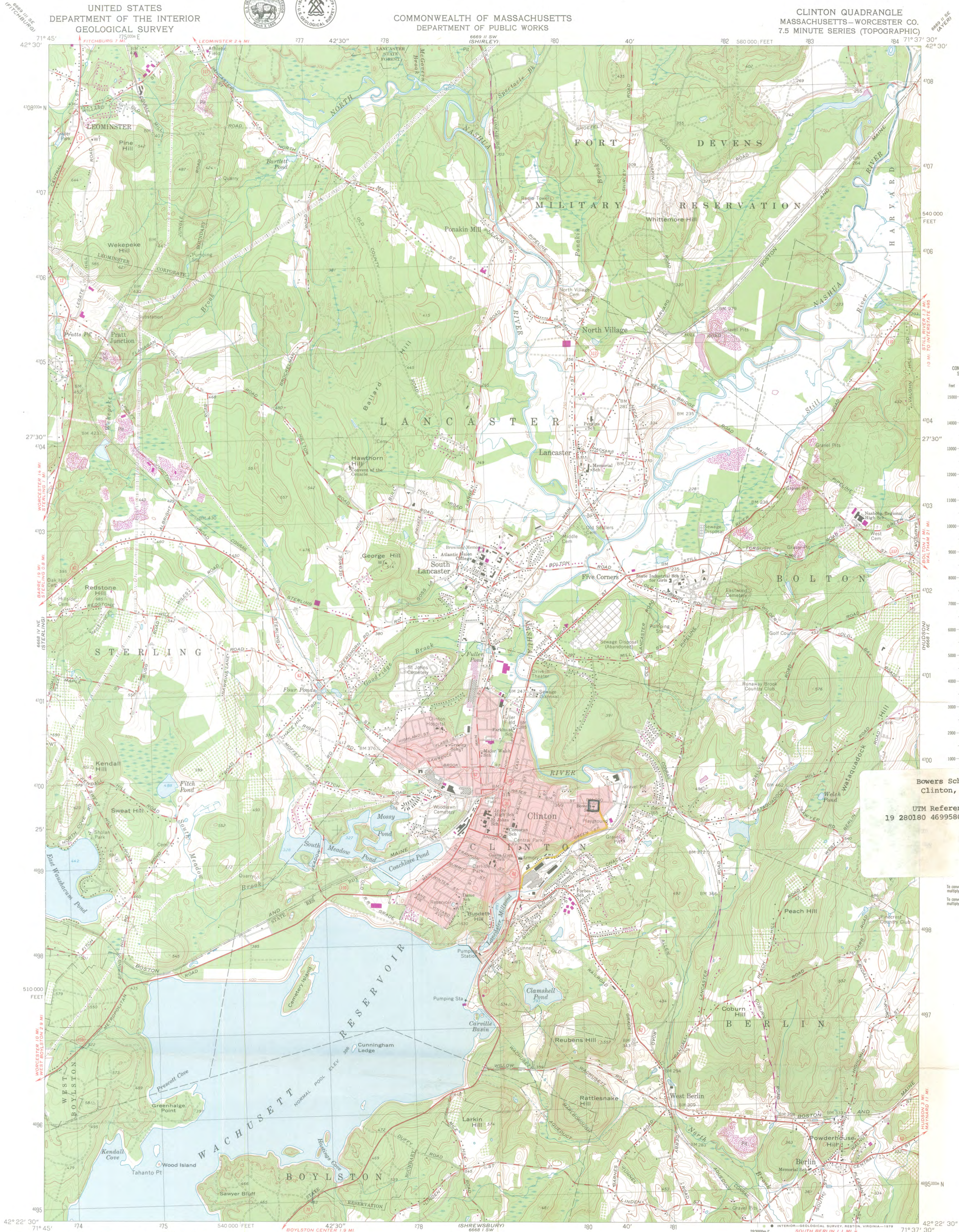
Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



Bowers School
411 Waters Street
Clinton, MA

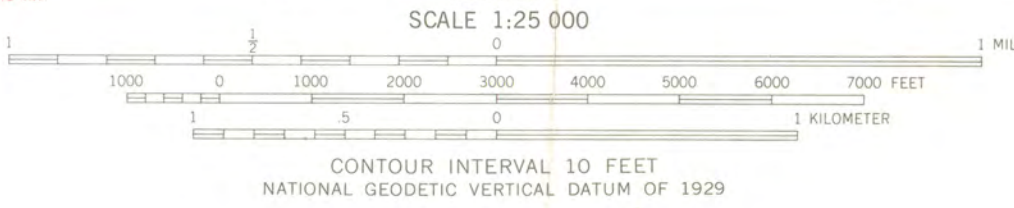
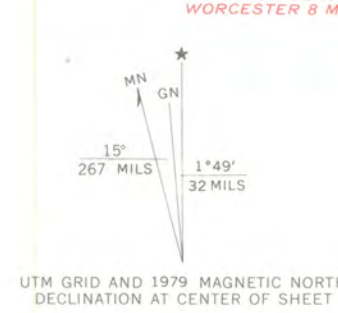
Photo by: Brian Jacobson, March, 1983
Negative filed with Clinton Daily Item



Bowers School
Clinton, MA
UTM Reference:
19 280180 4699580

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

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1939. Topography by planimetric surveys 1923 and 1940
Revised 1965
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid,
zone 19
Red tint indicates area in which only landmark buildings are shown
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map
Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with the State of
Massachusetts agencies from aerial photographs taken 1975 and other
source data. This information not field checked. Map edited 1979



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———
Slate Route ○



CLINTON, MASS.
N4222.5—W7137.5/7.5
1965
PHOTOREVISED 1979
AMS 6668 1 NW—SERIES V814

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

LOWERS SCHOOL
CLINTON, MASS.
1"=40'



TOWN OF CLINTON
ASSESSOR'S PLANS
SHEET No 43
OFFICE of PARKER & BATEMAN
Scale - 40ft. = 1in
Note - Stone bounds are shown thus x