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NATIONAL REGISTER

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 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 Benjamin Osborn House (preferred)
other names/site number Mother Ann Lee House

2. Location

street & number West Street, 1000' east on private road N/A not for publication
city, town Mount Washington N/A vicinity
state MA code 025 county Berkshire code 003 zip code 02158

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u> buildings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>1</u>	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>2</u>	<u>3</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 8/24/87
Signature of certifying official Date
State Historic Preservation Officer
State or Federal agency and bureau Massachusetts Historical Commission

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:) _____

Valerie A. Talmage 10-1-87
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use Benjamin Osborn House, Mount Washington, Massachusetts

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Single dwelling

work in progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

New England Colonial

foundation stone

walls asbestos

roof asphalt

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Benjamin Osborn House is located in the Berkshire County town of Mount Washington, in a meadow at 1550 feet elevation in the center of its builder's 93-acre house lot. It is reached by a 1000 foot dirt road from East Street that it shares with a modern house and two garages, the only other structures on the larger parcel. The house has small shrubs adjacent and is situated in a clearing of the wooded lot. A small cemetery is located 650 feet to the north east, behind the house.

The exact date of construction for the house is unknown, though it can be reasonably assigned to the years bracketing Osborn's purchase of lot 34, in 1759. Osborn chose a moderate-sized house form consisting of a single story under a gable roof, facing to the south, and heated by a central chimney. Its facade is symmetrical with a central entry and window on either side. Each lateral elevation originally had an entry and window on the first floor and centered window in the gable, but the original arrangement of openings at the rear is unknown. Four of the original nine over six, double hung sash and four of the original six over six sash survive.

Its interior plan is of particular interest, varying as it does from that usually associated with this form, but relating to other small houses known in the Commonwealth. Large center-chimney house plans are customarily composed of three primary rooms, two living areas in the front of the house on either side of the lobby entry, and a rear kitchen with small adjacent service or bedrooms. In the Benjamin Osborn house the number of primary rooms is reduced to two, recalling the earlier hall and parlor form, and suggesting the choice of a smaller living space. The house retains the central lobby entrance with stair against the chimney, and a small parlor is located in the southeast corner or right front of the house. On the opposite side, however the kitchen runs the entire depth of the house along its west wall. The northeast corner of the house was divided into two small unheated service or bedrooms. The house originally had wealtherboard walls, plank shutters, and wood shingle roofing.

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

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Benjamin Osborn House, Mount Washington, Massachusetts

In about 1906, changes were made to the house. The most significant of these was the reconstruction of the chimney and removal of the fireplaces in the kitchen and the garret above. The lobby stair was removed and a new flight added in the former chimney area of the kitchen. A shed roof addition, containing two small rooms, was constructed along the north wall. On the exterior, wood shingles replaced weatherboard, and new two over one sash were added on the facade. In about 1950, a large picture window was installed in the west wall, removed by the current owners, the Department of Environmental Management, in 1983. The walls were also then covered with asbestos siding, and two layers of asphalt shingles covered the roof. The adjacent non-contributing garage was built at this time.

Also included within this property is a small burying ground, the town's oldest. The earliest stone dates to 1772, that of Abigail Dibble Benjamin. The yard includes about thirty gravestones, and a range of simple stones. The most recent is dated 1962.

Archaeology

While no present sites are currently recorded on the property, sites may be present. The physical characteristics of the property, well drained terraces, north southerly exposure to Wright Brook, and unnamed wetlands to the north and west, may have made this a favorable area for native settlement and subsistence activities. Given the known patterns of prehistoric occupation in this area of Massachusetts, low density, it is possible that significant survivals existing within the property, would at best be moderate.

There is significant historic archaeological potential within the property. Archaeological testing and selective excavation may help locate occupation-related features dating from the colonial and later periods. Analysis of these remains can provide detailed information on the changing social, cultural, and economic patterns that characterized rural life in Mount Washington.

8. Statement of Significance

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 Religion	Period of Significance 1750-70	Significant Dates 1750-70 1781
	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 Benjamin Osborn House is located in the small Berkshire County town of Mount Washington. Dating to the region's colonial settlement period 1750-1770, it is the oldest standing structure in the community. Small in size and simple in ornamentation, it is a useful illustration of the initial homesteads built in the hilltown of Massachusetts. Benjamin Osborn was an early settler to this newly opened, contested area, he was among the petitioners for incorporation and one of the town's proprietors. He and his family participated in the rural religious awakening of the Revolutionary period, and welcomed Shaker evangelists on their first New England tour. It therefore meets criteria A, and C of the National Register. The small eighteenth century house is the oldest surviving in the town and retains integrity of location, design, setting, workmanship, feeling and association on the state and local levels.

Located in the Berkshire Hills in the southwest corner of the Commonwealth, the Mount Washington area was not settled by colonials until the second quarter of the 18th century. Ecological factors formed a significant barrier as colonials filled the broad river valleys of the Connecticut and Hudson before turning to the uplands. National and intercolonial rivalries further hampered settlement of this northwestern colonial frontier. Native American antagonism was brought on by the fur trade and colonial wars, and New York, Massachusetts, and Connecticut held conflicting claims to the area between the Hudson and Connecticut Rivers. In spite of claims to western Berkshire County by the New York manors of Livingston and Resselaeerwick and the Patent of Westonbrook, the Massachusetts General Court began granting land for townships along the Connecticut border in 1722 to strenghten their hold through settler occupation.

The townships along the southern border expanded during the brief period of peace at the close of King George's War, and continued to grow during the French and Indian War, protected from depredations by the northern line of forts. This area known as Taghknac received settlers at this time though it was unincorporated by Massachusetts, and a portion was claimed by Livingston Manor to the west. Petition was made to the Massachusetts General Court as early as 1753 that the land be granted to the early settlers and a small

See continuation sheet

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National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
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Benjamin Osborn House, Mount Washington, Massachusetts

parish be established. Conflict with the manors, however, was common during these years, and beginning in 1749 the border was troubled by raids culminating in the land riots of 1766. In the Livingston Manor, Mount Washington-area raids were common during the 1750s, and in 1755 a raid on the nascent settlement resulted in the death of William Rice, and the persistent fear of "repeated assaults from Livingston and Ranslans (Rensselaer) Banditti." During a second raid in 1757 several houses were burned. Confident that the outcome of petitions and border claims would be in their favor, these extra-legal residents organized a proprietorship in 1757 and surveyed land allotments in 1759-60. Incorporation petitions were repeated in 1774, 1776, and 1777, and Mount Washington was finally incorporated in 1779.

Like settlers in many peripheral towns established during the late 18th century, Mount Washington townsmen focused their resources on their homesteads and few social institutions augmented the family and town meeting. Benjamin Osborn purchased his lot of 93 acres, numbered 34 in 1759, and he and his wife settled there to raise their family. The house they built is the only one remaining from this critical formative period, a scarce surviving example of the once more common small houses built by most colonials. The gable-roofed house faces south, and clusters its rooms around a central chimney, in typical New England form. Its interest however is in its incorporation of only the most basic of regional traits: one rather than two stories under the garret, a three-bay rather than a five-bay facade, and a simpler floor plan incorporating two rather than three major rooms. Study of New England vernacular forms is only currently addressing these small variations.

Little would differentiate the Osborn family had they not chosen, in 1781, to welcome the Shakers to stay with them during their tour through New England. The Shakers had their origin under the charismatic leadership of Ann Lee (1736-84), a Friend of Manchester, England, who gathered followers to her vision of New Birth through the mutual confession of sin, and of forgiveness through Christ dwelling within her. Eight followers accompanied Mother Ann to New York and settled in a celebrate commune at Niskeyuna, eight miles northwest of Albany, in 1775. Though viewed with suspicion, the newcomers gathered followers, assisted by the religious awakening known as the New Light Stir that influenced newly settled areas between 1778 and 1782. The Shakers were strengthened by the ongoing threat of war, the awesome Dark Day of 1780, and the presence in nearby New Lebanon of the disappointed followers of millenialist Joseph Meacham. During this period they elaborated their liturgical emphasis on song and movement, their theological emphasis on New Birth, and their organization in extended family cooperatives.

continued

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Apparently Benjamin Osborn and his family became interested in the emerging sect, for their home was the first stop when the Shakers set out on their round of "residential evangelism" in 1781-1784. In contrast to other religious groups that focused evangelical efforts on itinerant preacher acting alone, the Shakers moved as a group from community to community, gathering potential converts together for extended periods, and moving on when a new core had coalesced. From Niskeyuna they came to Mount Washington where they remained for ten days, and the Osborn family became the focus of this Shaker outpost. The life of this Shaker group was short, however, for Benjamin died ca. 1787, Martha ca. 1795, and his children had moved on to Canaan, New York. The Shaker community, too, suffered loss and reorientation with the death of Mother Ann in 1785, and of her successor James Whittaker in 1787. When nine Shaker communities were formally organized between 1790 and 1793, Mount Washington was not among them.

Benjamin Osborn's children sold the house and land in 1795, and the property paralleled the fortunes of the town through the nineteenth century. Mount Washington grew rapidly during the prosperous years after the Revolution, expanding from 67 in 1790 to nearly 500 during the second quarter of the 19th century, and two farmers held the land for 18 then 27 years. When the town began to decline in population after 1840, the owner defaulted and the farm changed hands quickly. Three family owners held the property between 1865 and 1958-1961, when it was sold to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management to become part of the Mount Washington State Forest.

The burying ground behind the house dates to about 1772, and includes family members of the owners of adjacent lots. In 1829, the third owner of the house Jesse Coe, sold the small lot, measuring one chain eleven links by one chain thirteen links, to Charles Patterson who is buried there. It is currently owned by the town. While its significance is not directly tied to Benjamin Osborn, the burying ground, as Mt. Washington's oldest, holds important associations with the town's earliest development and is therefore, considered contributing.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 1

QUAD: Bashbish Falls
SCALE 1:25000

UTM REFERENCES			
<u>POINT</u>	<u>ZONE</u>	<u>EASTING</u>	<u>NORTHING</u>
A	19	626810	4664050
B	19	627000	4663440
C	19	626960	4663430
D	19	626160	4663410
E	19	626070	4663440
F	19	626040	4663950

870 01758

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Osborn, Benjamin, House
Berkshire County
MASSACHUSETTS

AUG 31 1987

Working No. _____

Fed. Reg. Date: 2/7/89

Date Due: 10/1/87 - 10/15/87

Entered in ~~the~~ National Register
Action: ACCEPT 10-1-87
 RETURN
 REJECT

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	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: _____



Benjamin Osborn House 1762
Sister Ann Lee Cottage
Off West Street
Mount Washington, MA 01258
James N. Parrish, BCRPC, 9/13/84
Photo 1 of 7 Roll 122 Frame 1
View of front (south) facade - Ann Lee
Cottage.



Benjamin Osborn House 1762
Sister Ann Lee Cottage
Off West Street
Mount Washington, MA 01258
James N. Parrish, BCRPC, 9/13/84
Photo 2 of 7 Roll 122 Frame 4
View of East gable of the Ann Lee Cottage.



Benjamin Osborn House 1762
Sister Ann Lee Cottage
Off West Street
Mount Washington, MA 01258
James N. Parrish, BCRPC 9/13/84
Photo 3 of 7 Roll 122 Frame 5
View of north elevation and east gable
Ann Lee Cottage showing original 9/6 sash.



Benjamin Osborn House 1762
Sister Ann Lee Cottage
Off West Street
Mount Washington, MA 01258
James N. Parrish, BCRPC, 9/13/84
Photo 4 of 7 Roll 122 Frame 7
View of Ann Lee Cemetery N.W. of
Benjamin Osborn House (Ann Lee Cottage)



Benjamin Osborn House 1762
Sister Ann Lee Cottage
Off West Street
Mount Washington, MA 01258
James N. Parrish, BCRPC, 9/13/84
Photo 5 of 7 Roll 122 Frame 9
View of the tombstone of John Dibble
8/1/1773 ag 71 and Abigail Dibble
Benjamin 9/7/1772 Age 31, Ann Lee Cemetery

MARTHA.
WIFE OF
Charles Patterson,
DIED
April 2, 1837.
aged 88 years.

CHARLES PATTERSON

CHARLES PATTERSON
BORN
Dec. 15th 1748
1837
In the 88th Year of his age

Benjamin Osborn House 1762

Sister Ann Lee Cottage

Off West Street

Mount Washington, MA 01258

James N. Parrish, BCRPC, 9/13/84

Photo 6 of 7 Roll 122 Frame 10

View of the tombstones of Charles Patterson,

May 22, 1837 Age 92 and Martha Patterson

April 2, 1837 Age 88. Charles purchased

the cemetery in 1829 - 1 chain, 11 links

by 1 chain, 13 links 23 62/100 rods.



Among these hills
that she loved
though she rests at home
the parents of
NANCY M. STERETT
this stone commemorates
her life and all her
things that she
died May 3, 1842 - Aug. 22, 1902
A Christian
buried in the ...

Benjamin Osborn House 1762
Sister Ann Lee Cottage
Off West Street
Mount Washington, MA 01258
James N. Parrish, BCRPC, 9/13/84
Photo 7 of 7 Roll 122 Frame 13

"Among these hills that she loved, tho'
she rests not here the parents of Nancy
M. Starrett raised this stone to mark her
favorite spot where all beautiful things
recall her. Died May 30, 1887 age 22. A
character strong for purity and truth"
Cross and cenotaph - Ann Lee Cemetery.

Benjamin Osborn House
West Street, 100' East on private road
Mount Washington, MA

Quad: Bashbish Falls
Scale 1:25000

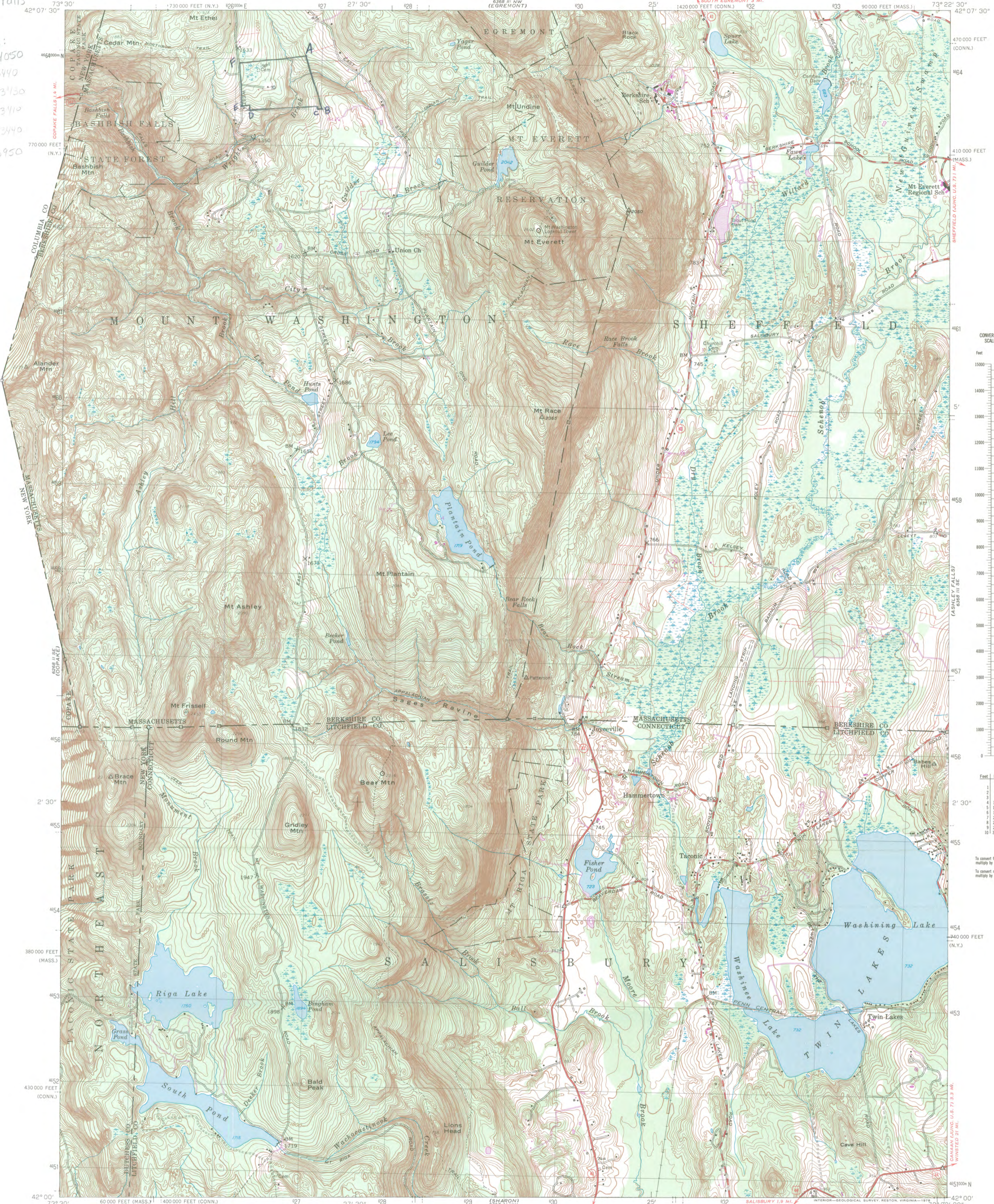
UTM References:
A 19/626810/4664050
B 19/627000/4663440
C 19/626960/4663130
D 19/626160/4663410
E 19/626070/4663440
F 19/626010/4663950

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

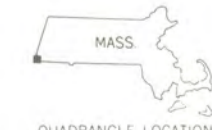
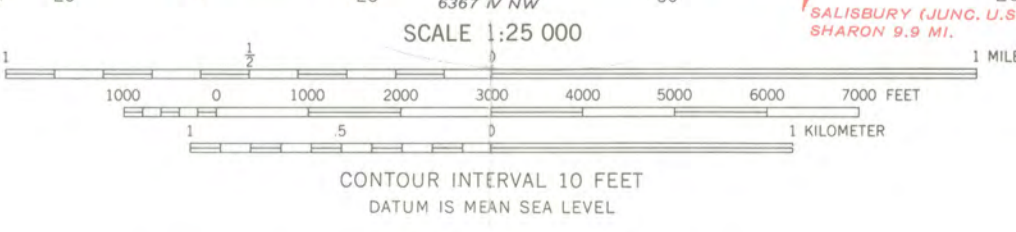
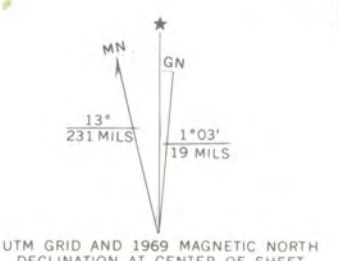
STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

BASHBISH FALLS QUADRANGLE
MASSACHUSETTS-CONNECTICUT-NEW YORK
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, Connecticut Geodetic Survey, and
Massachusetts Harbor and Land Commission
Culture and drainage, in Connecticut and New York, in part compiled from
aerial photographs. Topography by planetable surveys 1944
Topography in Massachusetts from aerial photographs by photogrammetric
methods. Aerial photographs taken 1942. Field check 1946
Revised 1958
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grids based on Massachusetts coordinate system, mainland zone,
Connecticut coordinate system, and New York coordinate system, east zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 19
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 IS AVAILABLE WITH OR WITHOUT SHADED RELIEF OVERPRINT
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

BASHBISH FALLS, MASS.-CONN.-N. Y.
N4200-W7322.5/7.5

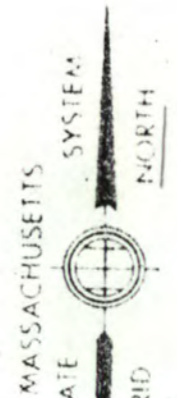
1958
PHOTOREVISED 1969
AMS 6368 III SW-SERIES V814

Benjamin Osborn House
West Street
Mount Washington, MA



TOWN OF
MOUNT WASHINGTON
Massachusetts

SEE MAP NO. 3
Scale 1" = 400'



SEE MAP NO. 10

KELLY & GRANGER
GREENWOOD MAPPING INC.
ROCHESTER N.Y.

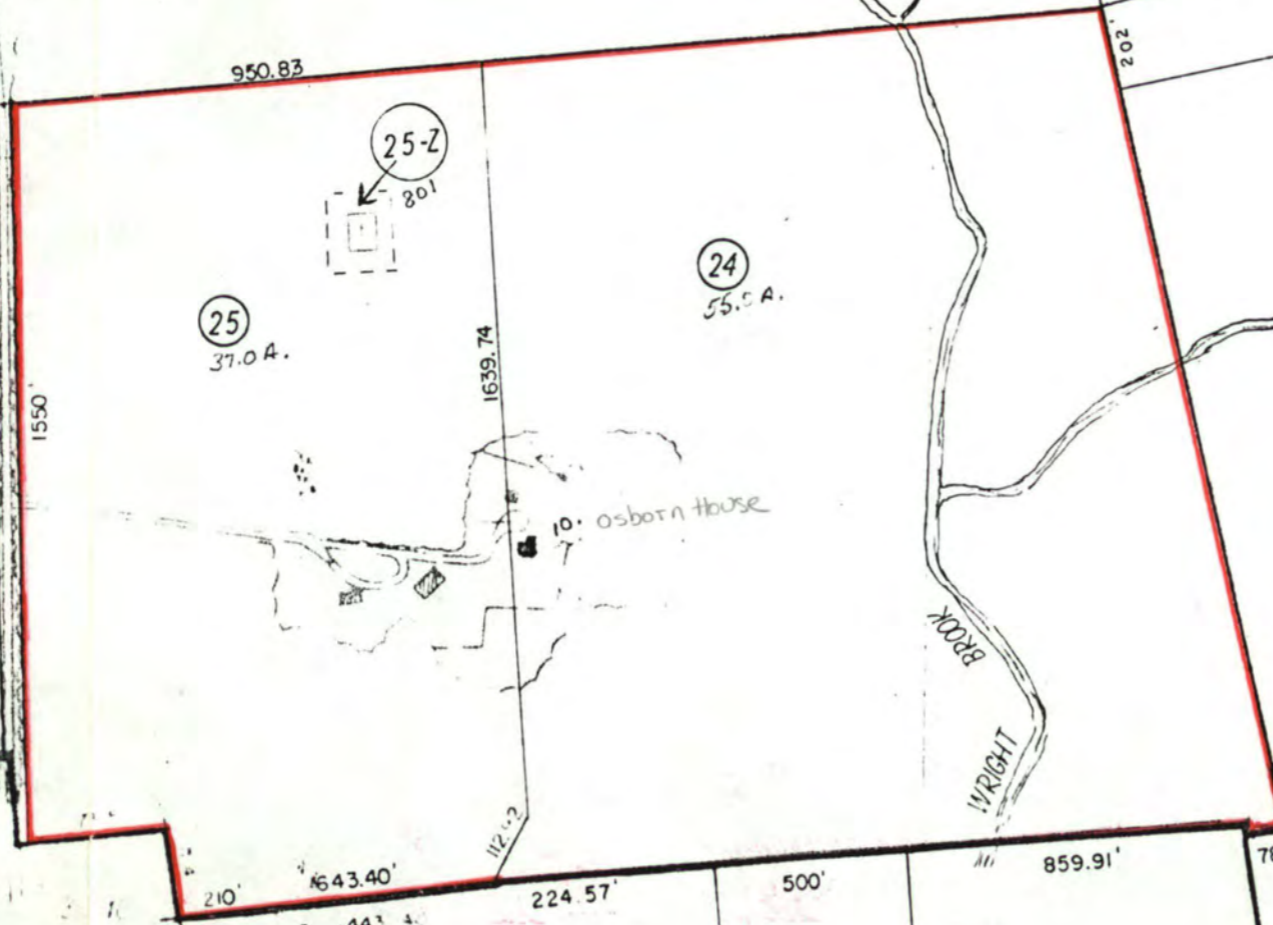
KELLY, GRANGER, PARSONS & ASSOCIATES

Benjamin Osborn House
West Street
Mount Washington, MA

WEST 1750 S STREET

WRIGHT

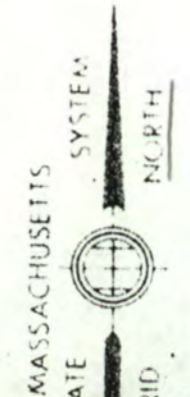
LOCATION FOR DETERMINED



SEE MAP NO. 3

Scale 1" = 400'

INDEX



SEE MAP NO. 10

KELLY & GRANGER

BLACKWOOD MAPPING INC.
ROCHESTER N.Y.

KELLY, GRANGER, PARSONS & ASSOCIATES

TOWN OF MOUNT WASHINGTON
Massachusetts