

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

870



# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Sargent-Robinson House

Other names/site number: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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

### 2. Location

Street & number: 972 and 974 Washington Street

City or town: Gloucester State: MA County: Essex

Not For Publication:  N/A Vicinity:  N/A

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local  
Applicable National Register Criteria:

A  B  C  D

|   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| <u>Brona Simon</u>  | <u>October 21, 2016</u> |
| Signature of certifying official/Title: Brona Simon, SHPO | Date                    |
| State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government       |                         |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria. |   |
| Signature of commenting official:   | Date  |
| Title :   | State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government |

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

*Joe Eason H. Beall*  
Signature of the Keeper

*12.20.16*  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

| Contributing | Noncontributing |            |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| <u>3</u>     | <u>0</u>        | buildings  |
| <u>3</u>     | <u>0</u>        | sites      |
| <u>2</u>     | <u>0</u>        | structures |
| <u>1</u>     | <u>0</u>        | objects    |
| <u>9</u>     | <u>0</u>        | Total      |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwellings  
DOMESTIC: two-family dwelling

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

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

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

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COLONIAL

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: WOOD, STONE, BRICK

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The ca. 1760 **Sargent-Robinson House** is one of Gloucester's best-preserved examples of a signature house type on Cape Ann: the 1½-story, gambrel-roofed, 18<sup>th</sup>-century dwelling that came to be called "the Cape Ann Cottage." The building also has significant earlier and later features: the probable foundation and chimney base of a smaller ca. 1700 First Period house, and one-story additions dating to the early and mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. All parts of the building retain intact finishes, woodwork, and masonry. The entire half-acre property, with the house, early 20<sup>th</sup>-century privy and shed, stone walls, and remnants of outbuilding foundations, as well as the longtime adjacent "garden plot," possesses integrity of setting, location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

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### Narrative Description

#### SETTING:

The house faces southeast over Washington Street (Mass. Route 127), in what today is largely a neighborhood of wood-frame houses dating to the mid 19<sup>th</sup> through the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, most of them on land that was part of the original ca. 1700 homestead farm of Samuel Sargent. The area is bordered by the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century villages of Lanesville to the northeast and Bay View to the southwest. Along the northeast side of the Sargent-Robinson House property, a private lane, called Bayview Lane, follows an old right-of-way leading back from the road to the shore of Ipswich Bay.

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Figure 1. Sargent-Robinson House. Historic photograph, early 20<sup>th</sup> century

Plan and exterior description (Photos 1 through 5; Figure 1)

The building is a fully developed, 18-x-34-foot example of the gambrel-roofed, 1½-story, Cape Ann cottage house type, with a single room at each story on either side of a large brick chimney that, in this case, rises southwest of center through the main roof ridge. Abutting the rear wall of the large first-story room northeast of the chimney (the original kitchen) is a one-story, early 19<sup>th</sup>-century, single-room addition. This addition has a long shed roof that extends back from the edge of the upper rear slope of the main gambrel roof. Extending northeast from that first addition and the rear portion of the kitchen is a one-story, side-gabled ell of the late 1830s or early 1840s that was apparently built for a dining room, and a second small kitchen. A narrow brick chimney rises from the roof ridge at the juncture of the dining room and the later kitchen. In the early 1970s, the ell was extended ten feet to the northeast for a new bathroom and kitchen area.

While an early 20<sup>th</sup>-century photo (Figure 1) shows the house sided with clapboards, today all elevations of the building are clad entirely in wood shingles. The roof is asphalt shingle; the foundation is roughly split granite and fieldstone. The southeast façade of the original ca. 1760 house (Photo 1) is asymmetrically arranged, reflecting the dimensions and functions of the interior spaces. The four-bay fenestration consists of an entry set slightly southwest of center, in line with the chimney, a single 9/6 parlor window to its southwest, and a pair of narrower 9/6's northeast of the entry. The three-foot-wide, six-panel door (its panel arrangement characteristic of the late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century) is double-thickness, with four raised-field panels on the exterior, and later glass panes inserted in place of the top two. The door is hung on long, iron strap hinges, is set into a plain surround of narrow, flat boards, and has both a large Suffolk latch and a cast-iron box lock. A 20<sup>th</sup>-century batten door presently functions as a storm door. The façade window sash, all of which date to the late 1960s, are set into flat, unadorned surrounds flush with the siding, and replicate the proportion and arrangement of the original windows.

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Exterior wood trim is minimal, consisting of narrow cornerboards, a plain friezeboard at the eaves, and a simple, flat rake board that has recently been replaced. (Former exterior features shown in the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century photo [Figure 1] but no longer extant include a wide watertable above the foundation, and graduated clapboards on the southwest end elevation.) Fir gutters and steel downspouts have recently been installed at both front and rear.

The fenestration of the southwest end (Photo 2) consists of one center window at each story—a 9/6 at the first story, and a 6/6 at the second. Historic photos (see Figure 1) show that the upper window opening formerly had a simply molded header above the upper sash. The bottom edge of a small, wood, louvered vent now abuts the flat upper-window casing. The arrangement of the northeast end elevation (Photo 3) is identical to the southwest. The centered upper-story window sash there dates to the 1830s or 1840s.

The rear elevation of the main house (Photo 5) has two windows at the main story. A small, 4/4 window in the rear wall of the southwest parlor dates to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The other window, in the rear kitchen wall, has 9/6 replacement sash from the 1960s or 1970s. A narrow, multipaned, wooden skylight is positioned on the lower rear roof slope, just behind the main chimney.

East and rear additions. The façade of the long northeast ell (Photos 1 and 3) has four late 20<sup>th</sup>-century, 6/6 windows. The two at the west end occupy early openings in the mid 19<sup>th</sup>-century section. Just to their northeast is a late 20<sup>th</sup>-century wood door of vertical planks on the exterior, and eight horizontal boards on the interior. (The door replaces a former four-panel door, and is covered by a wood storm door with a diamond glass pane in the upper section.) Northeast of this entry, a 24-inch-wide, 6/6 window also occupies an original opening; another 24-inch, 6/6 window to its northeast is in the front wall of the added 1970s kitchen space. The end elevation of that newer section has two widely spaced 6/6 windows at the first story, and a louvered vent under the gable peak. Reading northeast to southwest in the rear elevation of the ell (Photos 4 and 5) are a late 20<sup>th</sup>-century 6/6 window, and a door that is identical to the one on the ell façade. A 6/6 window located in the rear wall of the mid 19<sup>th</sup>-century dining room contains original 19<sup>th</sup>-century sash. Two others in the rear and the southwest walls of the early 19<sup>th</sup>-century addition are replacements of ca. 1969.

Site description. (Photos 6 and 7; Map #s A-H; see Sketch Plot Plan [Figure 2])

The **Sargent-Robinson House** stands on a roughly rectangular, sloping lot of about half an acre, with a few mature deciduous trees, shrubs, and low **fieldstone walls** (Map #D) along portions of the northeast, southwest, and southeast boundaries. A fieldstone wall along the rear boundary also functions as a low retaining wall. Short lengths of rebuilt stone retaining wall are located a few feet from and paralleling the back side and east end of the house. An area of rectangular granite stones in the ground at the rear of the lot apparently marks the **site of a long outbuilding** that is partly shown in the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century photograph (Figure 1) and was still standing in 1967 (Map #E). A rough granite **post** about three feet high stands just outside the south corner of the stone area (Map #F).

A shady rectangular area abuts the rear, west corner of the main property. Also bordered in part by low fieldstone walls, this is the old “**garden plot**” mentioned in early deeds. (Map #G.) A second group of small, square stones in the ground at the north corner of the garden plot may be part of the site of the long outbuilding noted above, or of another small outbuilding or structure.

There are presently two outbuildings on the property, both apparently dating to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Against the rear stone retaining wall is a wood-shingled **privy** about six feet square (Map #B; Photo 6) on a base of small, rectangular granite blocks. This little building may have been part of the long shed

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mentioned above. It has a narrow, deteriorated vertical-board door on the front, and a small, square, four-pane window beside it. The roof is also wood shingle.

The lower part of a larger, rebuilt square **shed** (Map #C; Photo 7) also appears to be shown in Figure 1. Today, it has a higher roof and front wall than it had then. This is a tall, board-and-batten building with a steep, asphalt-shingled shed roof. A somewhat deteriorated batten door on long strap hinges in the south corner of the southwest wall has “clinched” nails in the battens. (Nails with their ends hammered flat are usually hand-forged, and characteristic of the 18<sup>th</sup> or possibly early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.) A 2/2 sash window is located in the center of the southwest wall beside the door; a small wooden door on the northwest elevation opens into a coal bin. The shed stands on a base of fieldstone and rough granite blocks, with a large steppingstone in front of the door.

In addition to the long shed that stood against the rear boundary wall, at least three other buildings have been removed from the property. Both the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century photograph in Figure 1 and a plan of 1967 show a small barn, about 20 feet square, standing in the north corner. It was demolished about 1969. The 1917 Sanborn map, however, indicates a long, shallow, single-story shed at that location—probably a henhouse.

Sometime between 1899 and 1917, a small 19<sup>th</sup>-century house that apparently once housed the paint shop of Otis Robinson was also demolished. It stood at what is now the east corner of the front yard, on a tiny 875-square-foot **site** (Map #H) that is still a separate parcel of land (Assessor’s Parcel 140-2), officially numbered 974 Washington Street. The building’s former presence is still marked by the set of broad **granite steps** (Map #I) set into the front stone boundary wall. The steps, which appear to have been opposite the building’s front door, would have allowed access through the wall from the road, just as another set of steps about 50 feet further southwest in the wall is oriented to the main front door of the Sargent-Robinson House.

**Main house: Interior features** (Photos 8 through 12; see Sketch Floor Plans [Figures 3 and 4])

A note on restoration. Many original features were stabilized and restored during a restoration undertaken by Frank and Janet Barnes in the late 1960s and early 1970s. This included the removal of two deteriorated bake ovens that had been built into the main chimney stack about 1800, around the time when the house was apparently first converted to two-family occupancy. Some 18<sup>th</sup>-century woodwork was restored, and replicated where necessary. Earlier 20<sup>th</sup>-century 2/2 windows were replaced with 9/6 and 6/6 wooden sash, and two interior doors were removed from the northeast wall of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century dining room.

Framing

With the exception of the main first-floor frame, where red pine “sleeper” joists extend from the front to the rear sill, most of the framing elements of the house are concealed by wood casings, plaster, and other interior finishes. (All of the ceilings are fully plastered, and the small attic spaces are not presently accessible.) The front and rear posts of the main house are flared (or “gunstock” in profile), most of them covered with beaded casings. The main front and rear plates are similarly cased, except for the rear plate in the kitchen, which has an unbeaded face board.

Kitchen (Photos 8 and 9)

The original kitchen is a large, nearly square room, approximately fifteen by sixteen feet, with a number of original features still intact. Some were revealed during the late 1960s restoration work. The southwest fireplace partition wall, for instance, had been altered in the mid or late 19<sup>th</sup> century by the application of lath and plaster that entirely covered the vertical wall boards, the fireplace opening, and a

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ca. 1800 bake oven. (That Federal-era oven had been built into the northwest end of the main firebox, obscuring the opening of the original bake oven in the chimney behind it.)

The Barnes family removed the later 19<sup>th</sup>-century work and the deteriorated ca. 1800 bake oven, opening the fireplace to its original width, and adding a stone hearth (Photo 8). During the course of the late 1960s restoration, the opening of an earlier bake oven in the rear wall of the firebox was revealed, as was the section of 18<sup>th</sup>-century, vertical, beaded and beveled wood sheathing to the left of the fireplace. Under the direction of historic masonry expert Richard Irons, the chimney stack was stabilized and largely rebuilt. The fireplace and original bake oven opening were restored, along with a rare surviving triangular brick shelf in the left rear corner of the firebox, and a large wrought-iron crane. While the section of wall to the left of the fireplace had survived intact under the later plaster, the recessed overmantel above the fireplace was missing, and the Barneses installed a single long, raised-field panel there, to dimensions based on evidence found on site.

There are two doors in the fireplace wall. The south door, which opens into the main entry, is constructed of vertical board in the same plane and material as the wall between it and the fireplace. It has a large, hand-carved wooden latch, and is hung on distinctive wrought-iron hinges with very wide leaves. To the right of the fireplace is a narrow, single-board door to a passage behind the chimney, hung on wrought-iron "H" hinges.

One later feature of the kitchen is a six-foot-nine-inch-long closet set into the north rear corner (Photo 9). Probably built in the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the closet has a pair of large, four-panel doors across the front, connected to each other by a pair of five-part butt hinges. The inside walls of the closet are plastered. To either side of the closet, doorways lead to the two first-story rooms that were added in the early and mid 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Like most of the floors in the main house, the kitchen floor is constructed of pine boards of varying widths. A plain, seven-inch-high baseboard rings the outer three walls of the room, except for inside the closet, where the baseboard is nine inches high. The front section of the room shows a higher degree of finish than the rear. Consistent with the style of the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century, beaded casings cover the front posts and plate, the plate casing displaying a prominent quirked bead. On the rear wall of the room, the corner posts have unbeaded casings, and a half-inch-thick board covers the face of the plate. Most of the window casings around the 9/6-pane replacement sash of the four 24-inch-wide windows in the room consist of 3¾-inch-wide boards, flush with the wall plaster and edged with a narrow bead. The left casing of the eastern window in the front wall is two inches wide.

#### Parlor (Photos 10 and 11)

With the exception of its 20<sup>th</sup>-century flooring of three-inch-wide hardwood boards, the narrow, 10½-foot-wide parlor on the west side of the chimney displays the most high-style 18<sup>th</sup>-century features in the house. Here, while the low baseboard is unadorned, the plates and all four corner posts are covered with beaded casings.

The fireplace wall (Photo 10) is composed entirely of raised-field paneling, surmounted by a compound crown molding. The stiles and rails of the panels are edged with large ovolo molding, characteristic of interior partition walls built in comfortable homes from the 1750s through the 1780s. A section of two-range paneling, three panels wide, is intact to the right of the fireplace; today it is mirrored by a two-panel-wide replacement section to the left of the fireplace opening that was inserted when the room's bake oven was removed in the late 1960s. As in the kitchen, the construction of that bake oven probably dated to the years at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> or beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the house was first divided for



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two independent households. In this case, however, the oven was mostly built outside of the small firebox, which was slightly reduced in size to accommodate it. The resulting, smaller fireplace opening sat off-center under the four-panel overmantel, until the oven was removed in the 1960s and the firebox restored to its former dimensions. All or most of a compound-molded architrave around the fireplace opening apparently dates to the 1960s restorations.

In contrast to the doors in the kitchen, the door from the entry to the parlor is a high-style, four-panel door, hung on large “H-L” hinges, with an iron Suffolk latch typical of the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century. In the wall above the door, a single horizontal panel with a sliding section acts as a transom, providing ventilation to the room and transfer of heat to the entry.

Another fashionable element of the parlor is the tall pine cupboard (traditionally called a “beaufat”) set diagonally into the south corner of the room (Photo 11). Like the paneled fireplace wall, the cupboard is trimmed at the top with a compound crown molding. The door that encloses the lower portion is hung on two iron “H” hinges, complete with leather washers, and has two raised-field panels. The upper portion of the cupboard is open; the shape of its roundheaded opening is echoed in the three curved, open shelves.

#### Entry

The lobby entrance between the kitchen and parlor is plainly finished. The vertical boards that sheath the front wall are unbeaded, and some have been replaced. Alternate vertical boards of the northeast wall (the back side of the kitchen fireplace wall) display a bead along the edge. The turning staircase winds upward against the brick wall of the chimney. The full-height wall that encloses it is the same type as the kitchen fireplace wall, with alternating beaded- and bevel-edged vertical boards. The low door to the cellar is cut into the center section of the staircase wall, and hung on small “H” hinges. Visible in the face of the chimney is the end of the massive ten-inch oak lintel of the kitchen fireplace.

#### Chambers

Two plainly finished chambers occupy the upper half-story. Their outer walls, including the inward-slanting front and rear kneewalls, are plastered and covered with wallpaper. The single 6/6 windows in the end walls have some of the earlier sash in the house—with arrowlike muntins characteristic of ca. 1840. Each chamber has a batten door with hardware consistent with the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The doors are hung on three-part butt hinges, and have Norfolk, instead of Suffolk, latches. The door to the east chamber also has a cast-iron box lock. In about 1970, a modern lavatory was inserted behind the chimney, accessible from the smaller southwest (parlor) chamber through a vertical-board door hung on “H” hinges.

The southwest chamber was originally unheated. The northeast (kitchen) chamber (Photo 12) has a fireplace, with a four-foot-wide firebox recessed under a thin mantel shelf in a partially restored vertical-board wall. The fireplace had been bricked in, and was restored in the late 1960s. Like the larger kitchen fireplace below it, it retains an early iron crane. To the right of the fireplace, a single-board door on three-part butt hinges opens into a narrow closet.

#### Cellar

A full-height cellar exists only northeast of the chimney, under the kitchen. The cellar walls are of large stones and rough-split blocks of granite, which, together with the stone chimney base, enclose a space only eleven feet square. The sills of the outer walls of the northeast part of the house, however, rest on a stone base that lies several feet out from the cellar and continues under the southwest part of the building, where the ground is only partially excavated. Such a configuration suggests that the cellar may predate

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the building of the house. If that is the case, it would remain from an earlier dwelling on the property, most likely the house built by Samuel Sargent in about 1700.

### **Later additions: interior features**

#### **Rear bedroom, ca. 1800-1810 (Photo 13)**

The small room behind the kitchen bears characteristics of the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, including a 30-inch-high painted dado of wide horizontal boards, trimmed at the bottom with a shallow baseboard and with a narrow, bull-nosed chair rail at the top. Also consistent with that time period, both interior doors to the room are in the Federal style, with flat, recessed panels facing the room, hung on three-part butt hinges, and have Norfolk latches. The door between the room and the kitchen has four panels; the northeast door has six.

In the northwest corner is a tall, rectangular, painted cabinet with four open shelves and an enclosed lower section with a single-board door. The inner edges of the upper and lower openings are finished with a narrow quarter-round bead.

#### **Dining room, ca. 1840 (Photos 14 and 15)**

Built somewhat later than the bedroom, this 10½-by-14½-foot room was probably added, along with most of the northeast ell, by Daniel Robinson after he bought the house. It may have started out as a 19<sup>th</sup>-century kitchen in what is now the inner part of the long one-story ell, although it is more likely that it was intended as a dining room, with the new kitchen adjoining it to the northeast. As in the adjoining bedroom, the upper walls are plastered, above a painted dado in the lower part. Here, however, the dado is plastered, 29 inches high, and has an eight-inch baseboard and a five-inch decorative composite band below the chair rail. In the southwest wall, in addition to the door to the bedroom, a doorway to its left leads to the original kitchen (Photo 14). The door there is an early four-panel Victorian type, with flat recessed panels and applied moldings, and fitted with a late, cast-iron Norfolk latch. The 4¼-inch-wide casings of both doors are in the early Greek Revival mode, with flat cornerblocks at the top corners. The casings of the two front windows are of the same type. The northeast wall of the room (Photo 15), which contains two openings to the outer part of the ell, was renovated in the late 1960s with dado, chair rail, and casings similar to those on the other walls.

#### **Northeast part of ell and early 1970s kitchen/bathroom extension**

The space immediately northeast of the dining room apparently housed a small mid 19<sup>th</sup>-century kitchen. The walls of this area are plastered on the upper part, and have unpainted, horizontal boards in the 38-inch-high lower section that were added in the late 1960s or early 1970s. Against the southwest wall, between the two openings to the dining room, is a narrow brick chimney that presently serves the flue of an early 20<sup>th</sup>-century, cast-iron heating stove.

The ell was extended by about nine feet in the early 1970s. This newer section houses a small bathroom in the northeast corner, and a modern kitchen area with appliances, wood cabinets, a sink, and Formica counters in the center and south parts.

### **Archaeological Description**

No ancient Native American sites have been recorded on the Sargent-Robinson House property; however, information is present indicating that the area has a high potential for locating sites. Eight sites have been recorded in the general area (within one mile). Unprovenienced artifact collections, including burials, are

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also known for the Annisquam area of Gloucester, located to the south and west of the nominated property. No evidence of burials or other types of mortuary sites has been identified for the nominated property. Environmental characteristics in the area indicated several locational criteria (soil drainage, slope, distance to wetlands) that are favorable indicators for many types of ancient sites. The Sargent-Robinson House is located on a well-drained, level to moderately sloping coastal terrace on the northeastern side of Hodgkins Cove. Soils are sandy and stony, with rocks from one to three feet in diameter on the surface formed in glacial till. Rocky areas may also be a negative site locational characteristic. Ipswich Bay lies within 1,000 feet of the house to the north and west. The entire town lies within the North Coastal drainage. Given the above information, the potential for locating significant ancient Native American resources at the Sargent-Robinson House is high. Potential archaeological sites located on the property may include most site types, especially shell middens. The area is rich in both marine-related and upland resources. Given the above information, the small size of the parcel (0.44 acres), and the lack of open space, a moderate to high potential exists for the recovery of ancient Native American resources on the nominated property.

There is also a high potential for the recovery of historic archaeological resources on the Sargent-Robinson House property. Construction features (builder's trenches) and structural remains may be present from the initial building of the house ca. 1700, as well as later renovations that led to its present form. Structural remains might also exist from outbuildings, including barns and sheds. Occupational-related features (trash pits, privies, wells) should also be present. An early 20<sup>th</sup>-century privy is also present on the property; however, earlier privies may also exist.

A high potential also exists for locating historic archaeological sites on the Sargent-Robinson House property. Additional historic research, combined with archaeological survey and testing, may identify potential physical remains associated with the structural evolution of an 18<sup>th</sup>- through 20<sup>th</sup>-century farmstead that evolved in the fishing community of Gloucester. In particular, much-needed information may be available that identifies the function and layout of the First Period homestead of William Sargent ca. 1700. Structural evidence of the original farmhouse may survive, including evidence of walls, fireplaces, builder's trenches, and other features related to the maintenance and operation of the house. Important evidence may also be present that identifies patterns of reuse at the house, as the original structure was rebuilt later in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Portions of the original house survive within the walls of the present structure. At least four outbuildings have been removed, and the structural remains and related artifacts of many more potential outbuildings is expected, based on the potential late dates of the known outbuildings, their length of occupation, and the overall function of the homestead. A long shed originally stood next to the rear boundary wall. A small barn, approximately 20 feet square, was standing at the north corner of the property. It was demolished ca. 1900. Cartographic sources also indicate a long, one-story shed, possibly a henhouse, at that location. Additional potential 18<sup>th</sup>- through 20<sup>th</sup>-century outbuildings related to the operation and maintenance of the house and family undoubtedly exist in the area surrounding the house.

Archaeological survey and excavation may also help to identify the structural remains of a small 19<sup>th</sup>-century house, demolished sometime between 1899 and 1917. It stood on what is now the southeast corner of the front yard. Potential archaeological evidence of barns, outbuildings, and occupational-related features might also be present. A 20<sup>th</sup>-century privy and shed is present on the property, and an additional privy may also be present. Additional documentary research, combined with archaeological survey and testing, may produce additional evidence related to the existence, survival, and function of a second building that stood on the property close to the roadside, between Daniel and Charlotte Robinson's new house and the Sargent-Robinson House.

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## SARGENT-ROBINSON HOUSE

### RESOURCE COUNT

**Key:** C = contributing; NC = non-contributing  
 B = building; St = structure; O = object; Si = site

| MAP # | NAME OR DESCRIPTION                                  | DATE   | STATUS | TYPE |
|-------|--|--|--------|------|
| A.    | Sargent-Robinson House                               | ca. 1760   |        | C B  |
| B.    | Privy  | early 20 <sup>th</sup> century                   | C      | B    |
| C.    | Shed   | early 20 <sup>th</sup> century                   | C      | B    |
| D.    | Fieldstone walls                                     | 18 <sup>th</sup> and 19 <sup>th</sup> centuries  | C      | St   |
| E.    | Site of former outbuilding(s)                        | early 20 <sup>th</sup> century                   | C      | Si   |
| F.    | Granite post   | 19 <sup>th</sup> -early 20 <sup>th</sup> century | C      | O    |
| G.    | Sargent "Garden Plot"                                | 18 <sup>th</sup> century                         | C      | Si   |
| H.    | Site of G. Sargent House<br>(O. Robinson paint shop) | late 19 <sup>th</sup> century                    | C      | Si   |
| I.    | Granite steps  |  | C      | St   |

### TOTAL RESOURCE COUNT

|                   | CONTRIBUTING | NON-CONTRIBUTING |
|-------------------|--------------|------------------|
| <b>Buildings</b>  | 3            | 0                |
| <b>Structures</b> | 2            | 0                |
| <b>Objects</b>    | 1            | 0                |
| <b>Sites</b>      | 3            | 0                |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>     | <b>9</b>     | <b>0</b>         |

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### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

#### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

#### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

AGRICULTURE  
COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT  
ARCHITECTURE

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**Period of Significance**

ca. 1695-1966

**Significant Dates**

ca. 1700 (partial foundation)  
ca. 1760 (present house)

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

N/A

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The **Sargent-Robinson House** meets Criteria A and C of the National Register at the local level. Its period of significance spans nearly three centuries, extending from the earliest English occupation of the property by Samuel Sargent around 1695, to the 1960s, when his grandson's house was sold by the last resident member of the connected Sargent-Phipps-Robinson family. Contributing to Criterion A is the property's unbroken association with the descendants and relatives of one extended Gloucester family for a period of more than 250 years. Under Criterion C, the building is notable architecturally as a well-preserved example of an important regional house type, the 18<sup>th</sup>-century, gambrel-roofed, Cape Ann cottage.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

The **Sargent-Robinson House** exemplifies and tangibly illustrates the evolution of the north shore of Cape Ann over two centuries. Its continuum of family ownership began at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when Gloucester was still a seaside frontier settlement, and continued through a century of fishing, maritime trade, and hardscrabble farming. Later, it witnessed several decades of gradual, then rapid, 19<sup>th</sup>-century residential development, both year-round and seasonal, that built up around the post-Civil War granite works at Bay View and Hodgkins Cove. Better than any other homestead in the immediate area, the gradual subdivision of the colonial-era farm associated with the house typifies one type of development that occurred along the principal road ringing the outer shoreline of Cape Ann throughout the property's long period of significance.

The main house is one of the most intact of Cape Ann's mid 18<sup>th</sup>-century, colonial "Cape Ann" cottages, with the distinct gambrel-roofed, 1½-story form and the one-room-deep, two-cell floor plan of that iconic building type. In addition to intact period finishes and woodwork, there are three brick fireplaces, one of which retains an early bake oven that was exposed during restoration work undertaken in the 1960s. The building's architectural significance is enhanced by the presence of a cellar that may remain from a ca. 1700 First Period house, as well as by early and mid 19<sup>th</sup>-century additions that display compatible features of the Federal and Greek Revival eras. The house, together with its two small, early 20<sup>th</sup>-century outbuildings, stone boundary walls, and adjacent longtime "garden plot," retains integrity of setting, location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

**Background and early history**

Gloucester, named for Gloucester, England, was among the earliest towns in New England to be populated by English settlers. From the start, it was sustained by a maritime economy, and grew into a thriving seaport by the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Fishing was long the principal occupation, along with some agriculture on both common lands and privately owned farms. Commercial fishing, and its supportive industries of fish curing and packing, expanded greatly after the Revolutionary War, as did shipbuilding and maritime commerce.

The town originally covered all of the territory east of Ipswich on Cape Ann, which juts into the Atlantic between Ipswich Bay on the north, and to the south, the great arc of Massachusetts Bay. The east and west parts of Gloucester are divided by the Annisquam River. The section west of the river, later to become Gloucester's West Parish, was the location of some of the earliest Colonial land grants to settlers, but the greater population density developed over time in the eastern section, where settlement was largely concentrated close to the coast. Small clusters of occupational activity developed early at Gloucester harbor on the cape's southeast side, along the east side of the river around the sheltered cove at the secondary village of Annisquam, and later around small deepwater coves and inlets on the Ipswich Bay shore.

The first English settlers arrived in 1623, and as early as 1624 and 1625 the Dorchester and Plymouth Companies vied for the rights to permanently occupy what was viewed as a promising fishing area. By 1642, the population of Cape Ann was sufficient to form a town, and Gloucester was incorporated that year. The town's western boundary with Manchester was established in 1672, and in 1840, Rockport, formerly called Sandy Bay, was split off as an independent town on the eastern tip of the cape. In 1873, after rapid growth in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Gloucester was incorporated as a city.

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**Early ownership by the Sargent family, ca. 1695 to ca. 1760**

Fishing and other maritime pursuits dominated life in Annisquam and eastward along the north shore of Cape Ann as both full-time and part-time activities well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The local soil, with its bedrock base close to the surface, was not conducive to farming, but settlers managed to feed their families from a combination of fish and what they could grow on subsistence farms that stretched from the coast to the higher ground inland. The north-shore farm on which the Sargent-Robinson House was built was illustrative of the trend. The property was originally part of a land grant that the town conveyed to Samuel Sargent in 1695, along with the “privilege of establishing a fishery” on the northeast side of Hogskin (later “Hodgkins”) Cove.

Just as the granting of the first mill privileges was important to the viability of new Colonial communities, in a maritime location the launch of a fledgling fishing industry was regarded as essential to the stability of the local economy. By 1700, Annisquam village had already been the focus of fishing and trading on the north part of the cape for several decades, and as a new century approached, the town began to foster further development east of the village along the coast of Ipswich Bay. Hogskin Cove, the first sheltered inlet east of Annisquam’s Lobster Cove, had a small but deep harbor that opened directly onto the rich fishing grounds of the bay and the Gulf of Maine. Beginning with the grant to Samuel Sargent and the development of his fishery, in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century a small hamlet grew up at Hogskin Cove near Sargent’s house (the first built there), his fishery, and the small “watch house” where the fishermen’s catch was monitored. When the new highway leading northeast from Annisquam was laid out in 1707, it passed by Samuel Sargent’s house, described in town records as the first dwelling located outside the village on the new road.

**Samuel Sargent** (1660-ca. 1746), the grandson of original settler William Sargent, was an important citizen of Gloucester. Between 1695 and 1728 he served eight terms as a Selectman, and in 1729 represented Gloucester in the Massachusetts General Court. Over his long life he was noted as a fisherman, a trader, and a farmer.

Exactly how Samuel’s farm developed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century is somewhat unclear. As many as four of his adult children may have lived with their families in dwellings located on his original land grant, although the building locations are not known today. One daughter, Mary, married ship’s carpenter Edward Harraden, Jr., who died about 1738. In what may have been a mortgage agreement, in 1737 Edward conveyed a half acre of land, along with half of a “garden orchard” and the southeast end of a dwelling house, to his father-in-law. In 1739, after Edward’s death, Samuel conveyed back to “my daughter Mary Harraden” what appears to be that property: “the dwelling that was Edward Harraden’s, with garden plot.” Since the descriptions of it are similar to later ones for the Sargent-Robinson House property, there has been some speculation that the Harradens lived on Samuel Sargent’s farm, possibly even on the site of the present house.

As with other families in Gloucester, much confusion has resulted from the fact that many Sargent family members shared the same first name. Samuel Sargent’s eldest son Samuel (1690-1761), for instance, may also have lived on the farm, and for a time his 1761 death date was confused with his father’s. Recent research indicates, however, that in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century Samuel, Sr.’s original house was owned not by Samuel, Jr., but by his second son, **William Sargent**. William (b. 1692) had married Edward Harraden, Jr.’s sister, Susanna, in 1726. They had at least four children, and in about 1760, William conveyed the old house to their son Jonathan. Jonathan married Lydia Lane in 1757, and the conveyance may have been associated with their marriage, as well as with William’s advancing years.



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**Ownership under Jonathan Sargent, ca. 1760-1813**

The property that **Jonathan Sargent** (1735-1815) received from his father included several adjoining parcels of land. Seventeen acres were located on the northwest side of the “highway” leading northeast from the river and the village of Annisquam. The road, the precursor of today’s Washington Street/MA Route 127, eventually nearly encircled the cape. Jonathan’s seventeen-acre piece is described as lying between the road and the coast, and extending all the way from Hogskin Cove on the west to Plum(b) Cove on the east. It included some marsh land near the shore that may have produced some hay. Jonathan also owned twelve acres of upland on the higher ground southeast of the highway, reduced from the original 28 acres there that had been part of his grandfather’s homestead. The latter piece, which for the next century was conveyed in transactions together with the Sargent-Robinson House, was repeatedly referred to as “Jonathan Sargent’s Pasture.” Close to the house there was also a small “garden plot” of less than an acre that apparently functioned as a kitchen garden, where the family would have grown herbs, vegetables, etc. Remarkably, the little garden plot (Map #7) is still intact today.

Architectural evidence indicates that Jonathan Sargent replaced the previous dwelling on the site. Both the framing and earliest finishes of the main part of the current house are characteristic of the third quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, rather than of the pre-1725 First Period. Principal timbers are cased with beaded boards, and high-style, raised-field paneling graces the fireplace wall of the parlor. No evidence has been found to indicate that the building ever had the small casement windows or the chamfered timbers that were characteristic of New England houses before 1725.

In replacing the old house, however, it appears that Jonathan did not demolish it entirely. The fieldstone foundation, on which the walls of the northeast part of the main house rest, lies several feet outside the walls of a full-height stone cellar. The southwest wall of the cellar consists of the massive stone and rubble chimney base and a broken-down section of wall under the entry, in the area of the cellar stairs. The construction of both a chimney base and a full-height cellar was a massive undertaking, and required a large amount of labor. When possible, Colonial house builders utilized existing below-ground structures in the cellars of new buildings. (The Macy-Colby House in Amesbury [NR, 2006] is another Essex County example in which the cellar of an earlier house is incorporated into a later 18<sup>th</sup>-century structure.)

Jonathan Sargent was married twice. His first marriage, to Lydia Lane in 1757, may have been a factor in his acquisition of his father’s property and the building of the larger house. Sadly, their young family, which was soon to include four daughters, fell victim of a type of tragedy that was all too common in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. One daughter, Lydia, died as a small child, and the other three—Elizabeth, Rachel, and Sarah—all died of dysentery between the ages of 13 and 20 in September 1779.

Lydia Lane Sargent had died in 1772, and in 1777 Jonathan had married again. His second wife was Lydia Phipps (1744-1818). They had no children, and as the two of them grew older they apparently lived only in the southwest end of the house. The bake oven beside the parlor fireplace (see parlor description, page 8) was clearly an added feature of the very late 18<sup>th</sup> or the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, probably built when Jonathan and Lydia “downsized” to occupy just that part of the house. Photos from the 1960s show that when this new oven was built, it disrupted the design of the earlier, raised-field paneling of the fireplace wall.

It is not clear who may have lived in the other part of the house during the later period of Jonathan Sargent’s ownership, but census documents provide some clues. The federal population censuses of 1790, 1800, and 1810 confirm that in those years there were only two or three people in the Sargent household—Jonathan, Lydia, and in 1790 a male between 10 and 16 years of age. The boy may have been a relative, or possibly a servant or hired laborer. The most likely occupants of the other part of the

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building would have been the various relatives, including both Sargents and Phippses, who are listed adjacent to Jonathan's household on the census records.

**Interim ownership, 1814-1818: Phipps and Lane**

In 1813, two years before his death, the aged Jonathan Sargent sold his house and land. In the sale, he reserved for himself and his wife the right to live there until they died. After passing through the hands of Josiah Parsons in 1814 (Parsons was apparently an intermediary), the property was bought jointly by **Amos Phipps and Jonathan Lane**.

**Amos Phipps** (1770-1834), who may already have been living in the house for some time, was Lydia Phipps Sargent's nephew, and Jonathan Lane was either the father or another close relative of Amos's first wife, Lydia (Lane). Evidence from the 1810 census, which lists the household of Amos Phipps next to that of Jonathan and Lydia Sargent, indicates that the two generations were apparently sharing the house. Although they are not listed by name on that census, the ages and gender of the members of Amos's family recorded that year match those of Amos and Lydia and their young children—Lydia (b. 1798), Amos, Jr. (b. 1800/1), Eliza (b. 1804), Jonathan (b. 1807), and Charlotte (b. January 1810).

Jonathan and Lydia Phipps Sargent apparently had a close relationship with her nephew and his family. Two of Amos Phipps's children were named Jonathan Sargent Phipps—the child who was three years old in 1810 and who died in May of 1813, and another boy born just after the other's death.

Lydia Phipps Sargent died in 1818 at the age of 74, outliving her husband by three years. Judging by the architecture of the little room that was added onto the back of the kitchen, that section was probably built around 1800-1810 as an additional bedroom—possibly intended for Lydia, or even for Jonathan in his last years. The doors, dado, and other architectural trim of the room are all characteristic of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**Winthrop Sargent ownership, 1818-1836**

In Lydia Phipps Sargent's will, she left two dollars to each of her two brothers and the residue of her estate to her young great-nephew, Jonathan Sargent Phipps. Jonathan's father, Amos Phipps, already owned half of the property, and upon Lydia's death, he sold his portion to a relative of Jonathan Sargent's, **Winthrop Sargent** (1761-1839). It does not appear that Winthrop ever lived in the house; he apparently rented it back to Amos Phipps. The other half-owner, Jonathan Lane, lost his half of the property to debt, and in 1823 Winthrop Sargent purchased Lane's portion as well, thus acquiring all or most of the ownership of the house and the associated land.

Both of these transactions may have been associated with debts that Phipps and Lane owed to Winthrop Sargent, and may have been part of a repossession or a foreclosure by the latter. Whatever the circumstances, Amos Phipps and his wife (who, like both of Jonathan Sargent's wives, was named Lydia), continued to live in the house, and raised their children there. Like Jonathan Sargent's family in the previous century, Amos and Lydia Phipps also experienced their share of tragedy. In addition to enduring the death of a six-year-old son, they lost their eldest son, Amos Phipps, Jr., in a type of accident that was all too common on Cape Ann. Amos, Jr., like many young Gloucester men, was a mariner. According to the Gloucester town records, in October, 1823, at the age of 23, he was "drowned off Portsmouth lighthouse from the schooner Paramount."

Amos Phipps, Sr. died in 1834. His widow appears to have retained some rights in the property, however, probably as part of her widow's dower. She lived on in the house for thirty years after her husband's death, occupying it along with various members of the next generation. During that period there appears

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to have been some uncertainty over who actually owned or had the rights to the two halves of the house, and to the more than 2,100 square feet of land associated with the southwest end of the building.

During the rest of Winthrop Sargent's ownership, and until his death in 1839, all of the surviving Phipps children grew up and married. The eldest, Lydia, married George Davis in 1823. Eliza, the second daughter, married into the Sargent family in 1827, when she married George Riggs Sargent. The second son to be named Jonathan Sargent Phipps (who had received the bequest from his great-aunt in 1818) married Mary Robards in 1837.

Several of the grown Phipps children lived for a time in the Sargent-Robinson House with their spouses, while their mother continued to occupy the other side. They all eventually established their own homes close by—several of them on the opposite side of Washington Street, on what had been “Jonathan Sargent's pasture.” The eldest Phipps daughter, Lydia, may have lived in the house for a while with her husband, George Davis. As late as 1850, the youngest Phipps child, Jonathan Sargent Phipps, occupied the Sargent-Robinson house with his wife and two young children, while the widow Lydia Phipps was still living in the southwest end.

It was apparently in this generation that a small house was built between the Sargent-Robinson House and the road, on an 875-square-foot parcel that is now numbered 974 Washington Street. Middle Phipps daughter Eliza occupied the little house for many years with her son George, after her husband, George R. Sargent, died.

Although ownership of the various parts of the property shortly before Winthrop Sargent's death is somewhat unclear, Lydia Phipps Davis's husband **George Davis** appears to have actually owned both parts of the Sargent-Robinson House for a time, as evidenced by an exchange of deeds in April 1835. No money changed hands, but one deed conveyed what was described as the east part of the house and land extending back to the bay shore from Davis to Winthrop Sargent, while the other transferred the west part of the dwelling and eight square rods of land from Sargent to Davis. It appears, however, that Winthrop Sargent soon ended up owning the southwest (or “west”) part as well, because after he died in 1839 it was part of his estate, and became the property of his heirs.

It was the third Phipps daughter, Charlotte, whose marriage formed an important link with another longtime Gloucester family, and whose descendants were to own the house for the next 120 years.

#### **Daniel Robinson ownership, 1836-1886**

In 1831, Amos and Lydia Phipps's youngest daughter, Charlotte (1810-1882), married **Daniel Robinson, Jr.** Like Jonathan Sargent, he was one of many descendants of an original Cape Ann settler. In 1836, Daniel (1807-1886) made the first of a series of purchases that were eventually to give him ownership of both parts of the house, the pasture across the road, and much of Samuel Sargent's original land between the road, the shore, and Hodgkins and Plum Coves. That year, he bought the northeasterly half of the house and the property extending north-northwest to the coast. After Winthrop Sargent's death in 1839, Daniel Robinson bought the “west” (actually southwest) part of the house and the associated 2,100 square feet from Sargent's estate.

It is not clear exactly how long Daniel and Charlotte Robinson may have lived in the Sargent-Robinson House. The census of 1840 indicates that they were living there at that time, with Lydia Phipps occupying the other part. However, by about 1850, Daniel had built a two-story house on the land just southwest of the old Sargent house, and he and his young family moved there. Later 19<sup>th</sup>-century maps show that

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second house standing some distance back from the street, on the property numbered today as 968 Washington Street, and it is possible that it may still exist there, although in greatly altered form.

No longer extant is a small, mid 19<sup>th</sup>-century commercial building also shown on those maps that was built close to the roadside in front of Daniel and Charlotte's new house, and just west of the Sargent-Robinson House. Daniel Robinson had several occupations during the 50 years he was to own Jonathan Sargent's former property. Like many of his neighbors, he was listed in some years as a fisherman. In the 1850s, however, he was a "trader" and "merchant," running a store in the building in front of his house. Daniel and Charlotte eventually had seven children, and by 1855 their eldest son, Amos Phipps Robinson (b. 1835), was a clerk in the store, and apparently later took over its management.

Later in the century, Daniel Robinson took on other duties. By 1870 he had been appointed the customs inspector for the area, probably in charge of examining the cargo brought by vessels into Hodgkins Cove and Annisquam. By 1880 he was classified both as a "master fisherman" and "wreckmaster," dealing with wrecked ships off the shore of Cape Ann.

In 1870, even though by then he had already sold off some of his acreage, Daniel Robinson was the owner of \$3,000 worth of real estate on the "highway to Annisquam" between Plum Cove at Lanesville and Hodgkins Cove at Bay View. The two villages on the coves sprang up quickly in the third quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They were part of the explosive growth on Gloucester's north shore associated with two powerful forces: the accelerated development of a summer resort community following the 1847 extension of the railroad to Gloucester, and the expansion of the quarrying and granite-shipping industry that had begun earlier in the century, especially on the north side of the cape. Like other owners of some of the large properties that had come down from the original Colonial farms and land grants, Daniel Robinson took advantage of the real estate boom that began before the Civil War. Between the mid 1850s and 1880, he subdivided and sold off sections of the old Sargent land that lay between the road and the shore. In 1872, for instance, he sold a house lot northeast of the Sargent-Robinson House to Peter Gordon, who built the house now next door at today's 976 Washington Street. Several of Daniel's real estate transactions were with family members, like the 1869 sale of some land on the southeast side of Washington Street to his brother-in-law, Thomas Brackett.

As Daniel and Charlotte Robinson's children grew up, several of them lived in one or the other of his two houses, either boarding with their parents in the larger house at 968 Washington Street, or in the old Sargent-Robinson House at #972. As adults, at various times sons Amos, Allen, and George Edwin, and youngest daughter Ada all lived at #968 with Daniel and Charlotte. In 1860 the elderly Lydia Phipps was still living in the old Sargent-Robinson House at #972 (she died in 1864), but Daniel and Charlotte's second son, Daniel Howard Robinson, occupied the other part of it with his wife Clara and son Henry. In 1876, the youngest Robinson son, **Otis Clifford Robinson** (1849-1938), married Ellen Tucker, and they moved into the Sargent-Robinson House shortly afterward. (Several late 19<sup>th</sup>-century deeds ascribe the ownership of the southwest part of the house to Charlotte Robinson, creating a questionable chain of title that was never clarified. The reference may have had to do with an encumbrance inherited from her mother, Lydia Phipps.)

Otis and Ellen Robinson had no children, and at least in some years after Lydia Phipps' death, they shared the Sargent-Robinson House with tenants. In 1880, for instance, two single women, 51-year-old Dorcas Wheeler and her invalid 65-year-old aunt, Caroline Parsons, a hatmaker, lived in one part of the house.

Unlike most of his close relatives, Otis Robinson was not involved in fishing or the maritime trade. Instead, he had a long career as a house painter. In 1875 he had bought the Robinson store building west

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of the house from his father and converted it to his paint shop. That building disappeared sometime between 1884 and 1899, and its 8,800-square-foot property became today's 970 Washington Street, where the present house was built about 1915. Directories indicate that sometime after 1892, Otis moved his paint shop into the little house that had stood at today's 974 Washington Street, after his aunt Eliza died and his cousin George Sargent moved to a house across the road.

#### **Children of Daniel Robinson → Otis Robinson 1886-1938**

Both Charlotte and Daniel Robinson died in the 1880s, Charlotte in 1882, and Daniel in 1886. Their property passed in trust to their seven children, some of whom continued to occupy the two houses at 968 and 972 Washington Street.

Of those adult children, Allen B. Robinson (1841-1923) and the youngest of the seven, Ada (1854-1917), apparently lived at 968 Washington Street for the rest of their lives. In 1870, at the age of seventeen, Ada Robinson had married Orin Chick, a stonecutter in the nearby granite quarry. Before she was 21, she had two children, Fredwin and Florence Chick, who lived there as well.

It is not clear whether Ada and Orin were divorced or whether he died, but their children's surname was changed to Robinson, and in 1878 Ada married another stone cutter, Philip Gallagher. They had one daughter, Gertrude, born in 1879. Gertrude married teamster Eugene Lane in 1900. For some years after their marriage Gertrude and Eugene lived in nearby Lanesville, but by 1920 they and their two sons, Sargent (b. 1901) and Eugene G. Lane (b. 1902 or 1903), were living in one side of the Sargent-Robinson House. By that time Otis Robinson's wife Ellen had died, and he remained in residence in one end of the house, probably the smaller southwest part. In 1920, the two Lane boys were employed in typical early 20<sup>th</sup>-century occupations. Nineteen-year-old Sargent Lane was a streetcar conductor on the trolley line that ran past the house on Washington Street, and seventeen-year-old Eugene worked at the box factory then operating in Lanesville.

By 1930 Otis Robinson, at the age of 80, had retired from house painting. The building at 974 Washington Street was gone by 1917, but he may have continued his trade for some years after that, using one of the outbuildings at #972 for a paint shop. In 1930 he still lived in the old Sargent-Robinson House, with Gertrude and Eugene Lane, and the Lanes' older son, Sargent. By then Sargent Lane was working as a chauffeur, and his father was employed as a mechanic in the nearby granite works, the profession he followed for the rest of his life.

#### **Gertrude Robinson Lane, 1938-1961**

Otis Robinson died in 1938. Although the 19<sup>th</sup>-century ownership record of the Sargent-Robinson House is somewhat cloudy, it is clear that in spite of the family trust arrangement, Otis had long been considered the owner of 972 Washington Street. His will left the house to his niece, **Gertrude Lane**.

In 1940 Gertrude and her husband Eugene took out a mortgage on the property, and it may have been around that time that they made some renovations to the old house, including installing the hardwood floor in the parlor. Eugene Lane, Sr. died in 1941, and upon Gertrude's death in 1961, she left all of her property to their younger son, **Eugene G. Lane, Jr.**

#### **Eugene G. Lane, Jr., 1961-1969**

**Eugene G. Lane, Jr.** (1902/3-1991) lived in the Sargent-Robinson House for most of his life. He had a long career in Bay View or Lanesville—first in trucking, and later as an iron forger and a crane operator. In 1969 he sold the Sargent-Robinson House, together with its small garden plot, to **Frank T. Barnes, Jr.**

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and his wife **Janet**. On the same day, the Barneses also bought the little lot at 974 Washington Street where George Sargent's little house (later Otis Robinson's paint shop) had stood.

#### **Late 20th-century restoration and Barnes family ownership**

The Barnes family undertook a careful restoration of the old house. They selectively removed late finishes to uncover fireplaces and other features, and restored and stabilized the entire chimney stack, removing the two later bake ovens. Under their ownership, modern installations were largely confined to utility systems and to kitchen and bathroom areas. They extended the northeast end of the ell for a bathroom and new kitchen, and added a second-story lavatory under the rear slope of the roof just north of the main chimney.

The house is still in the Barnes family today and is currently occupied by tenants. Listing in the National Register will bring a long-overdue honor to one of Gloucester's best-preserved Cape Ann cottages, and to the many generations of the interconnected families who lived there and cared for it for more than two centuries.

#### **Archaeological Significance**

Since patterns of ancient Native American occupation in Gloucester are poorly understood, any surviving sites could be significant. Ancient sites in this area can help document the effects of sea-level rise on Native American settlement and subsistence through time, and the ways in which Native peoples adapted to that change. The proximity of the property to ocean waters may indicate the potential for ancient sites in this area to contain valuable information on fishery technologies, particularly involving the exploitation of more open water or pelagic species, including swordfish and whales. Ancient Native American sites in this area may also contain data relating to prehistoric tool technologies, including the extent to which local and regionally important volcanic lithic complexes, including the Lynn Volcanics complex, were utilized on local sites.

Historic archaeological resources described above have the potential to provide detailed information on Gloucester's social, cultural, and economic growth from the 17<sup>th</sup> through the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Additional documentary research, combined with archaeological survey and testing on the property, can help document the original construction date for the house and the changes that occurred as it evolved over the next three centuries. This research can document the extent to which the original house, constructed ca. 1700, was incorporated into the present structure. Careful mapping of structural remains from outbuildings can also help document the layout of the property through time, and the functional changes that occurred under different ownerships. This information, combined with the detailed analysis of the contents from occupational-related features (trash pits, privies, wells) can contribute important information on the lives of inhabitants of the house, including their occupations and the extent to which they were interrelated. These sources may contribute information important to studies of agriculture, fisheries, and other maritime trades pursued during occupations by the Sargent family. Information may be present indicating the extent to which these occupations were conducted seasonally or by some other division of labor.

Known and potential historic archaeological resources discussed above may contribute important information related to the construction and architectural details for an 18<sup>th</sup>-century Cape Ann cottage, and the social and economic characteristics of fishermen/farmers in 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century Gloucester and Massachusetts. Important information may also be available that can contribute information on the history of New England fisheries in general.

Sargent-Robinson House

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Gloucester was first settled in 1625, as fishing settlements were made by the Dorchester and Plymouth Companies. While no sites from this period or earlier are known, they may exist. Potential historic archaeological sites at the Sargent-Robinson House begin with the conveyance of a land grant from the town to Samuel Sargent in 1695. The house was rebuilt ca. 1760, apparently incorporating portions of the old house. The foundation, stone walls, and a full-height stone cellar were incorporated into the present structure. The incorporation of an earlier structure into a later 18<sup>th</sup>-century building has been recognized in other areas of Essex County.

Any archaeological evidence of Samuel Sargent's 1700 homestead would contribute greatly to the significance of this nomination. The development of the farm in the 18<sup>th</sup> century remains unclear. Additional documentary research, combined with archaeological survey and testing, may help to bridge this gap. Archaeological research on the area surrounding the house and in the basement of the Sargent-Robinson House may help to identify construction features of the original and rebuilt house and any barns, stables, outbuildings, and occupational-related features (trash pits, privies, wells) associated with both houses and three centuries of occupation.

Detailed analysis of the contents of occupational-related features may contribute important information related to the social, cultural, and economic characteristics of the occupants of the farm. Information may be present that clarifies and contributes information related to the relationship between fishing and farming, including the division of labor between the farm, fishing, and other trades conducted from the house. Information may also be available that defines the living arrangements of the inhabitants as the house was altered to accommodate two families instead of one. Each group of occupants may have used their own occupational-related features communally, or may have used a combination of communal and "private" features. Single component-type features may be present that may contribute valuable insights into the lives of specific inhabitants of the houses. Similar information might also be obtained from communally based features in which stratified deposits are present, which could give an isolated view of specific events and/or specific occupants of the house.

Additional background research, combined with archaeological survey and testing, may also clarify whether or not any of the small building located "beside the road" stood on the nominated property. Archaeological resources associated with that building, operated as a store by Daniel and Charlotte Robinson in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, may contribute important information related to the types of goods bought, sold, and traded by local farms and fishermen in the area for their work and subsistence. This information may contribute valuable information that indicates how successful local residents were in combining fishing with agriculture as their subsistence base. Customs house records, if they exist, could provide information related to trade and the relationships of the port of Gloucester with other coastal communities, including the international coastal trade. Information derived from trash deposits located around the small house may contain broken and other discarded items used in the coastal trade.

Information may also be present at the Sargent-Robinson House related to its significance as a well-preserved example of the 18<sup>th</sup>-century Cape Ann cottage. The layout and/or function of buildings, structures, and features at the house site may survive archaeologically as unique examples of the design, construction, and use of 18<sup>th</sup>-century Cape Ann cottages. This information could prove invaluable to historic archaeologists by providing them with indicators of this building's design and construction through archaeological survivals only, without the benefit of a standing structure.

Sargent-Robinson House  
Name of Property

Essex, MA  
County and State

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

### Books

Babson, John J. *History of the Town of Gloucester, Cape Ann*. Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1972 (first published 1860).

Copeland, Melvin T. and Elliott C. Rogers. *The Saga of Cape Ann*. Freeport, ME: Bond Wheelwright Co., 1960.

Erkkila, Barbara. *Hammers on Stone: The History of Cape Ann Granite*. Beverly, MA: Commonwealth Editions, 1980.

Garland, Joseph E. *The Gloucester Guide: A Retrospective Ramble*. Gloucester, MA: Gloucester 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, Inc., 1973

\_\_\_\_\_. *The North Shore*. Beverly, MA: Commonwealth Editions, 1998.

Hawes, Charles B. *Gloucester by Land and Sea*. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1923.

Hurd, D. H., ed. *History of Essex County*. Philadelphia: J. W. Lewis & Co., 1888.

Pringle, James R. *History of the Town and City of Gloucester, Cape Ann, Massachusetts*. Gloucester, MA: James R. Pringle, 1892.

### Manuscripts

Fish, Prudence. Draft National Register nomination for the Sargent-Robinson House. 2012.

Research by Ruth Tyler, 1971-1972.

### Federal and State Documents

Federal census collection: Population census for Gloucester, various years.

Massachusetts Historical Commission. Reconnaissance Survey Report for the City of Gloucester, 1985.

\_\_\_\_\_. Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth.

### Essex County records

Essex County Registry of Deeds and Probate. Various deeds and plans.

### City of Gloucester documents

City of Gloucester Directories, various years, 1860 to 1950.

Gloucester early town records, including vital records.



Sargent-Robinson House  
Name of Property

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Maps and plans (chronological order)

Mason, John. *Map of Gloucester, Cape Ann*. 1831.

Walling, Henry F. *Map of the Towns of Gloucester and Rockport*. 1851.

Beers, F. W. & Co. *Atlas of Essex County*. 1872.

Hopkins, G. M. & Co. *Atlas of Gloucester and Rockport: Plate 17*. 1884.

Stadley & Co. *Atlas of Cape Ann: Map of Gloucester*. Sampson & Murdock, 1899.

Appleton, Thomas A. Plan of Land in Gloucester. February 1917.

Sanborn & Co. *Maps of Gloucester*. 1917.

Essex Survey Services. Plan of Land in Gloucester. April 4, 1967.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other. Name of repository: Cape Ann Historical Museum

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** GLO.614

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** less than one acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 42.671102 Longitude: -70.665119

2. Latitude: Longitude:

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

1. Zone: 19 Easting: 363520 Northing: 4725400

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Sargent-Robinson House property occupies two parcels of land (Gloucester Assessor's Map 140, Parcels 1 and 2), totaling just under half an acre. The southeast boundary runs 115 feet along Washington Street (MA Route 127), and the northeast boundary follows Bayview Lane, a private way. The combined property is roughly rectangular, except for the small garden plot that extends southwest from the rear, west corner of the main parcel, behind the neighboring property at 970 Washington Street.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The Sargent-Robinson House property is the last intact piece of the mid 18<sup>th</sup>-century Jonathan Sargent farmstead at Hogskin (Hodgkins) Cove, and incorporates its one remaining building--the farmhouse dating to ca. 1760.

Sargent-Robinson House  
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### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Anne Forbes, with Betsy Friedberg, National Register Director, MHC  
organization: Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC)  
street & number: 220 Morrissey Boulevard  
city or town: Boston state: MA zip code: 02134  
e-mail betsy.friedberg@sec.state.ma.us  
telephone: 617-727-8470  
date: August 2016

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Sargent-Robinson House  
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### Photo Log

Name of Property: Sargent-Robinson House

City or Vicinity: Gloucester

County: Essex State: Massachusetts

Photographer: Anne Forbes

Date Photographed: July 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 15. Sargent-Robinson House: Southeast façade.
- 2 of 15. Sargent-Robinson House: Southwest and southeast elevations (camera facing north).
- 3 of 15. Sargent-Robinson House: Northeast elevation of main house, with inner part of ell (camera facing southwest).
- 4 of 15. Sargent-Robinson House: Northeast ell, view southwest.
- 5 of 15. Sargent-Robinson House: Rear elevations of northeast ell, inner rear ell, and main house (camera facing south).
- 6 of 15. Sargent-Robinson House: Privy (camera facing north).
- 7 of 15. Sargent-Robinson House: Shed (camera facing north).
- 8 of 15. Sargent-Robinson House: Kitchen, view west, with fireplace wall.
- 9 of 15. Sargent-Robinson House: Kitchen, view north into ells, with closet.
- 10 of 15. Sargent-Robinson House: Parlor, view north, with fireplace wall.
- 11 of 15. Sargent-Robinson House: Parlor, view south, with corner cabinet.
- 12 of 15. Sargent-Robinson House: Northeast chamber: fireplace wall.
- 13 of 15. Sargent-Robinson House: North (rear) addition, camera facing west.
- 14 of 15. Sargent-Robinson House: Northeast ell, view south from dining room into main kitchen.
- 15 of 15. Sargent-Robinson House: Northeast ell, view northeast into present kitchen.

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### Index of Figures

- 1 of 4. Sargent-Robinson House. Historic photograph, early 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 2 of 4. Sargent-Robinson House. Sketch plot plan. 2015.
- 3 of 4. Sargent-Robinson House. Sketch floor plan: first story. 2015.
- 4 of 4. Sargent-Robinson House. Sketch floor plan: second story. 2015.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

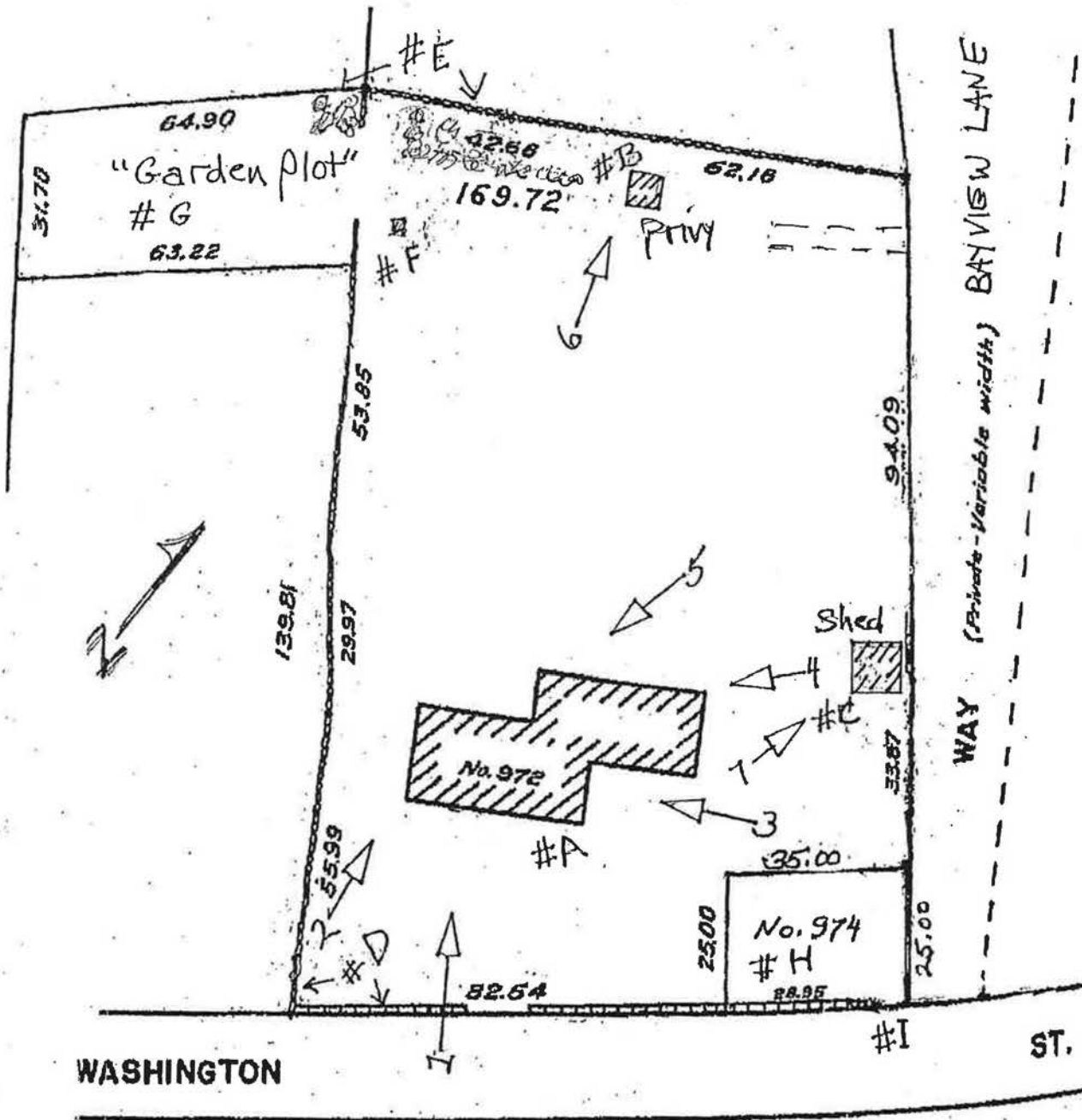
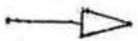


Photo location: 

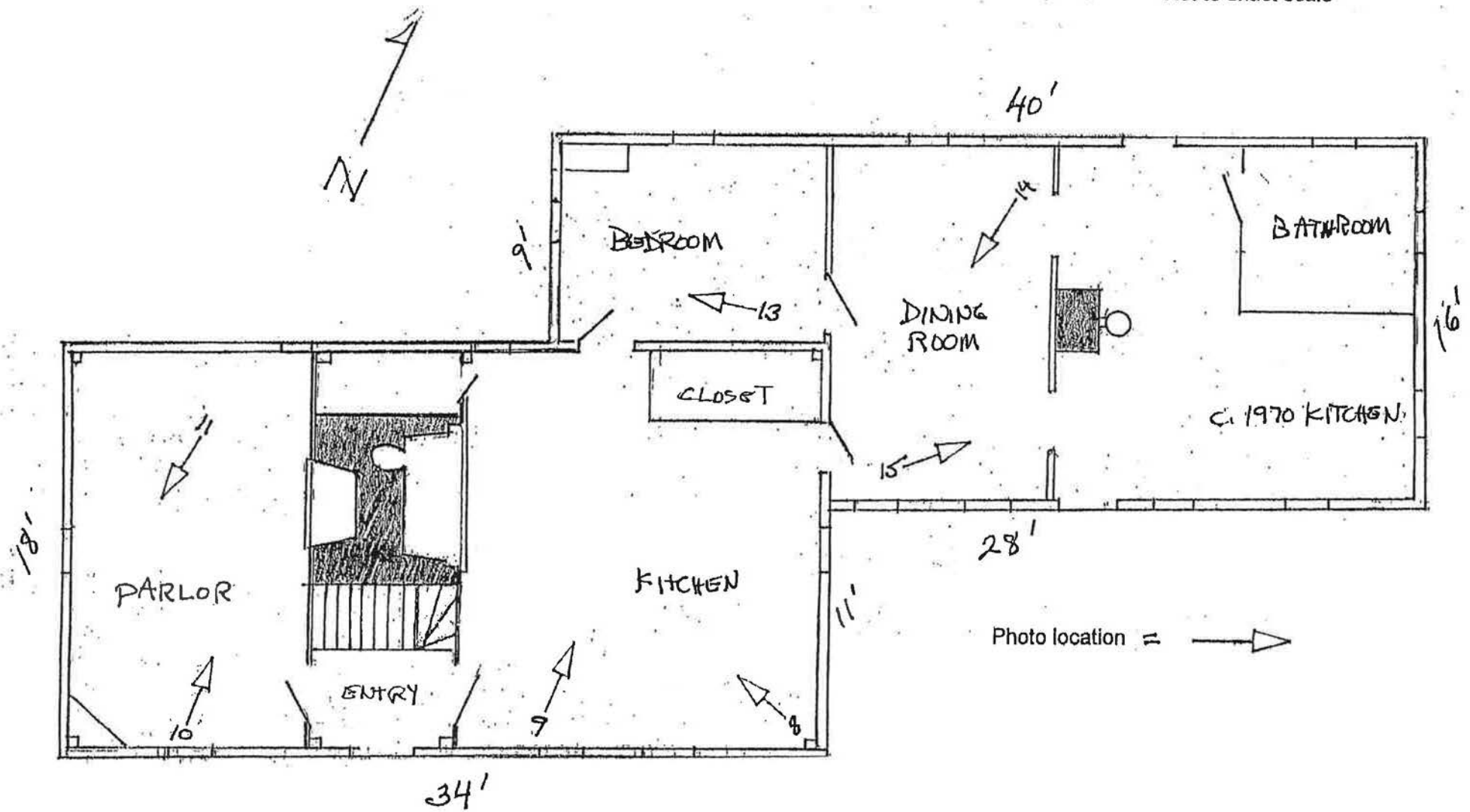
Map/resource number: #

WASHINGTON ST. MA RTE 127 SKETCH PLOT PLAN

Figure 2 Not to exact scale

**SARGENT-ROBINSON HOUSE**  
 Gloucester, Essex County, MA

Not to exact scale

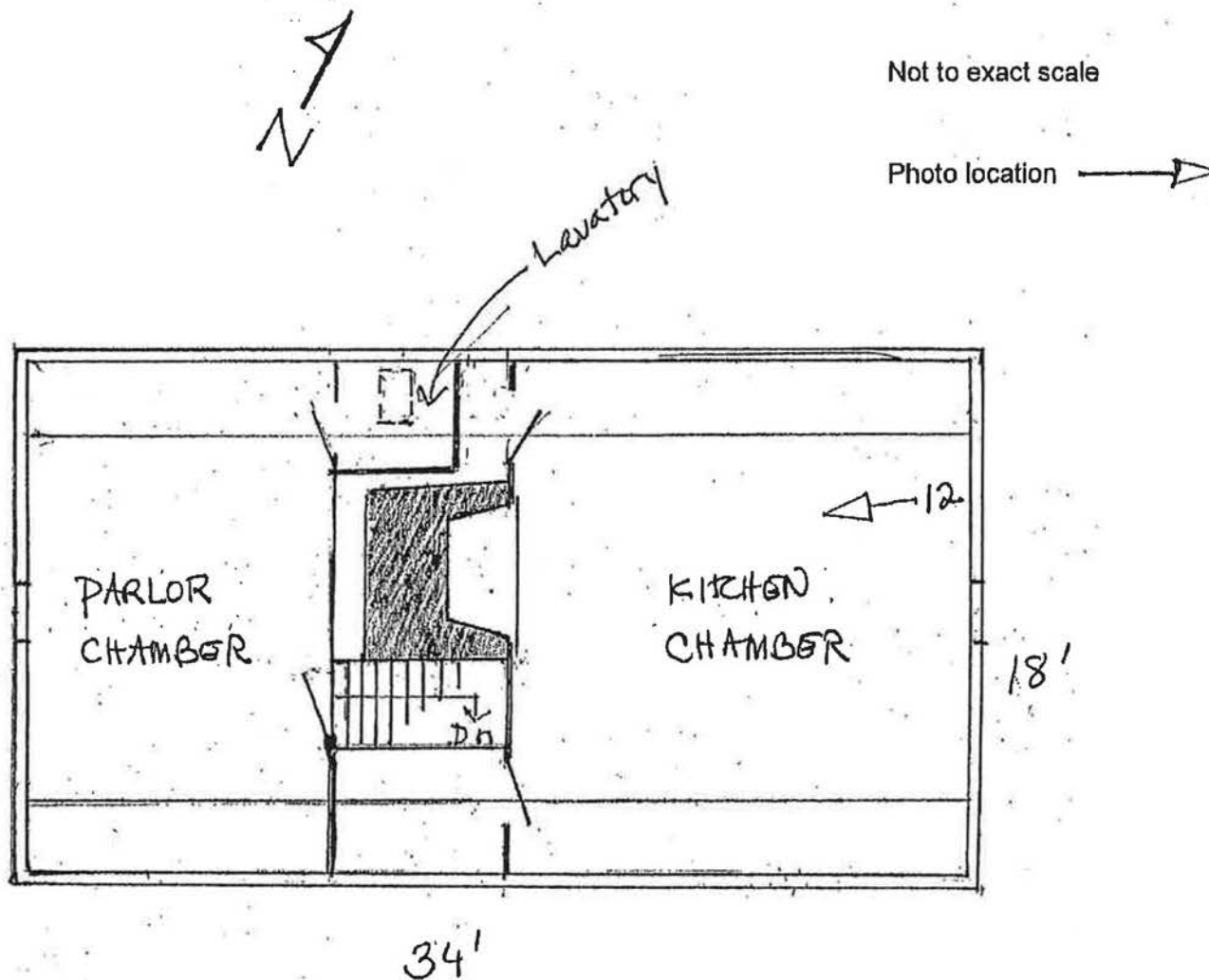


**SKETCH FLOOR PLAN - FIRST FLOOR**

**SARGENT-ROBINSON HOUSE**

**Gloucester, Essex County, MA**

Figure 3



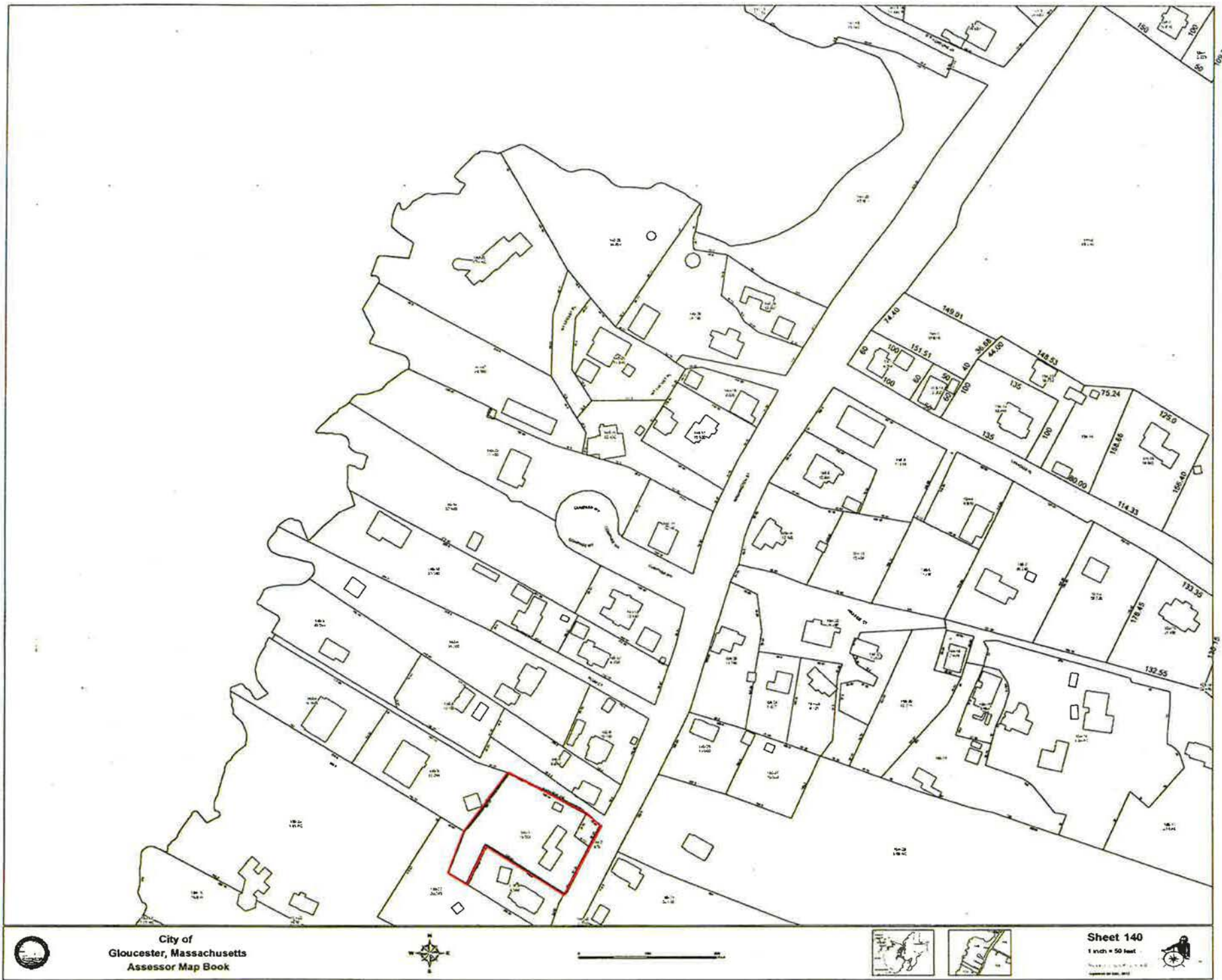
**SKETCH FLOOR PLAN - UPPER FLOOR**

**SARGENT-ROBINSON HOUSE**

**Gloucester, Essex County, MA**

Figure 4

























Small white sign with illegible text, likely a historical marker or informational plaque.





















**Massachusetts Historical Commission Digital Image Submission Form**

*Please submit one form for each group of digital images*

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**About your digital files:**

Camera Used (make, model): Nikon D40X

Resolution of original image capture (camera setting including resolution and file format):

All photos are .TIFF files, 300 megapixels; camera set at "fine"

File name(s) (attach additional sheets if necessary) check here  to refer to attached photo log:

**(see attached sheet)**

|       |       |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

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**About your prints:**

Printer make and model: Hewlett-Packard Photosmart D7520

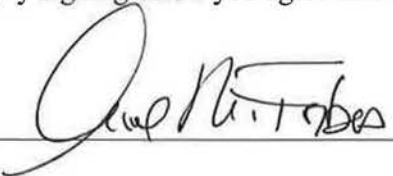
Paper: brand & type (i.e., Epson Premium Glossy Photo)

HP Premium Plus Photo Paper -glossy

Ink: HP 564 ink set

---

**Signature:** (By signing below you agree that the information provided here is true and accurate.)

Signature: 

Date: 7/23/2015



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

October 21, 2016

Mr. J. Paul Loether, Chief  
National Register of Historic Places  
Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
1201 Eye Street, NW 8<sup>th</sup> floor  
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

Sargent-Robinson House, 972 and 974 Washington Street, Gloucester (Essex), MA

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. The owners of the property were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30 to 45 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Betsy Friedberg".

Betsy Friedberg  
National Register Director  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Enclosure

cc: Anne Forbes, consultant  
Mayor Sefatia Theken, City of Gloucester  
Marietta Barnes Delehant  
David Rhineland, Mary Ellen Lepionka, Gloucester Historical Commission  
Richard Noonan, Gloucester Planning Board