

PH0366111

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

DATA SHEET

RECEIVED APR 12 1977

DATE ENTERED SEP 22 1977

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME



HISTORIC

Nichewaug Hill, (Negus Hill)

AND/OR COMMON

Gay Farm (Preferred)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Gay Drive, South Street off Nichewaug Rd.

CITY, TOWN

Petersham

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
2nd

STATE

Massachusetts

CODE

01366

COUNTY

Worcester

CODE

027

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Corinne Howe Babbitt

STREET & NUMBER

Gay Drive, South Street off Nichewaug Road

CITY, TOWN

Petersham

VICINITY OF

STATE

Massachusetts, 01366

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Worcester County Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

2 Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Worcester

STATE

Massachusetts, 01608

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Inventory of the Historic Assets of the Commonwealth

DATE

1976

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Massachusetts Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

Boston

STATE

Massachusetts, 02108

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

☐ EXCELLENT

☐ DETERIORATED

☐ UNALTERED

☒ ORIGINAL SITE

☐ GOOD

☐ RUINS

☒ ALTERED

☐ MOVED DATE _____

☒ FAIR

☐ UNEXPOSED

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Gay Farm is located off Nichewaug Road in Petersham on a town road known as Gay Drive. A beautiful old stone wall lines the property in front of the house along the road. The house is set on a slight rise in a well landscaped lawn. The property originally encompassed 96 acres, 30 of which remain. The other 60 acres comprise a wildlife sanctuary given to the Town of Petersham by Corinne Howe Babbitt in memory of her husband Lewis Hall Babbitt, a naturalist.

The two story house with ell was built between 1740 and 1742. It is a gambrel roofed structure with a central stone chimney and a stone foundation. The original wide shiplap boards on the exterior walls remain, but were entirely covered with shingles in about 1880. Sections of the sheathing were reshingled after 1926, and in the process the shiplap was exposed, but retained. The corner boards are plain.

The facade faces east toward Gay Drive. A simple wooden door is placed slightly off center, and is no longer used. One window to the left of the door and two windows to the right are 12/12 framed by simple flat architraves. There is a simple molded cornice on the overhanging eave. The second story contains three shed roof dormers with 8/8 fenestration.

The south elevation contains the present main entrance in the west end bay. This entrance is covered by a shallow gambrel roofed porch with open lattice work sides. There is a small bay window in the east end bay and a large small paned window directly to the left of the entry porch. In the second story there are two symmetrically placed 12/12 windows.

The west, rear elevation has two 8/8 shed roof dormers above two 12/12 windows and one horizontal window. An ell in the north end of the rear elevation has a plain wooden door, twelve paned casement windows on the first story and twelve paned square windows on the second story.

A large woodshed on the west end of the ell shows a plain wide wooden door with a 12/12 window directly to its right, and two 8/8 windows in the second story.

The interior of the main house is typical of the center chimney entry hall floor plan, with two rooms on both north and south sides. The first floor contains three fireplaces. The dining room fireplace retains a brick oven. In 1846

the stairway from what is now the dining room was moved to the front of the house. At that time the second floor consisted of a simple loft around the huge plastered chimney. At a later date, the upstairs was converted to a four bedroom plan. One bedroom has a fireplace.

The ell was originally a summer kitchen. In about 1940 this summer kitchen was panelled with wide hurricane boards and was protected by a new floor to insure warmth and convenience in the newly converted kitchen, bathroom and pantry (once a part of the original buttery). The second story of the ell has 1 bedroom and storage space.

Near the house is a deep well and set to the south of the house is a 200 year old barn. There are two sheds on the property behind the house.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 1

Between the house and the barn is a hill which contains an old cistern, which for many years was the only water supply to the house. Most of the drinking water was brought from a spring in the woods west of the house. The cistern is approximately thirty feet deep, and is constructed of bricks. It is filtered with sand at the bottom.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
☐ PREHISTORIC	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING	☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	☐ RELIGION
☐ 1400-1499	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	☐ CONSERVATION	☐ LAW	☐ SCIENCE
☐ 1500-1599	☐ AGRICULTURE	☐ ECONOMICS	☐ LITERATURE	☐ SCULPTURE
☐ 1600-1699	☒ ARCHITECTURE	☐ EDUCATION	☒ MILITARY	☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
☒ 1700-1799	☐ ART	☐ ENGINEERING	☐ MUSIC	☐ THEATER
☐ 1800-1899	☐ COMMERCE	☐ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	☐ PHILOSOPHY	☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ 1900-	☐ COMMUNICATIONS	☐ INDUSTRY	☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)
		☐ INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1740-1742

BUILDER/ARCHITECT William Negus

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Gay Farm is significant as the oldest remaining house in Petersham and as a building which housed the same family, the Negus family and descendants, for 234 years.

The house was built between 1740 and 1742 by William Negus, who had come to Petersham during the 1730s. His son Joseph, born in Worcester in 1742, was deeded the house and 96 acres in 1769.

Joseph was a soldier in the Revolutionary War. His regiment left Petersham in April, 1775 en route to camp at Cambridge. He was stationed at General Washington's Hudson River headquarters and superintended the building of Fort Clinton at West Point. After the Battle of Bennington, August 1777, he joined Captain Wing Spooner's Company which participated in the taking of British posts on Lake George in September 1777. Joseph was commissioned Captain by Governor John Hancock in 1789 and Major by Governor Samuel Adams in 1794. He was the father of five daughters and four sons.

Joseph deeded the farm to his son Joel who was a Militia Captain, Justice of the Peace, Town Clerk, school teacher, land surveyor, appraiser, builder of hand looms, designer, decorator, painter, and master of hand lettering.

Joel's eldest daughter, Arathusa Negus, was married to Jonas Howe. The couple lived in the Joel Negus home in town. When their son Thomas grew up and married, he moved back to his great-great grandfather William Negus' property. Here Thomas' daughter, Elizabeth Arathusa Howe, was born. She inherited her father's home and, upon her death in 1926, willed the property to Lewis Hall Babbitt whose widow Corinne Howe Babbitt still lives in the house.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Unpublished papers of the Negus Family.

Coolidge, Mable; History of Petersham, Hudson Press, Hudson:1948.

Howe & Wilder, Petersham Sketches, Transcript Press, Athol: 1950.

Willson, Rev. Edmund, Centennial Address, 1855.

Worcester County Registry of Deeds.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2¹/₄ Acres

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	18
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7	3	1	4	5	0
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4	7	0	4	9	1	0
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ZONE

EASTING

NORTHING

B

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--	--	--	--	--	--

ZONE

EASTING

NORTHING

C

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D

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Blaine Mallory and Joseph Orfant, National Register Editor

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Massachusetts Historical Commission

November 23, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

294 Washington Street

617-727-8470

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Boston

Massachusetts, 02108

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Elizabeth Reed Amadon

TITLE

Executive Director, Mass. Historical Commission

DATE

3/17/77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Charles H. Smith
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

9.22.77

ATTEST:

William H. Cole
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

9.22.77

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

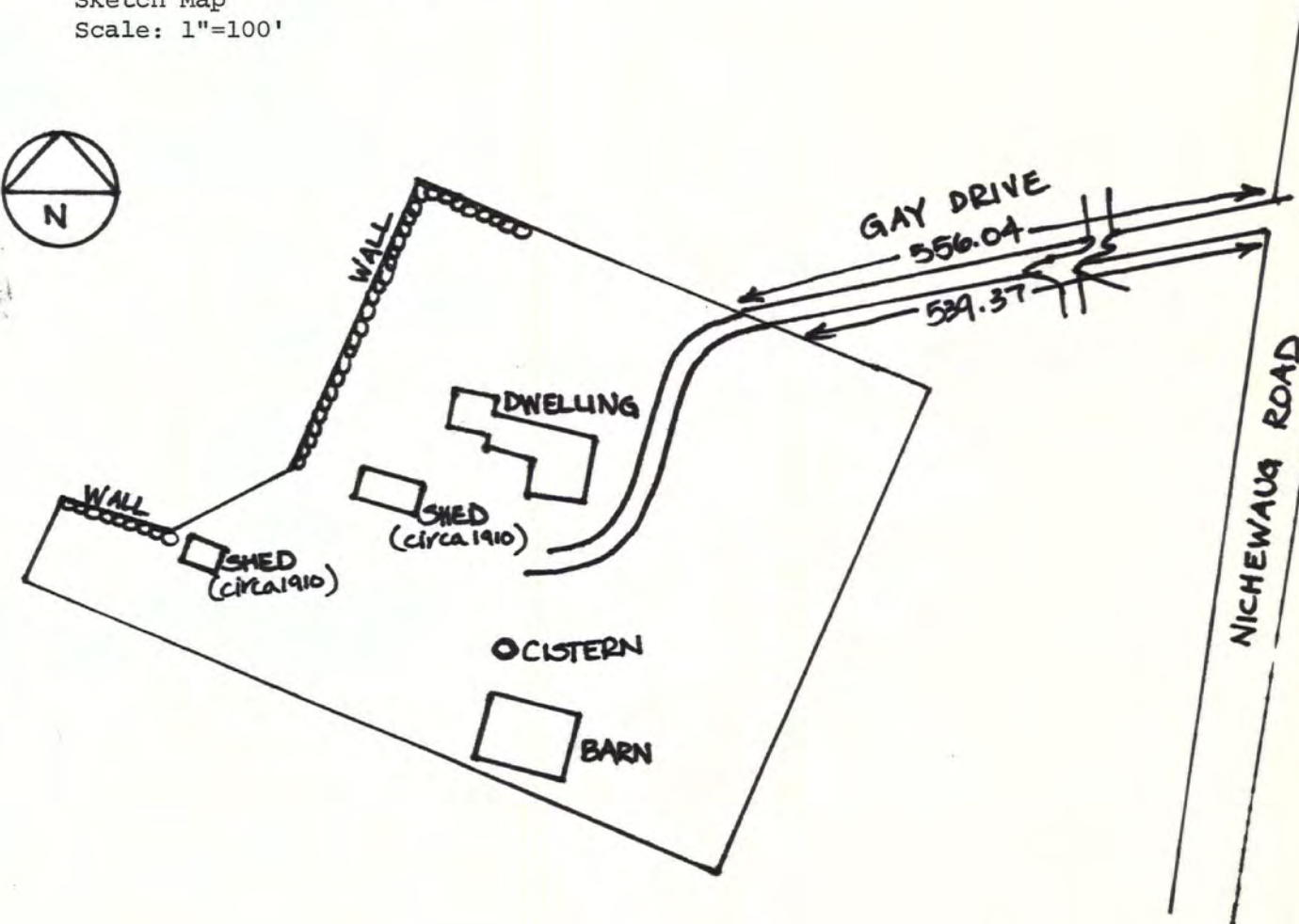
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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

Gay Farm
Petersham, Massachusetts
Sketch Map
Scale: 1"=100'



Property Gay Farm (Negus Hill)

State Massachusetts Working Number 4.12.77.578

Worcester 77000201

TECHNICAL

CONTROL

Photos 5

Maps 1

Acres include barn + outhouses

HISTORIAN

*Accept
Franklin
7.7.77*

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

*Accept
Leborich
5.25.77*

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory _____

Review _____

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

*Accept
Cole
9.19.77*

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

*Hemington
7.22.77*

National Register Write-up _____

Federal Register Entry 11-1-77

Send-back _____

Re-submit _____

Entered SEP 22 1977

INT:2106-74



Gay Farm
Petersham, Massachusetts
1976

APR 12 1977

SEP 22 1977

Corrine Howe Babbitt
Gay Farm, Petersham, Mass.

#1 035

South and West elevations showing ell and
attached shed.

Worcester County

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



Gay Farm

Petersham, Massachusetts
1976

APR 12 1977

SEP 22 1977

Corrine Howe Babbitt

Gay Farm, Petersham, Mass.

#2

obs
East facade and North elevation showing ell.

Worcester County

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



Worcester County

Gay Farm
Petersham, Massachusetts
1976
Corrine Howe Babbitt
Gay Farm, Petersham, Mass.
#3 *075*
East facade.

APR 12 1977

SEP 22 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



Gay Farm
Petersham, Massachusetts
1977

APR 12 1977
SEP 22 1977

Robert E. Hunt
Gay Farm, Petersham, Mass.

#485

Looking northeast toward south elevation
of barn.

Worcester County

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

PHOTO TAKEN

Jan 22-1977

AT

Lewis Babbitt Est.

BY

Robert E. Hunt

HAMES PHOTO SHOP & STUDIO
527 MAIN ST. - ATHOL, MASS. 01331



Gay Farm
Petersham, Massachusetts
1977

APR 12 1977

SEP 22 1977

Robert E. Hunt

Gay Farm, Petersham, Mass.

#5 *9.5*

Looking southeast toward north and west
elevations of barn.

Worcester County

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

PHOTO TAKEN

Jan 22. 1977

AT

Lewis Babbitt Est.

BY

Robert E. Hunt

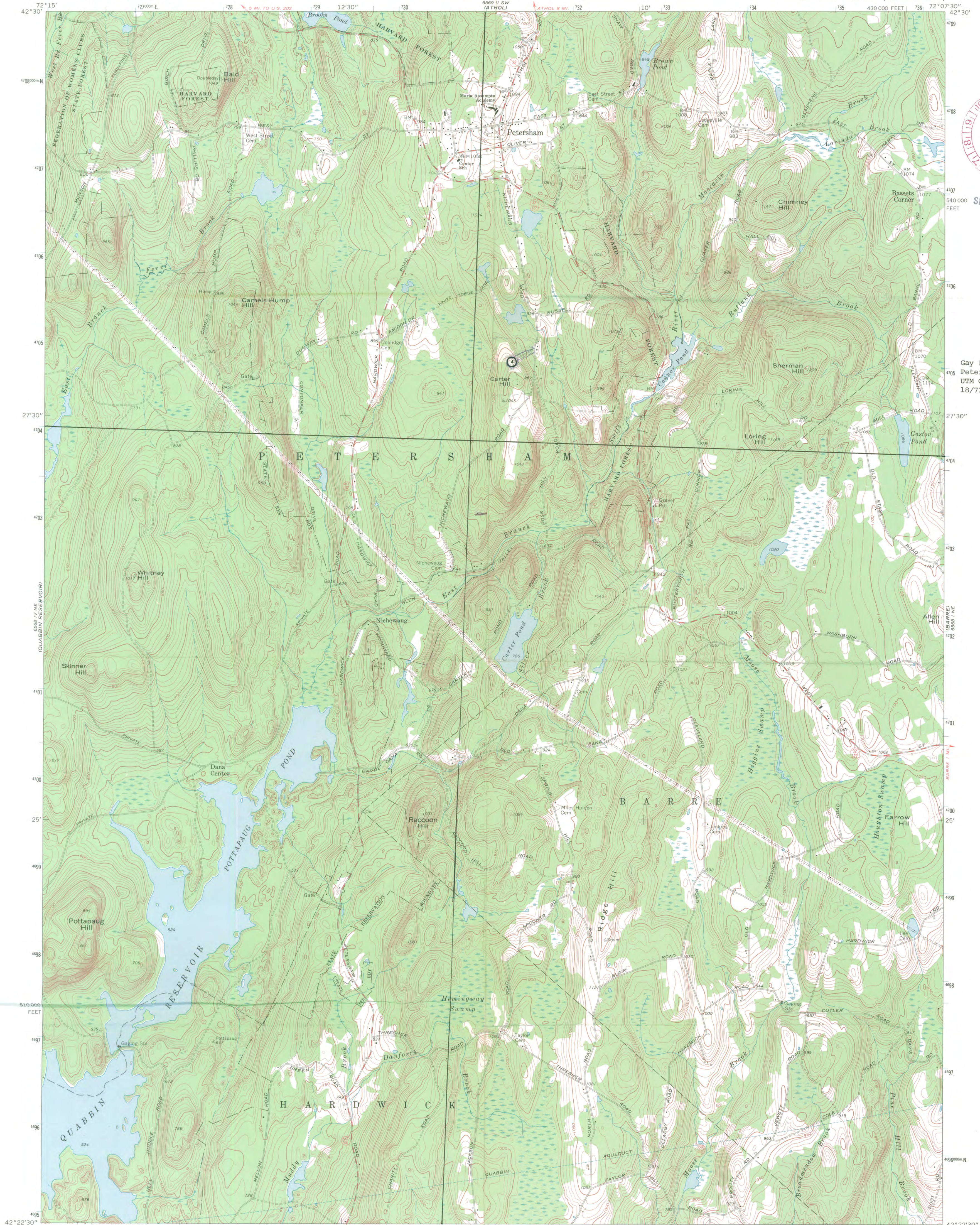
HAMES PHOTO SHOP & STUDIO

527 MAIN ST. - ATHOL, MASS. 01331

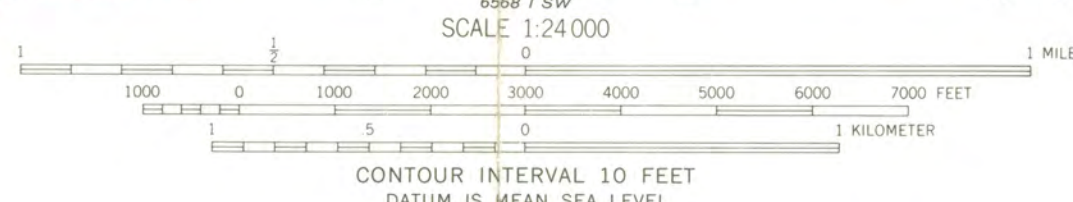
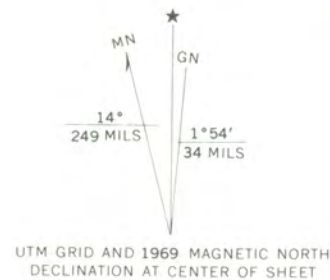


SEP 22 1977

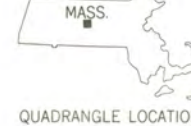
Gay Farm
Petersham, Massachusetts
UTM Coordinates:
18/731 450/4704 910



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, Massachusetts Geodetic Survey, and
Massachusetts Harbor and Land Commission
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1939. Topography by planetable surveys 1943-1944
Revised from aerial photographs taken 1968. Field checked 1969
Polyconic projection, 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 18, shown in blue
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, all weather, hard surface
Secondary highway, all weather, hard surface
Light-duty road, all weather, improved surface
Unimproved road, fair or dry weather
State Route

PETERSHAM, MASS.
N4222.5—W7207.5/7.5

1969

AMS 6568 I NW—SERIES V814

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

WASO-166
(August 1971)

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

TELEPHONE REPORT

DATE

April 14, 1977

TIME OF CALL
3:25

XXXXXX
PM

1. CALL ☒ TO: ☐ FROM (Name)

Joseph Orfant

2. ADDRESS (Tel. No. if needed)

617-727-8470

3. SUBJECT, PROJECT NO., ETC.

Gay Farm (Negus Hill)

4. DETAILS OF DISCUSSION

Inquired about origin of preferred name. Charles M. Gay lived in house from 1846 or 1847 until 1926 and it is still known by that name.

NAME OF PERSON PLACING/RECEIVING CALL

N. Rowland

TITLE

OFFICE

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

MASSACHUSETTS

STATE

Date Entered SEP 22 1977

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Barton, Clara, Homestead	North Oxford vicinity Worcester County
Milford Town Hall	Milford Worcester County
Gay Farm (Negus Hill)	Petersham vicinity Worcester County

Also Notified

Hon. Edward M. Kennedy
Hon. Edward W. Brooke
Hon. Edward P. Boland
Hon. Joseph D. Early

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mrs. Elizabeth R. Amadon
Executive Director, Massachusetts
Historical Commission
294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

Regional Director, North Atlantic Region

880 Mott 9/27/77

NATIONAL REGISTER DATA SHEET

① NAME as it appears on federal register: Gay Farm (Negus Hill)		② OTHER NAMES: Nichewaung Hill		③ date of entry: SEP 22 1977		④ county code: 27th	
⑤ LOCATION street & number S of Petersham off Nichewaung Rd.		city / town Petersham	vicinity of Petersham	state MA	county Worcester	⑥ NPS REGION: NA	
⑦ OWNER ☒ PRIVATE ☐ STATE ☐ MUNICIPAL ☐ COUNTY ☐ MULTIPLE ☐ FEDERAL (agency name)				⑧ ADMINISTRATOR:			
⑨ EXISTING SURVEYS ☐ HARS ☐ HAER ☐ NHL		⑩ FUNDED? ☐ YES ☐ NO		⑪ CONGRESS. DISTRICT 2nd		⑫ SOURCE of NOMINATION ☒ STATE ☐ FEDERAL	
⑬ WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT? ☐ YES, NAME ☐ NO		⑭ WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK? ☐ YES, NAME ☐ NO		⑮ ACREAGE 2.3		⑯ if state who prepared form? ☐ LOCAL ☐ PRIVATE ORGANIZATION	
⑰ CONDITION ☐ excellent ☐ ruins ☐ good ☐ fair ☐ deteriorated ☐ unexposed ☐ unexcavated ☐ altered ☐ unaltered ☐ reconstructed ☐ excavated		⑱ original site ☐ moved ☐ unknown		⑲ features: INTERIOR ☐ SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-1 ☐ NOT INTACT-0 ☒ UNKNOWN-4 ☐ NOT APPLICABLE-7 EXTERIOR ☒ SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-2 ☐ NOT INTACT-0 ☐ UNKNOWN-5 ☐ NOT APPLICABLE-8 ENVIRONS ☐ SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-3 ☐ NOT INTACT-0 ☐ UNKNOWN-6 ☐ NOT APPLICABLE-9			
⑳ ACCESS ☐ YES-Restricted ☐ YES-Unrestricted ☐ No Access ☐ Unknown				㉑ ADAPTIVE USE ☐ YES ☐ NO		㉒ SAVED? ☐ YES ☐ NO	
㉓ AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: ☐ ARCHEOLOGY-prehistoric-2 ☐ COMMERCE-6 ☐ ENGINEERING-11 ☐ LANDSCAPE ARCH.-15 ☐ POLITICS/GOVT.-21 ☐ RECREATION-28 ☐ ARCHEOLOGY-historic-1 ☐ COMMUNICATIONS-7 ☐ ENTERTAINMENT-26 ☐ LAW-16 ☐ RELIGION-22 ☐ SETTLEMENT-29 ☐ AGRICULTURE-3 ☐ CONSERVATION-8 ☐ EXPLORATION-12 ☐ LITERATURE-17 ☐ SCIENCE-23 ☐ URBAN PLANNING-31 ☒ ARCHITECTURE-4 ☐ ECONOMICS-9 ☐ HEALTH-27 ☒ MILITARY-18 ☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN-24 ☐ OTHER (SPECIFY) ☐ ART-5 ☐ EDUCATION-10 ☐ INDUSTRY-13 ☐ MUSIC-19 ☐ SOCIAL/CULTURAL-30 ☐ INVENTION-14 ☐ PHILOSOPHY-20 ☐ TRANSPORTATION-25				㉔ CLAIMS: explain 'first' ☐ 'oldest' ☒ 'only' ☐			
㉕ functions WHEN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT: CURRENTLY:				㉖ dates of initial construction: major alterations: historic events:		㉗ ETHNIC GROUP ASSOCIATION	
㉘ architectural style(s): Colonial		㉙ architect: WM. NEGUS		㉚ master builder:		㉛ engineer:	
㉜ landscape architect / garden designer:		㉝ interior decorator:		㉞ artist:		㉟ artisan:	
㊱ builder/contractor:							
㊲ NAMES give role & date PERSONAL: Negus Family EVENTS: INSTITUTIONAL:							
㊳ NATIONAL REGISTER WRITE-UP Frame, 1 1/2 story, rectangular, gambrel, with perpendicular rectangular bldgs. outbuildings (various) oldest remaining house in Petersham, in same family continuously							