

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received DEC 6 1984

date entered JAN 3 1985

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Ezra Carpenter House

and/or common Witchie House

2. Location

street & number 168 South Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Foxborough

N/A vicinity of

state Massachusetts

code 025

county Norfolk

code 021

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: <u>Currently</u>
				<u>vacant</u>

4. Owner of Property

name Town of Foxborough, Historical Commission

street & number Memorial Hall, 2 South Street

city, town Foxborough

N/A vicinity of

state Massachusetts 02035

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Norfolk County Registry of Deeds

street & number 10 High Street

city, town Dedham

state Massachusetts

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Inventory of the Historic Assets
title of the Commonwealth, #92

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1981

federal state county local

depository for survey records Massachusetts Historical Commission

city, town Boston

state Massachusetts

7. Description Ezra Carpenter House, Foxborough, MA

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Ezra Carpenter House is set back one hundred feet from South Street on a level lot of almost one acre. In front of the house are a broad lawn, two lilac bushes, and a large maple tree; the area behind the house is open except for a few old apple trees. Located in a residential area of single-family 19th and 20th century dwellings, the Ezra Carpenter House was built around 1800 along South Street, one of Foxborough's earliest roads. It consists of a 1½-story main structure with an attached southern wing. In the rear is a small single-story addition, built ca. 1920.

The house is a typical Federal-period cottage. The main house is five bays wide with a center entry. The roof is a shallow-pitched gable, and there is a small central chimney located forward of the ridge. The five-bay southern wing is original to the main house up to the second bay. It was extended around 1830 to include three additional bays (two doors and a window).

The house stands on its original cut-granite foundation. Its front doorway is embellished with flat pilasters with simple Doric capitals. The exterior clapboards are in part original, but the roof is now covered with asbestos shingles laid in a diamond pattern. Window frames are original but sashes have been replaced with 8/12 double-hung sashes.

On the western side of the building, its main facade, four 8/12 simply framed windows flank the door and are flush with a plain frieze board spanning the front of the house. Plain wide corner boards frame the facade, which is capped by a cornice of crown molding of late 19th century date. The western side of the wing, with three windows and two simply framed doorways, is framed by plain corner boards and cornice.

The northern elevation, a two-bay gable end, has its original raking cornice and cornice returns. The two first-floor windows have pegged frames; the single second-story window, centered beneath the gable, has Federal-period moldings across the top and along the sides.

The southern elevation of the main house contains a first-floor pegged frame window and a second-floor Federal-style window identical to that of the northern elevation. The second-story window is placed well off center, an indication that the southern wing is original to the main house.

At the rear of the building, its eastern elevation, are three asymmetrically placed windows. Like the front facade, the rear has a plain frieze board and corner boards. The cornice is identical to that on the front facade. The flat-roofed shed with a brick chimney, in very poor condition, is a late addition of ca. 1920. Set into the main house's roof is a rectangular hatch, also ca. 1920.

The interior of the main structure, with a typical early 19th century floor plan, retains its original Federal-period cornice moldings and baseboards. The main house has two large rooms with fireplaces at the front and three smaller rooms at the rear. A staircase leads to an upstairs bedroom with fireplace and an attic storeroom. Two of the three fireplaces in the main house also retain original Federal mantels, including one in the southern front room of the main house where a large fireplace has been bricked in.

No outbuildings remain on the property, although the foundations of an early 20th century barn that burned in the early 1960s remain.

8. Significance Ezra Carpenter House, Foxborough, MA

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

Specific dates ca. 1800 Builder Architect Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Ezra Carpenter House possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. It is significant as an intact Federal-period cottage and as the home of the patriarch of one of Foxborough's most prominent families, the Carpenters, who contributed greatly to the late 19th century development of the town as an important center of straw hat manufacture. The building thus meets Criteria A, B, and C on the local level for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The house was built for Ezra Carpenter (1753-1841) around 1800. The son of Nehemiah Carpenter, one of Foxborough's founders, Ezra was a hero of the Revolutionary War. He answered the summons for minute men after the battle of Lexington, served at Valley Forge, and crossed the Delaware River with General Washington on Christmas night, 1776. After the war, Ezra returned to Foxborough, which was then primarily a poor agricultural community. He became a farmer and a straw merchant, travelling to Boston to trade braided straw. He is thought to have been the first straw merchant in a town that by the mid 19th century would become a major regional center for the straw hat and bonnet industry.

The Ezra Carpenter House is architecturally important as one of the only intact Federal-period cottages remaining in Foxborough. Other early cottages in Foxborough have had numerous additions, including front porches, that substantially alter their original appearance. Furthermore, the house retains the integrity of its setting. Little development has occurred in this section of the town, and the property retains its rural character, looking today much as it did when the first Carpenters lived there.

Ezra Carpenter's children and grandchildren were leaders in Foxborough's civic and commercial affairs throughout the 19th century. His son, Daniels (1795-1889), grew up in the house and inherited his father's small business. He expanded the straw enterprise to include bonnet manufacturing as a cottage industry. In addition, he was co-owner of a Foxborough box manufacturing mill, ran a thread mill, and invested in other businesses in neighboring towns. A successful businessman, Daniels Carpenter helped lead Foxborough from a relatively diverse economy toward a period at mid-century dominated by the highly profitable straw goods industry. In 1858, he served as a representative to the General Court.

Descendants of Ezra Carpenter furthered Foxborough's industrial growth. His grandson, Erastus P. (1822-1902), and cousins, Oliver and Warren Carpenter, established the town's first formal straw works in 1844. In 1853, Erastus consolidated several straw businesses into the Union Straw Works, for its time the largest straw factory in the world. Erastus was also one of Foxborough's most prominent citizens. He was responsible for planning Foxborough Common in 1857, chaired the committee that built the town's Memorial Hall in 1868, and toward the end of his life served in Massachusetts' Senate and House of Representatives.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Jack Authelet, Glimpses of Early Foxboro. The Foxboro Company, Foxboro, Massachusetts, 1978
John Curtis, Architectural Evaluation, August 1, 1980.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 42,292 sq. ft.

Quadrangle name Wrentham

Quadrangle scale 1:25,000

UTM References

A

1	9	3	1	3	4	2	0	4	6	5	7	7	9	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

See attached assessor's map.

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Betsy Friedberg, Preservation Planner and Mary Elizabeth Pyne, Historic Properties Research

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date September, 1984

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

city or town Boston state Massachusetts

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Valerie A. Talmage

State Historic Preservation Officer title Valerie A. Talmage date November 16, 1984

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the National Register

date 1-3-85

for Helorus Byer
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered

1985

Continuation sheet Ezra Carpenter House

Item number

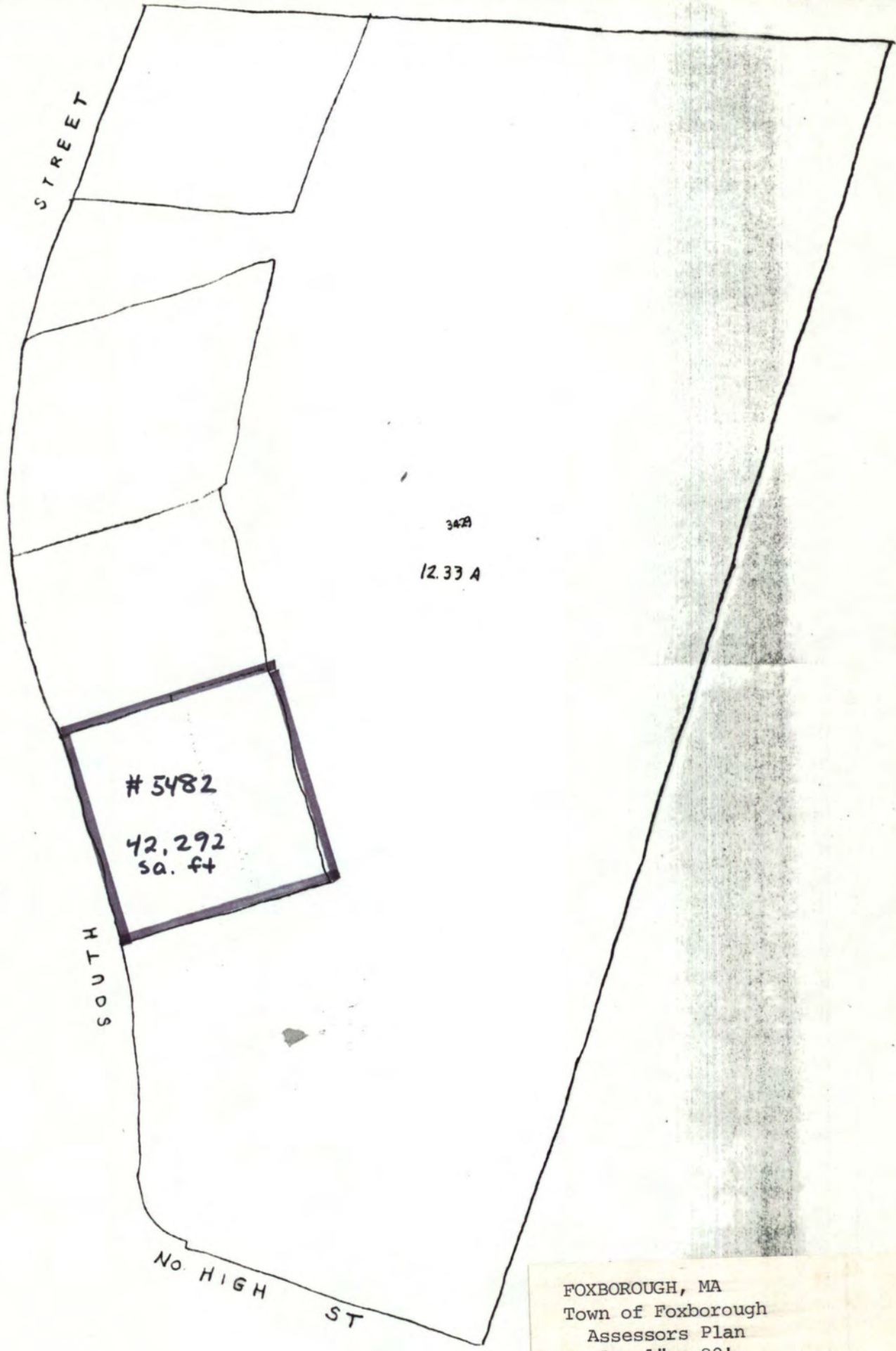
8

Page 1

Several other resources in Foxborough are associated with Ezra Carpenter's prominent descendants. In 1824, Ezra's son Daniels built a late Federal-style home on Main Street. The mansion still stands but it does not retain integrity. The Great Bonnet Shop, or Verandah House, which housed the first modest straw works that Erastus, Oliver, and Warren Carpenter established in 1844, still stands on Wall Street, a short distance from Foxborough Common.

The house passed through a number of hands in the late 19th and early 20th centuries until 1911, when it was purchased by the Witchie family for use as a dairy farm. Cows were kept in a large barn, which has since burned. Foundations of the barn remain in the northeastern portion of the lot. The Witchie family retained ownership of the property until 1977, when it was donated to the Foxborough Historical Commission. The Commission plans to restore the building in the future.

Archaeological Considerations: The Ezra Carpenter House may retain intact archaeological deposits relating to domestic use of the property and the owners' involvement in the straw industry.



FOXBOROUGH, MA
Town of Foxborough
Assessors Plan
Scale: 1" = 80'
Date: 1982
lot #: 5482

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Carpenter, Ezra, House
Norfolk County
MASSACHUSETTS

DEC 6 1984

Working No. _____
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/4/86
Date Due: 1/3/85 - 1/20/85
Action: ACCEPT 1-3-85
 RETURN
 REJECT
Federal Agency: _____

Entered in the
National Register

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership Public Acquisition	Status Accessible	Present Use
----------	---------------------------------	----------------------	-------------

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? yes no

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

8. Significance

Period _____ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national ____ state ____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title _____ date _____

13. Other

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



Ezra Carpenter House
168 South St
Foxboro, MASS

Mary Elizabeth Pyne
March 1983
Neg. at Mem. Hall, Foxboro

Photo #1 of 5

Western Elevation



Ezra Carpenter House
Foxboro 3/83

Northern Elevation
photo #2 of 5



Ezra Carpenter House

Foxboro 3/83

Eastern Elevation

photo # 3 of 5



Ezra Carpenter House

Foxboro 3/83

Eastern Elevation

photo # 4 of 5



Ezra Carpenter House

Foxboro 3/83

Southern Elevations

photo # 5 of 5

71° 22' 30" W
42° 07' 30" N

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

WRENTHAM QUADRANGLE
MASSACHUSETTS
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

71° 15' W
42° 07' 30" N



FOXBOROUGH, MA
Ezra Carpenter House
168 South Street
UTM Reference:
19/313420/4657790

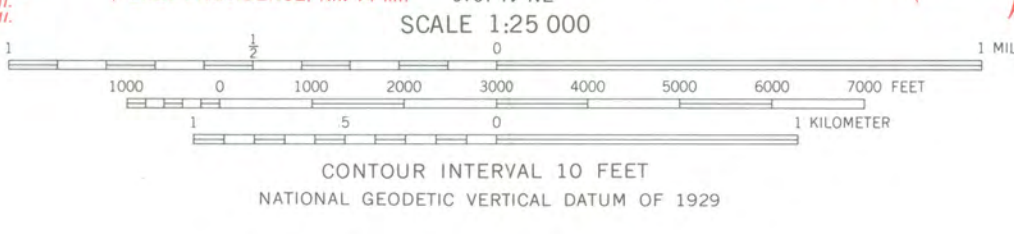
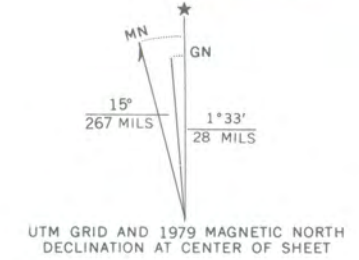
Feet	Meters
1	3048
2	6096
3	9144
4	12192
5	15240
6	18288
7	21336
8	24384
9	27432
10	30480

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

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planetable surveys 1938. Revised 1964
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid,
zone 19

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map

Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with State of
Massachusetts agencies from aerial photographs taken 1977 and other
source data. This information not field checked. Map edited 1979



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt - - - - -
Interstate Route U.S. Route State Route

WRENTHAM, MASS.
N4200-W7115/7.5
1964
PHOTOREVISED 1979
AMS 6768 III SE-SERIES V814

FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST