

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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

For HCRS use only

received MAR 6 1981

date entered MAY 20 1981

1. Name *Beebe Estate*

historic Foster-Bigelow House

and/or common Beebe Estate (preferred)

2. Location

street & number 235 West Foster Street not for publication

city, town Melrose vicinity of congressional district Seventh

state Massachusetts code 025 county Middlesex code 017

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
☐ district	☒ public	☒ occupied	☐ agriculture
☒ building(s)	☐ private	☐ unoccupied	☐ commercial
☐ structure	☐ both	☐ work in progress	☒ educational
☐ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	☐ entertainment
☐ object	☐ in process	☒ yes: restricted	☒ government
	☐ being considered	☐ yes: unrestricted	☐ industrial
		☐ no	☐ military
			☐ museum
			☐ park
			☐ private residence
			☐ religious
			☐ scientific
			☐ transportation
			☐ other:

4. Owner of Property

name City of Melrose

street & number Cambridge Street

city, town Melrose vicinity of state Massachusetts

5. Location of Legal Description

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

street & number Cambridge Street

city, town Cambridge state Massachusetts

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

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

date 1977 federal ☒ state county local

depository for survey records Massachusetts Historical Commission

city, town Boston state Massachusetts

7. Description

Condition

☒ excellent
☐ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☒ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Beebe House, an early Greek Revival period estate, stands on one and three-quarter acres of land situated at the head of a major intersection in downtown Melrose. The excellently conceived and commanding design of the building takes maximum advantage of its large, open site, being set well back from the property lines on all sides.

The large, nearly cubical building is two stories high, sheathed in clapboards, with a high hip roof and tall thin end chimneys paired at either side. The unusual pattern of ornamentation witnesses the transitional nature of the building's period of construction.

The house has a five bay facade with 6 over 6 windows -- taller on the first floor, smaller and close to the eaves on the second floor -- and a center doorway. This entrance is emphasized by a sturdy portico with fluted Doric columns, high flat entablature, and pedimented roof. The doorway itself has sidelights (now blocked in) and a glazed transom. Excepting this striking element, the visual focus of the Beebe House is not the facade, with its narrow flat corner boards, fascia, and window surrounds. The eye is drawn first to the portico and then upward to a superbly enriched roofline.

A low openwork balustrade with an "X" pattern runs along the base of the roof. An acroteria motif in a scroll and anthemion pattern ornaments the corners and center panel of each side of the balustrade. The most dominant element, however, is the central cupola. The large cylinder shape sits on a polygonal base and consists of six fluted Ionic columns supporting an entablature which is delicately embellished with carved wreaths, dentils, anthemion antefix, and a central urn-capped finial. Within this frame is a low balustrade and six 2 over 2 windows.

Attached to the west side of the house is a small, one-story, hip-roofed addition; at the rear is a large 2-story wing with a hip roof. Behind the house is a large barn from the Colonial Revival period. This structure has a steeply pitched gambrel roof, cross-gambrel on the facade, hipped dormers, and a small polygonal lantern.

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/
☐ 1700-1799	☐ art	☐ engineering	☐ music	☐ humanitarian
☒ 1800-1899	☒ commerce	☐ exploration/settlement	☐ philosophy	☐ theater
☐ 1900-	☐ communications	☒ industry	☐ politics/government	☒ transportation
		☐ invention		☐ other (specify)

Specific dates 1828 Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Beebe Estate represents an early achievement in the Greek Revival style. It was built by an internationally prominent merchant as a summer house and was subsequently occupied by a number of influential area businessmen. The building thus meets criteria B and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

In the early nineteenth century Melrose (then North Malden) was a pleasant farming community about seven miles north of Boston. William Foster of Boston was impressed by the natural beauty of the area and in 1828 purchased a substantial acreage near the center of town. On this site he built the lovely home now known as the Beebe Estate.

Foster (1772-1863) was born into a Boston merchant family. At an early age he was sent to Europe to act as his father's representative in Spain and France. Foster served in Napoleon's army, participated in many events of the French Revolution, and at one time was president of a branch of the Jacobin Club, a political group which exerted profound influence on the progress of the French Revolution. Of major importance to the American textile industry was Foster's trip back to the United States in 1793, when he smuggled in three Merino sheep--the first ever introduced to this country. This important breed of sheep was valued for its fine wool, and Spain and France prohibited its export in an effort to retain their countries' economic advantage.

Foster returned permanently to Boston in 1807 with his wife and two children, building a winter home on Beacon Hill and later (1828) this summer home in Melrose. Foster remained active as a commission merchant but also participated actively in local politics (as a political writer and a state senator) and frequently was called into court to translate writings from French, Spanish, and Italian.

About 1842, after his wife's death, Foster sold the Melrose house to William Harlow, also a Boston businessman. Mr. Harlow was connected with the steam railroad business, and it was while he was living in this house (1845) that the Boston & Maine railroad tracks were laid through Melrose, a portion adjoining his land.

In 1854 the property was sold to Liberty Bigelow (1815-1890), who had a very active life in the railway business. Bigelow established the first stage express between Boston and New York, was the first superintendent of the Sullivan and the Rutland Railroad lines in Vermont, and was superintendent of the much larger Fitchburg Railroad (a post he accepted the same year in which he purchased this house). Bigelow left the Fitchburg Railroad in 1857 to establish his own railroad express business in Boston. His company was later merged in Northern Express Ltd., which became known as one of the finest and most prosperous express companies on the continent, operating a U.S. to Canada line.

9. Major Bibliographical References

New England Genealogical Society Report, October 1863.

Melrose Free Press -- September 25, 1915.

Goss, Elbridge H., History of Melrose (Melrose, 1902).

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

UTM NOT VERIFIED

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 76,000 Sq. Ft. (1 3/4 acre)

Quadrangle name Boston North

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	9
---	---

3	2	9	7	6	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	7	Q	2	2	3	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

B

--	--

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

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

Zone Easting Northing

C

--	--

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

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

D

--	--

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

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

E

--	--

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

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

F

--	--

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

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

G

--	--

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

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

H

--	--

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

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

Verbal boundary description and justification

See attached sketch map

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 Wendy Frontiero, Preservation Planner, with Orren L. Walsh, Chairman,
Melrose Historical Commission

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date December 17, 1980

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

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Patricia K. Weslowski 4/22/81

title Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical Commission date

For HCRS use only

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

Patricia K. Weslowski date 5/20/81
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Patrick Andrews date 5/19/81
Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received MAR 6 1981

date entered MAY 20 1981

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 2

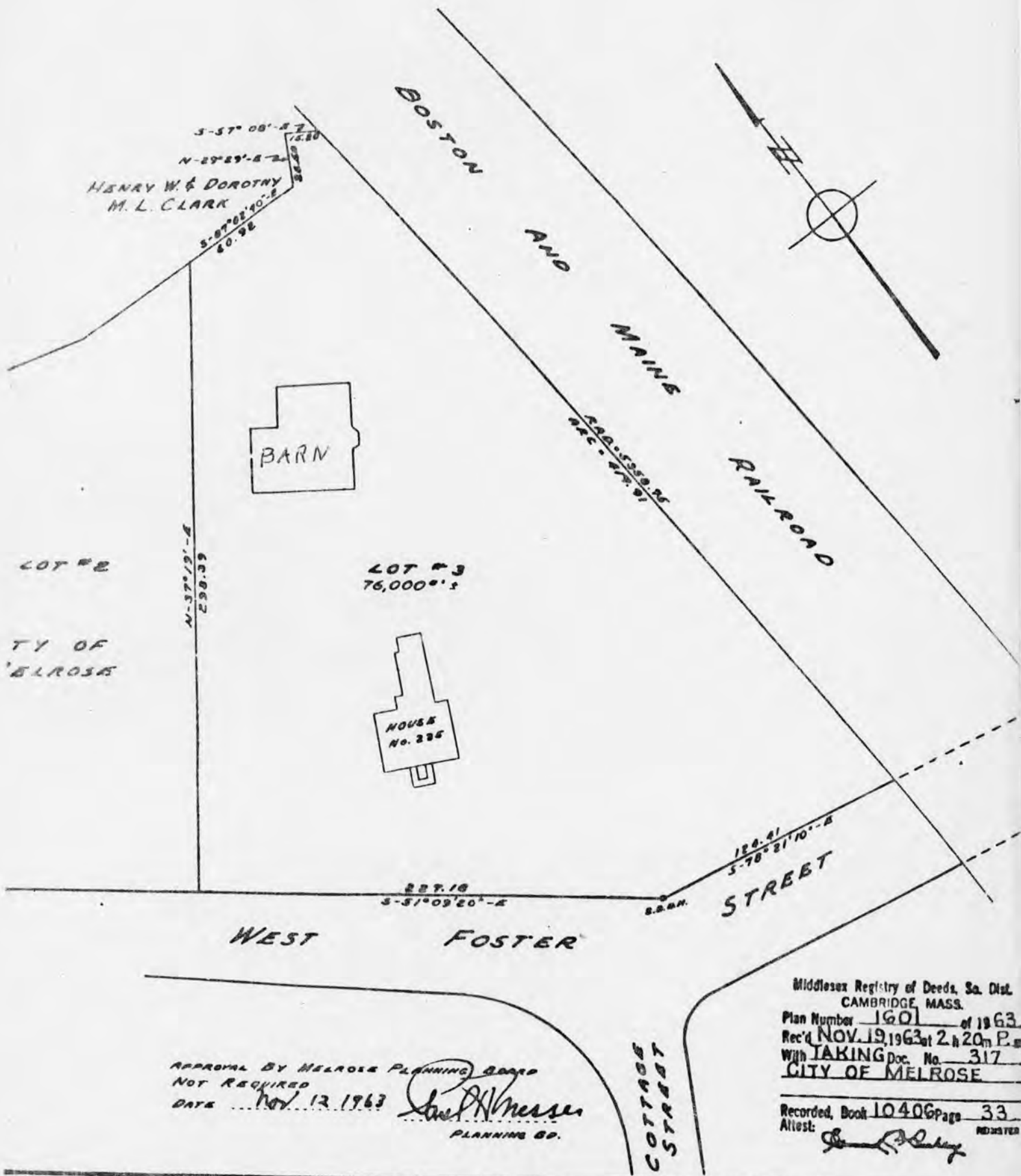
Bigelow also established the Chicago City Railway Co., a horse-drawn street railway system for the newly thriving city of Chicago, and first conceived the idea of running a system of railway coaches between the railroad stations and hotels in Chicago -- an idea which spread rapidly through the east coast.

Bigelow died in Melrose in 1890; his widow, Harriet, occupied the house until her death in 1898. Mrs. Bigelow was a strong supporter of a city hospital, and it was in this house that the Melrose Hospital Association was organized in 1893.

Mrs. Bigelow left her home to her daughter, Katherine, who was married to Decius Beebe, descendant of a wealthy family and a member of the leather house of Lucius Beebe and Sons of Boston. This firm had extensive interests and tanneries in New England and was well recognized throughout the trade. Decius was also active in local financial affairs as President of the Melrose National Bank, as trustee of the Melrose Savings Bank, and as a generous contributor to the Melrose Hospital. The Beebe family continued to occupy the estate until the last member died in 1963. In that year, the property was taken by the City of Melrose through eminent domain and turned over to the School Department for use as an administration building, a use which continues today.

In addition to its historical significance in commerce, transportation and industry the Beebe House also possesses considerable architectural significance. Retaining the traditional five bay center entry form of the Federal period, it is most notable for the sophistication of its roof detail which includes an elaborate cupola based on the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates. Research to date has not proven that this feature is original and it may date to a later period such as that of the Harlow occupancy in the 1840's. However, if this feature is original, it may represent its first use in the United States, and the house would assume a critical role in the history of American Architecture.

The Beebe Estate, having originated in 1828 as a summer house in the then rural community of North Malden, should be considered to possess potential for the presence of archaeological remains. Domestic refuse, indicative of foodways and social status, may exist on the property in a broadly cast or concentrated form. Archaeological features representing changes in landscaping and land use are also quite likely to be present. Both kinds of archaeological remains can be useful in understanding the physical development and social context of this small landscape.



APPROVAL BY MELROSE PLANNING BOARD
 NOT REQUIRED
 DATE Nov 13 1963 *[Signature]*
 PLANNING BD.

Middlesex Registry of Deeds, So. Dist.
 CAMBRIDGE, MASS.
 Plan Number 1601 of 1963
 Rec'd NOV. 19, 1963 at 2:20 P.M.
 With TAKING Doc. No. 317
 CITY OF MELROSE

Recorded, Book 10406 Page 33
 Attest: *[Signature]*

Beebe House
 MELROSE, MA

MAR 6 1981
 MAY 20 1981

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

20
MAY 7 1981

Name of Property Beebe Estate
State, County MA Middlesex County
Federal Agency _____

The above nomination is being returned to you because of problems in the areas checked below and/or on the back of this form. Please return this form when the nomination is resubmitted.

Technical Review

- ☐ Name
- ☐ Location
- ☐ Classification
☐ Category ☐ Ownership ☐ Status ☐ Present Use
- ☐ Owner of Property
- ☐ Location of Legal Description
- ☐ Representation in Existing Surveys
- ☐ Description
☐ Condition ☐ Original Site/Moved (w/date)
- ☐ Significance
☐ Period ☐ Areas of Significance ☐ Specific Dates
- ☐ Major Bibliographical References
- ☐ Geographical Data
☐ Acreage ☐ Quad Name ☐ Quad Scale ☐ UTM
☐ Verbal Boundary Description and/or Site Plan or Tax Map
- ☐ Form Prepared By
- ☒ Certification
☒ Level of Significance ☒ SHPO Signature ☐ Federal Signature
- ☐ Photographs
☐ Missing ☐ Not Adequate in Quality
- ☐ Maps
☐ USGS Map ☐ Site Plan/Sketch Map ☐ Historic District Map
- ☐ Comments:
- ☐ Substantive Review Problems (see reverse)

Melores Byers 4/16/81
Signed

Substantive Review

Description

 Incomplete/Inaccurate: _____

 Alterations: _____

 Dates: _____

 Boundary Selection/Justification: _____

 Other: _____

Significance

 Too Weak or General: _____

 Poorly Related to Resource: _____

 Confusing/Incomplete: _____

 Context: _____

 Integrity: _____

 Period of Significance Unclear: _____

 Exception(s) to Criteria not Justified: _____

 Other: _____

 Bibliography: _____

Geographical Data

 Acreage: _____

 VBD: _____

 Certification: _____

Photographs:

 Inadequate Coverage: _____

 Poorly Labeled/Not Keyed to Map

 Other: _____

Maps

 USGS Sketch

 Missing
 Location of Resource(s)
 Boundary Lines
 Discrepancies
 Other

Comments

Reviewer
tel: (202) 343-6401

Chief, Branch of Registration

Date

Name Beebe Estate
 State, County MA Middlesex Fed Nom or Request—Agency _____
 Working Number 3/6/81/67 Federal Register Date 2. 2. 82

☒ Nomination
☐ Determination of Eligibility
☐ On Nomination Form

☒ Bldg(s)
☐ Site
☐ Object
☐ Structure
☐ District

Within:
☐ Multiple Resource Area
☐ Thematic Group

Maps 4/2
 Photos 2

Nomination prepared by:

☒ State Staff
☐ Local
☐ Other

Action:

☒ ACCEPT 5/20/81
☐ RETURN _____
☐ REJECT _____

Check if Appropriate:

☐ State Request for Review
☐ Keeper's Decision to Review
☐ 2nd Return

I. Evaluation of Resource (cont. on back if necessary)

accept, B&C

Patrick Andrews - historian

5/19/81

II. Evaluation of Nomination

	Good	Adequate	Poor	Comments
1. Descriptive Statement Short Format ☒ Yes ☐ No		☒		
2. Significance Statement Short Format ☒ Yes ☐ No		☒		
3. Concepts/Integrity		☒		
4. Concepts/Criteria		☒		
5. Concepts/Boundaries		☒		
6. Contextual Evaluation		☒		

General Comments (cont. on back if necessary):

Reviewer/Date Patrick Andrews / 5/19/81

See Attached _____

Property Beebe Estate

DUE
3/31/81 - 4/20/81

State MA, Middlesex

Working Number 3/6/81/67

TECHNICAL

CONTROL

Photos 2
Maps 41

HISTORIAN

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

accept-see review sheet - Patrick Andrews 5/19/81

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory _____
Review _____

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

National Register Write-up _____
Federal Register Entry _____

Send-back 4-6-81
Re-submit 5-7-81

Entered MAY 20 1981



MELROSE, MA
Beebe Estate

6 1981

MAY 20 1981 MAR

View from the south
Photo by Orrin L.
Walsh, 1979
Negative filed with
photographer at
409 Lebanon St.,
Melrose MA

Middlesex County

MAY 20 1981



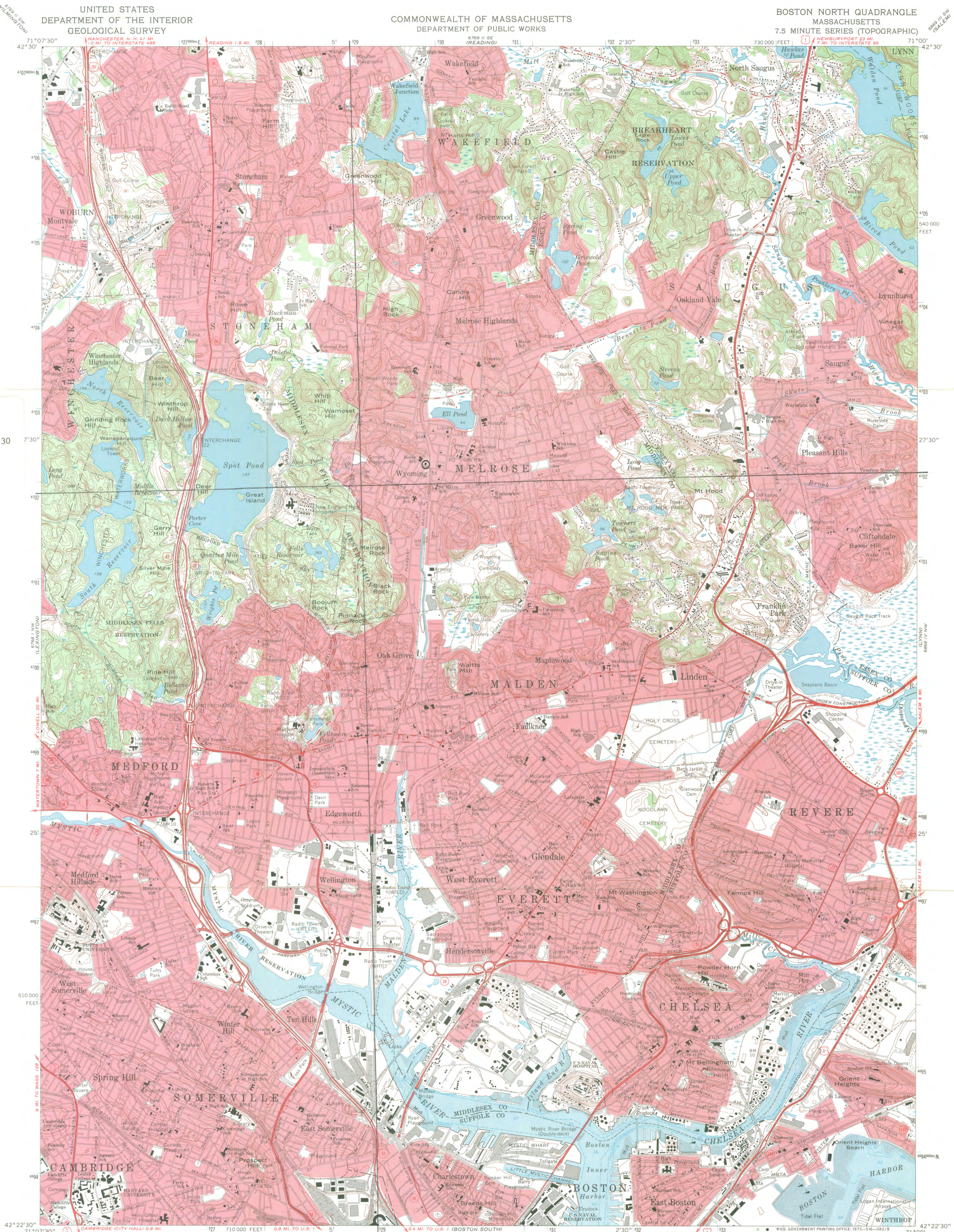
1101 750-124

MELROSE, MA
Beebe Estate
Middlesex County
MAR 6 1981
South and west
elevations
Photo by Orrin L.
Walsh, 1979
Negative filed w/
photographer at
409 Lebanon St.,
Melrose MA

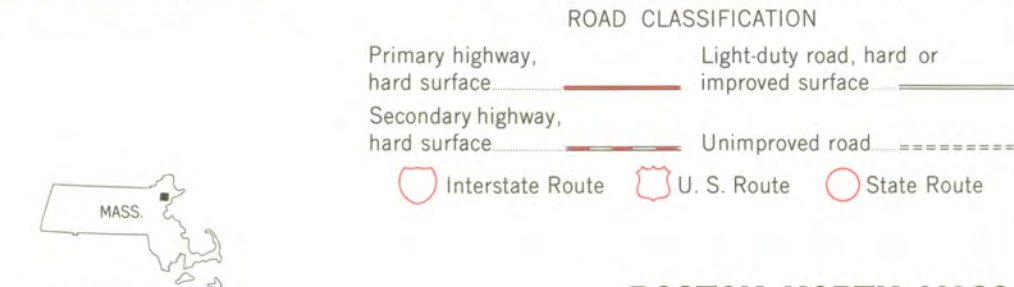
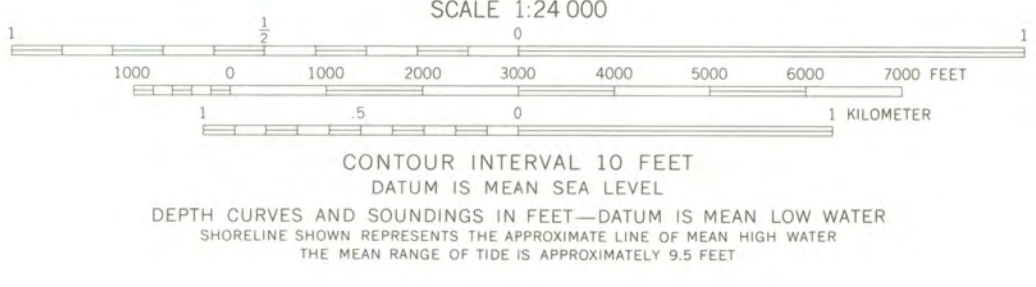
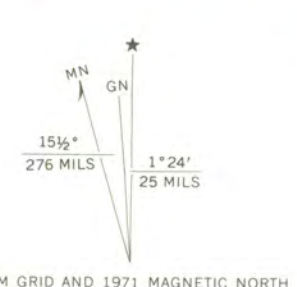
MAY 20 1981

MELROSE, MA
Beebe Estate

UTM Reference:
19/329760/4702230



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by plane-table surveys 1943. Revised from
aerial photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1971
Selected hydrographic data compiled from USGS Chart 248 (1971)
This information is not intended for navigational purposes
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 19, shown in blue
Boundaries in tidalwater areas from information supplied
by Massachusetts Department of Public Works
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



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

BOSTON NORTH, MASS.
N4222.5-W7100/7.5
1971
AMS 6768 I NE-SERIES V814

MAY 20 1981



CITY OF MELROSE

MASSACHUSETTS

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

RECEIVED

JAN 15 1981

MASS. HIST. COMM.

JAMES E. MILANO
MAYOR

January 12, 1981

Patricia L. Weslowski
State Historic Preservation Officer
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Office of the Secretary of State
Massachusetts Historical Commission
294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

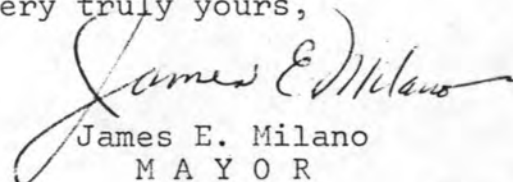
Dear Mrs. Weslowski:

Thank you for writing to me recently relative to the Beebe Estate which is under consideration by your Historical Commission for nomination on the National Register.

As you know from information submitted to you by the Melrose Historical Commission that this property has a very long and distinguished part in the history of this City.

The School Department, which has its Administrative Offices in this building, is very much supportive of the proposed recognition, and it goes without saying that I am firmly committed also in having this Estate become listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Very truly yours,


James E. Milano
MAYOR

JEM/mo's

cc: Dr. George R. Quinn, Supt. of Schools
235 W. Foster Street
Melrose, Ma.

Mr. Orren Lynde Walsh
Melrose Historical Commission
409 Lebanon St.
Melrose, Ma.

MAR 6 1981



**MASSACHUSETTS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION**

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
Office of the Secretary of State**

294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts
02108
617-727-8470

MICHAEL JOSEPH CONNOLLY
Secretary of State

February 24, 1981

Ms. Carol Shull, Acting Chief
Registration Branch
National Park Service
440 G Street, NW
Washington D.C. 20243

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed you will find the following nomination forms:

Melrose: Beebe Estate (State)
Weymouth: Jefferson School (Local)

Both have been voted eligible by the State Review Board and have been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. Both are owned by public agencies which consent to their nomination.

Sincerely,

Candace Jenkins

Candace Jenkins
Registration Director

CJ/lk



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE **MASSACHUSETTS**

Date Entered **MAY 20 1981**

Name

Location

Beebe Estate

**Melrose
Middlesex County**

Also Notified

Honorable Paul E. Tsongas

**Honorable Edward M. Kennedy
Honorable Edward J. Markey
Northeast Region, HCRS**

**State Historic Preservation Officer
Mrs. Patricia L. Weslowski
Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission
294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108**

NR

Eady/bjr/5/26/81

For further information, please call the National Register at (202)343-6401.