

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE

Page 1

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY.

Historic Name: QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE

Other Name/Site Number:

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 20 Muirhead Street

Not for publication: __

City/Town: Quincy

Vicinity: __

State: MA

County: Norfolk

Code: 021

Zip Code: 02169

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Private: X

Public-Local: __

Public-State: __

Public-Federal: __

Category of Property

Building(s): X

District: __

Site: __

Structure: __

Object: __

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

1

__

__

1

Noncontributing

1 buildings

__ sites

__ structures

__ objects

1 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 2

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: N/A

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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.

Signature of Certifying Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

- Entered in the National Register
- Determined eligible for the National Register
- Determined not eligible for the National Register
- Removed from the National Register
- Other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

████████████████████
6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic: Domestic

Sub: Single Dwelling

Current: Recreation and culture

Sub: Museum

████████████████████
7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION:

Colonial: Georgian

MATERIALS:

Foundation: Stone (granite)

Walls: Wood (weatherboard)

Roof: Asphalt

Other: Trim: wood

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE**Page 4**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

The Josiah Quincy House is situated in the residential Wollaston section of Quincy. The house is sited on a three-quarter-of-an-acre level lot, the remains of a once grand setting, the 100 acre estate of Colonel Josiah Quincy (1710-1784), which extended to Quincy Bay and contained open fields, farm-related structures and windmills for a salt works.¹ The property was subdivided in 1895 and the house site is now surrounded by late nineteenth and early twentieth century residences on small lots. Two of the barns formerly on the property survived and were adapted as residences in the area.² The only current outbuilding is a traditionally designed garage built in 1924. The garage is counted as noncontributing because it was constructed after the period of significance. The house faces south toward Muirhead Street where a picket fence, replacing an earlier fence of *chinoiserie* design, defines the front lawn. Gould Street marks the northern boundary of the property. North and southeast of the house are the remains of two formal gardens established in the early twentieth century.

The present Josiah Quincy house, a two-story, seventeen-room structure, consists of the original house built in 1770 with hip roof and monitor and several subordinate early additions. An ell, built in 1808 and raised to two stories c. 1850 extends from the northwest end. A single story extension on the north side, enlarging the northwest room by eight feet, and a porch, spanning the east side of the building, were added in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The house is of wood frame construction. The exterior walls are finished with clapboards painted yellow in contrast to white trim. The foundations are faced with rectangular granite sill stones. The roofs are covered with asphalt shingles. There are two interior brick chimneys.

The original 42' by 36' structure built for Col Josiah Quincy, likely to have been designed by housewright Edward Peirce of Dorchester, is a distinguished example of New England Georgian architecture of the third quarter of the eighteenth century and reflects the sources of that architecture in the Renaissance classicism of England as conveyed to New England primarily through eighteenth-century architectural books. Symmetrical in plan and overall design, the Quincy house is a well-proportioned architectural composition which preserves virtually all of its original carefully-crafted, architectural-book derived features intact. The corners of the building and the monitor are defined by rusticated quoins. The cornice below the shallow hip roof is decorated with modillions and a dentil course. Molded window caps dress sash windows on the first level throughout the main block of the house. Window trim above the second story windows is integrated into the cornice, so that the lower moldings, including the dentil course, are set forward over the windows to suggest a cap. A Chinese

¹H. Hobart Holly, "The Quincy's Homes in Quincy," *Quincy History* (Quincy Historical Society) 8 (Spring 1983): 3.

²Description of physical appearance of the Josiah Quincy House, Quincy House binder, SPNEA Archives: "[The garage] now occupies the site of a barn which stands at 7-9 Rawson Road, a very handsome duplex. That barn occupies the site of another Quincy barn which has been converted to a duplex and now stands at 143-145 Beach Street."

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE**Page 5**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

fretwork balustrade extends around the perimeter of the roof.³ A balustrade of plain X design ornaments the roof of the monitor (these balustrades represent a replication in 1978 of the original designs).

The most exquisite decorative feature of the building and the architectural focus of the main facade is a classical entrance portico. The portico is very similar to the design of a doorway illustrated in William Pain's *The Builder's Companion and Workman's General Assistant* of 1762.⁴ The portico features a pediment and cornice decorated with modillions, a dentil molding and an entablature with pulvinated frieze, supported by fluted Doric columns set on high plinths. Doric pilasters and two-pane-wide, half-length sidelights flank the doorway. The ceiling of the portico is coved and the soffit below the entablature is decorated with elaborate Greek key fretwork. Originally, benches with Chinese fretwork backs were placed opposite each other at the sides of the portico.⁵

The north facade has a transomed, pedimented doorway with Doric pilasters, similar to designs shown in many architectural books of the 1750s and 1760s.⁶ Windows on the north facade, while incorporating the same trim as elsewhere, are narrower overall than those on the other elevations, suggesting that the north facade was considered a minor facade. The north windows (except those on the extension of the northeast room) retain smaller panes of glass in 12/12 sash with inch-thick muntins. These are likely to be original to 1770, whereas the 6/6 windows with larger panes and narrower muntins on the other elevations represent an updating in the Federal period.⁷

The porch on the east side, 8' x 36' in dimensions, has a hip roof supported by fluted Doric columns and an entablature of Greek Revival proportions. Paint evidence suggests that the porch was added c. 1840.⁸ The east central window was made into a door at some point for access to the east yard and porch, while retaining the appearance of a window.

³Chinese fret work of this particular design is illustrated in Abraham Swan, *A Collection of Designs in Architecture*, vol. 2. (London, 1757), Plate 43. Similar designs appear in other architectural books, such as William Salmon, *Palladio Londonensis or, the London Art of Building*, 5th ed. (London, 1755), Plates Q and R. Note: these and all but one of the architectural books referenced in this nomination were known to have been available in Boston before 1770, either in the library of Thomas Dawes, or offered for sale by Boston booksellers, according to Helen Park, in *A List of Architectural Books Available in America Before the Revolution* (Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, 1973).

⁴William Pain, *The Builder's Companion and Workman's General Assistant*, 2nd. ed. (London, 1762), Plate 43.

⁵Eliza Susan Quincy, Inventory of the Josiah Quincy House, 1879: "Seats, pillars, steps, same as erected in 1770." Transcription in the Quincy House binder, SPNEA Archives.

⁶For example, Batty Langley, *City and Country Builder's and Workman's Treasury of Designs* (London, 1756), Plate xxxv.

⁷West windows in the northwest chamber have the same dimensions as those on the south, east and the rest of the west elevation, but have small panes of glass and thick muntins, and probably date from 1770, suggesting that the window openings on all but the north elevation were always the same size, but that the sash windows in these openings, except in this room, were updated.

⁸Josiah Quincy House Development Project Completion Report, February 1980, Section III - B, p. 1. SPNEA Archives.

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 6

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

The monitor roof, rectangular in plan, extends between the two chimneys at the center of the house's hip roof. Shallow 4/4 sash windows light the monitor, three on the south and north sides, two on each of the side facades. The roof balustrades were reconstructed in 1978 on the basis of physical evidence in the roof and photographic evidence. The original balustrade was removed c. 1908 and discarded.

The plan (HABS 2-42, sheet #1) conforms to the typical Georgian plan of four rooms symmetrically disposed on each of two similar floors. Two interior chimneys with back to back fireplaces serve the ranges of rooms on either side of the central hall. At the north end of the nine-foot-wide hall is a straight-run staircase which rises to the second floor toward the front of the house, the reverse of the usual arrangement in houses of the period.

The interiors of the house present a cohesive assemblage of well-executed Georgian woodwork and decorative trim, minor aspects of which were sensitively updated at several later periods. The central hall has a panelled dado and a Georgian molded cornice. The staircase is decorated with carved and spirally turned balusters and newel posts, scrolled step ends and an elaborately molded handrail. Physical evidence suggests that the hallway was divided originally by an archway or partition ten feet from the south entrance, the typical location of keystone and pilastered arches in Georgian houses (HABS 2-42, sheet #1). That arch or partition was removed in a subsequent alteration, possibly in conjunction with the doubling in width of the doorways to the east and west parlors, an alteration which is thought to have occurred in the mid-nineteenth century. The stair hall upstairs displays a dentilled cornice and panelled dado. Physical evidence suggests that the north end of the hall on the second floor, where the stair balusters end, was partitioned off originally.⁹ Here and throughout the house floors are early or original random width boards.

The southwest parlor is the most elaborate room in the house. The chimney breast, composed of an overmantel panel and fireplace surround, is decorated with carefully-carved, crossetted egg and dart moldings with acanthus leaves at the corners. This particular molding and mantelpiece design appears frequently in eighteenth century architectural books.¹⁰ The firebox has a fine molded sandstone surround, and one of three firebacks in the house dated to 1770. The walls are finished with a high dado composed of a smaller panel over a larger one. Here, as in all of the major rooms, molded cornices and cased posts complete the room's decorative woodwork. Physical evidence indicates that there were originally window seats. When the seats were removed, the panel below the seat was reused and set against the wall to create a flush embrasure. Also evident is the location of the original fireplace wall flanking the chimney breast and recessed behind it ever so slightly (this configuration of slightly recessed flanking walls is still present in the chamber above). The area on either side of the chimney in the parlor was opened up to the room before c. 1880.

⁹Evidence for this partition consists of cuts in the woodwork and the floor, and paint scars in the ceiling.

¹⁰For example, in James Gibbs, *Rules for Drawing the Several Parts of Architecture* (London, 1732), Plate VIII; and Abraham Swan, *British Architect* (London, 1745), as illustrated in William Pierson, Jr., *American Buildings and Their Architects: The Colonial and Neoclassical Styles* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1970), 131.

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE**Page 7**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Three other rooms in the house, the dining room, the southwest chamber and the northeast or Franklin chamber, retain virtually complete assemblages of 1770 woodwork. All feature well-executed panelled chimney breasts with bolection molding and English glazed picture tiles made in Liverpool surrounding the fireplace, panelled fireplace walls, and panelled dado on the other walls. The dining room, at 16' x 24', the largest room in the house, was lengthened in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, but panelled dado was either reused or replicated so well in the extension as to be indistinguishable from that in the rest of the room. Closets on either side of the chimney breast were removed before c. 1880 to allow a freer flow of space between the dining room and the southeast parlor.

During Josiah Quincy's lifetime (1710-1784), the southeast parlor and the room above remained unfinished. Possibly events leading up to the Revolution and the war itself diverted the attention of the owner and his carpenter. Josiah Quincy's estate was not settled until 1790, at which time, his grandson, Josiah III (age 18) and his widowed mother made the Quincy house their summer home. It is likely that the southeast rooms were completed in the early 1790s, shortly after they took possession of the house. Mantelpiece features in both rooms are suggested by illustrations in William Pain's *Practical Builder and Workman's General Assistant* of 1789.¹¹ Both rooms display plain, wide-board dado with molded caps and surbases, identical molded cornices and mantelpieces with similar overall configuration and identical molding profiles. In the southeast room, the mantelpiece is decorated with scrolled, fluted consoles above panelled pilasters and a frieze decorated at intervals with five sets of flutes suggesting glyphs. Fret dentils are included in the assemblage of bed moldings below the shelf. In the southeast chamber, the mantel frieze is plain except for five flutes at either end. Another version of dentils surmounts the frieze.

The northwest room was the kitchen in the original house. It appears to have been reworked to some extent when the ell was built. The oven is no longer present east of the fireplace, for example. The northwest chamber was always a simply finished, utilitarian room never fitted with a fireplace, but housing the stairs to the attic and formerly stairs to the kitchen.

The monitor contains four small rooms, one of which has a small fireplace. The rooms are finished with plaster or wooden knee walls concealing storage in the eaves. Pine framing supports the roof and monitor, (whereas framing elsewhere in the house, where it has been examined, is of oak). The cellar under the main block and ell have granite rubble walls.

Massive round-arched brick foundations support the two chimney stacks in the house. The interior of the northwest service wing has been modestly updated from time to time and now serves as the resident overseer's apartment.

Toward the north end of the lot is a traditionally designed garage built in 1924. It is counted as a noncontributing building because it was constructed after the period of significance.

¹¹William Pain, *Practical Builder and Workman's General Assistant* (London, 1789), plates xxxii, xxxvi and xl).

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE**Page 8**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:
 Nationally: X Statewide: Locally:

Applicable National
 Register Criteria:

A B X C X D

Criteria Considerations
 (Exceptions):

A B C D E F G

NHL Criteria:

1,2,3,4

NHL Theme(s):

I. Peopling Places
 1. Family and life cycle
 III. Expressing Cultural Values
 1. Education
 3. Literature
 5. Architecture
 IV. Shaping the Political Landscape
 2. Governmental institutions
 4. Political ideas, cultures and theories

Areas of Significance:

Architecture; Politics/Government

Period(s) of Significance:

1770-1893

Significant Dates:

1770, 1808, c. 1850

Significant Person(s):

Quincy, Col. Josiah (1710-1784); Quincy, Josiah, Jr. (1744-1775);
 Quincy, Josiah, III (1772-1864); Quincy, Eliza Susan (1798-1884)

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

Attributed to Peirce, Edward (1735-1818)

NHL Comparative Categories:

IV. The American Revolution
 A. Politics and Diplomacy
 V. Politics and Military Affairs
 D. Jeffersonian Period, 1800-1811
 XVI. Architecture
 B. Georgian (1730-1780)
 XIX. Literature
 C. Non-fiction

State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 9

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Significance Noted Above.**Summary**

The 1770 Josiah Quincy House is an outstanding example of New England Georgian architecture notable for its well-proportioned and well-preserved design features and its exquisite classical entrance portico. The building's monitor roof is the oldest known surviving example of the roof form in the country and may even have been the seminal example of the roof form in the original colonies. The Josiah Quincy house is also preeminent for its association with four generations of Josiah Quincys and Eliza Susan Quincy, shapers of the national political landscape, prominent in affairs of education and commerce, and contributors to the nation as writers of history and literature. The cultural significance of the property is underscored by its stewardship over the last sixty years by the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. SPNEA's ownership since 1937 has guaranteed the integrity of the house and its rich collection of furnishings and objects associated with the Quincy family, and ensured that the public will have access to this exceptional cultural resource.

Architectural Significance

The Josiah Quincy House is an outstanding example of American Colonial Georgian architecture and possesses integrity of materials, design, workmanship, association and feeling. Notable for its excellent proportions, its restrained, though well-executed, classical ornament, and its felicitous combination of *chinoiserie* roof balustrades and monitor roof, the Quincy House is a timeless example of good design and a superb exemplar of its historic period.

The Josiah Quincy House compares favorably with other surviving Georgian houses of the second half of the eighteenth century in New England including the Loring-Greenough House in Jamaica Plain of c. 1760; the Craigie-Vassall-Longfellow House in Cambridge of 1759; the Jeremiah Lee House in Marblehead of 1768; the William Peperrell House in Kittery Point, Maine of 1760; the Governor John Wentworth House in Portsmouth, New Hampshire of 1769; and SPNEA's own Sara Orne Jewett House of 1774 and Hamilton House of c. 1785, both in South Berwick, Maine; and the Gov. John Langdon House in Portsmouth of 1784. The Quincy house shares design features with many of these houses, although it is more modest in scale and simpler in decoration than many of them. The Quincy House has a *chinoiserie* roof balustrade similar to that on the Langdon House, a stair balustrade reminiscent of the one in the Craigie-Vassall-Longfellow House and chimney breast features similar to those in the Hamilton House, for example. The Quincy House is noticeably smaller and lower than even the Loring-Greenough House, which is believed to have been designed by the same housewright. The ceilings are not high enough to easily accommodate a stair landing with ornamental window which virtually all of these other houses have. It is not, however, the elaborateness of its decorative features nor its size that distinguishes the Josiah Quincy House. Rather it is the integrity of the design as an architectural composition, and the relatively unaltered nature of the house's architectural fabric. Virtually all of the houses listed above have seen more alteration than the Quincy House. The

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE**Page 10**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

entrance portico, in particular, represents the rare survival of an unaltered eighteenth century entrance and is among SPNEA's finest and best-preserved original exterior features.

The monitor roof is the oldest known example to survive from the original colonies and may, in fact, be the prototype of all later monitor roofs in New England. Only one other potentially earlier monitor has been identified. The Matthew Cozzens House in Middletown, Rhode Island of c. 1750-1760, sometimes attributed to Peter Harrison and now demolished, was illustrated with a monitor roof similar to that on the Josiah Quincy House in Antoinette Downing's book in 1937.¹ Since the house is now gone, it is impossible to determine whether the monitor resembled the one on the Quincy House.

Josiah Quincy I (1710-1784) had the misfortune to lose two houses to fire in ten years. If we are to believe John Adams's comments, Josiah I was particularly fond of elegant architecture. When Quincy's first house burned in 1759, Adams wrote, "Is it the Pleasure of seeing, with your own Eyes, the Elegance, and Grandeur of your House . . . That you regret the Loss of?"² When Josiah I's second house burned on Dec. 6, 1769, owing to a faulty oven repair, he set out immediately to replace it.³ Josiah Quincy I wrote to housewright Edward Peirce of Dorchester on Dec. 19, 1769:

You have doubtless heard that God in his providence has been pleased to consume my house by fire and by Divine Permission, I propose to build another this ensuing year. If therefore you are disengaged, I should be glad to treat with you upon the subject, at least, I beg the favour you would dine with me . . . And Assist me in projecting a Plan of such a House as I want [,] making a schedule of the Materials to be collected for the Purpose and an Estimate of the cost.⁴

Edward Peirce (1735-1818) had completed a very similar Georgian house for merchant Joshua Loring (1716-1781) in 1760 in Jamaica Plain, now known as the Loring-Greenough House.⁵ It is highly likely that Quincy would have been familiar with Loring's house, since as wealthy merchants, they would have traveled in the same circles. (Loring would have fallen out of favour with Quincy in the early 1770s after he declared his Loyalist sympathies.) Edward Peirce's only

¹Antoinette Downing and Vincent J. Scully, Jr. *The Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island 1640-1915* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1952), Plate 111.

²L. H. Butterfield, ed. *The Adams Papers: Diary and Autobiography of John Adams*, vol. 1, Diary 1755-1770 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1951), 113.

³Memorandum-account of Col. Josiah Quincy, as copied by Eliza Susan Quincy and as quoted in information compiled by William Churchill Edwards, Oct. 7-13, 1963, Quincy House Binder, SPNEA Archives.

⁴Josiah Quincy to Edward Peirce, December 19, 1769. Photocopy in the Curatorial Files, SPNEA Collections Department

⁵This attribution comes from a typewritten note, author unknown, in the Curatorial Files, SPNEA Collections Department.

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE**Page 11**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

other known work is the widening of the Dorchester Meetinghouse, where he was a deacon for many years, by separating the two halves at the ridge pole.⁶

Quincy's two subsequent surviving letters to Peirce suggest that the house went up very quickly, and also indicate that Peirce was not the actual builder.⁷ On April 15, 1770, Quincy asked to consult with Peirce and requested that he to go to Boston "to Purchase 16 peices [sic] of Timber which I find is still wanting to complete the frame of my House."⁸ Quincy's letter to Peirce of April 27, 1770 suggests that he was on the point of deciding about the design of his roof and wanted Peirce's advice:

I should be glad to see you next Monday morning to determine ab't the Roof of my House, but Wm Stoddard says he must if possible see you tomorrow morning for if the weather permits, that will be the first thing he goes about besides which, he wants you[r] pit saw to divide the Pieces of Pine Timbers.⁹

In the period before there were professional architects in America, design of buildings was undertaken by either gentleman amateurs or housewrights. The letters from Quincy to Peirce do not make clear who designed Josiah Quincy's house. However, since Peirce was already the competent designer in 1760 of the very similar Loring-Greenough House, it is likely that he was responsible for the major design features of this house. A gentleman of Quincy's stature would have been conversant with architectural trends of his day, and would likely have had a clear idea of the kind of house he wanted. Quincy's travels in Europe in the 1730s and 1740s would have exposed him to Renaissance classical architecture in several countries, and very likely in England to the works of Inigo Jones, James Gibbs and the Burlington Group. Further, as a leading citizen of Massachusetts, Quincy was surely familiar with the houses of his counterparts in his own and neighboring colonies. Whoever projected the plan of the Josiah Quincy House surely referred to English Architectural books. Several books known to have been available in Boston at the time the house was built can be identified as likely sources of motifs in the house.¹⁰ No architectural books are among the books listed in the inventory of Quincy's estate in 1784.¹¹

Quincy's reasons for choosing a monitor roof remain a mystery and its sources uncertain. None of the houses Quincy would have seen, with the possible exception of the Matthew Cozzens House, would have had a monitor roof, to our knowledge. The more typical Georgian response to lighting an attic story would have been dormer windows or a cupola, or, if an look out feature was wanted, a balustraded roof deck would have served. From purely a design standpoint, the

⁶Ibid.

⁷William Stoddard is referenced as the carpenter in Josiah Quincy's letter to Peirce of April 27, 1770.

⁸Josiah Quincy to Edward Peirce, April 15, 1770. Photocopy in the Curatorial Files, SPNEA Collections Department.

⁹Josiah Quincy to Edward Peirce, April 27, 1770. Photocopy in the Curatorial Files, SPNEA Collections Department.

¹⁰See eighteenth century architectural books referenced in the Bibliography.

¹¹Suffolk County Registry of Probate, Docket # 18158.

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE**Page 12**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

monitor roof allows for more useable and congenial attic space while maintaining the sense of horizontality imposed by a low hip roof partially concealed behind a balustrade. Although prominent central roof features are found in many eighteenth century buildings in England (Chiswick, for example), no exact prototypes for hip roofed monitor have been identified.¹² An architectural book source that might have suggested the monitor feature to Quincy or his housewright is Plate 65 in James Paine's *Plans, Elevations and Sections of Noblemen's and Gentlemen's Houses*, vol. 1 (London, 1767). While this book is not identified by Helen Park as one available before the Revolution in this country, Gov. John Wentworth of New Hampshire is believed to have had a copy before 1770.¹³ The design shows a two story house with hip roofs on the two side bays and a monitor-like feature with gable roof over the central three bays. A more remote possible inspiration for the monitor is Plate 1 in Abraham Swan's *A Collection of Designs in Architecture*, which shows three low central dormers in a hip roof behind a parapet.¹⁴ Monitor roofs became an occasional feature of Federal and Greek Revival houses in New England.¹⁵

Quincy descendants and other purchasers selected SPNEA to receive the Josiah Quincy House in 1937 after considering other recipients. William Sumner Appleton, SPNEA's founder, underscored the house's importance at the time of its donation when he stated:

We have here a stately mansion of a bygone period, the house practically unaltered and retaining an ample sufficiency of land to insure a fine setting for all time. The plan is good and the detail of the architecture is stately, refined and well-proportioned The house represents a type of which we have none, namely . . . [a] Monitor roof.¹⁶

In 1986, the Quincy House was one of the houses selected to receive individual coverage in *The Magazine Antiques* special issue on SPNEA.¹⁷

Since 1938, the Josiah Quincy House has been open to the public as a museum. Family

¹²Personal communication, Carl Loundsbury, Architectural Historian, Colonial Williamsburg, Dec. 16, 1996.

¹³James Leo Garvin, "Academic Architecture and the Building Trades in the Piscataqua Region of New Hampshire and Maine, 1715-1815. (Ph.D. diss., Boston University, 1983), 264.

¹⁴Abraham Swan, *A Collection of Designs in Architecture*, vol. 1(London, 1757), Plate 1.

¹⁵Among those of note are the Beale-Rice House, 181 Adams Street, Quincy, built in 1792; the Judge Silas Lee House on High Street in Wiscasset, Maine, built in 1792; the Salem Towne House, Old Sturbridge Village, built in 1796; the Perez Morton House in Roxbury, built in 1796 and designed by Charles Bulfinch; the Gershom Bradford House, 931 Tremont Street, Duxbury, built in 1808; the Cyrum Hamilton House in Lyme, NH, built c. 1812; the Seth Sprague House, 476 Washington Street, Duxbury, built in 1813; a house on Commercial Street in Weymouth, MA, built in the 1790s; and a house on Cushman Street in Monson, MA built ca. 1780-1790, judging by its style.

¹⁶William Sumner Appleton to Arthur Wendell, July 20, 1937. Quincy House File, SPNEA Archives.

¹⁷Elizabeth Redmond, "Colonel Josiah Quincy House, Wollaston, Massachusetts," *The Magazine Antiques* (March 1986): 632-634.

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE**Page 13**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

members returned many furnishings and objects with Quincy family connections to the house. The inventory that Eliza Susan Quincy made in 1879 of the house's contents and the photographs that she had taken c. 1880 served as a guide to the arrangement of Quincy furniture and the choice of supplementary pieces from the SPNEA collection. The most important piece is japanned high chest of drawers, apparently saved from both fires, which was bought by Colonel Josiah Quincy I in 1733. Listed in the inventory of estate in 1784 as "1 Japan Chest of Draws 36' [shillings],"¹⁸ the piece is one of seventeen surviving japanned high chests of drawers in the Queen Anne style known to have been made in Boston and is among the best documented and preserved.¹⁹ It is located in the southwest chamber. Other furniture pieces of note include the Chippendale English Mahogany double-chair-back settee in the west parlor and the English looking glass in the east parlor bought by Josiah Quincy I in London, and a Hepplewhite Boston card table which belonged to Abigail Phillips Quincy (1745-1798), wife of Josiah Quincy II (1744-1775). Decorative arts, and other items returned to the house include the Quincy-Sturgis embroidered coat of arms of c. 1740-1750; the Chinese whist set given to Abigail Phillips Quincy by her brother-in-law, Samuel Shaw, who opened up trade with China in the 1790s; and a number of watercolors by Eliza Susan Quincy.

The Quincy family papers at the Massachusetts Historical Society, the published Quincy biographies and the papers of prominent friends and associates of the Quincys have made it possible for SPNEA to achieve a depth of understanding and interpretation that is not possible at many of its other museum houses where such a rich documentary and material record is lacking. SPNEA's interpretive philosophy with regard to the Josiah Quincy House was perhaps best expressed in 1980:

It is a sense of "totality" of architecture, furnishings, objects and historical documentation which gives the Quincy House its ultimate significance. The preservation and interpretation of this property as an architectural-historical continuum contributes to a vital and illuminating understanding of history on various levels -- national, regional, and local.²⁰

Historical Background

Quincy family ownership of the site of the Josiah Quincy House and surrounding land dates from 1635 when Edmund Quincy (1602-1636) purchased 400 acres from the Sachem of the Massachusetts Indians. The area in which the property was located, known as Mt. Wollaston, was part of Boston until 1640; then it became a part of the Town of Braintree. The same area became the north precinct of Braintree in 1708, the Town of Quincy in 1792 and the City of Quincy in 1887. In 1734, Edmund Quincy's grandson, Edmund Quincy (1681-1737/38) deeded 100 of the original acres, known as the Lower Farm, to his son, Josiah Quincy I (1710-1784).²¹

¹⁸Suffolk County Registry of Probate, Docket # 18158.

¹⁹Penny J. Sander, "Collections of the Society [SPNEA]," *The Magazine Antiques* (March 1986) Pl. V, p. 598.

²⁰Josiah Quincy House Development Project Completion Report, February 1980, p. 4. SPNEA Archives.

²¹Ezekiel C. Sargent, Quincy Lands records Collection Book B, the Edmund Quincy Farms, Quincy Historical Society, p. B-59.

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 14

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

The property remained in the hands of Josiah Quincy I and his descendants until 1895 when the surrounding acres were sold for development. Owned by the Hall family until 1937, the Josiah Quincy House and its three-quarter-acre site were purchased by Quincy descendants and donated to the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities in that year.

Historical Significance

The Quincy family over many generations made significant contributions to the political, economic, educational and cultural life of the nation. Josiah Quincy I (1710-1784), graduated from Harvard in 1728, married Hannah Sturgis in 1733, settled in Boston in 1735 and became a merchant in partnership with his older brother, Edmund Quincy (1703-1788) and his brother-in-law, Edward Jackson of Boston. Josiah I traveled to England and the continent in 1735, 1738, 1740, 1742 and 1748, establishing business contacts in several countries and a partnership with English merchant Slingsby Bethel. In 1748, one of the firm's ships had the good fortune to capture a hostile Spanish privateer in the Mediterranean Sea and its cargo of silver and gold. Upon receiving his share of \$100,000 of the proceeds of this venture, Josiah Quincy dissolved his partnership and returned to Braintree, where he engaged in several manufacturing ventures, a spermaceti works and a salt works. Quincy's chief occupations, however, were in civil and military affairs. In 1755, he was sent by Gov. Shirley on a mission to Philadelphia to secure Pennsylvania's cooperation in erecting a fort for protection against the French at Crown Point, renewing his friendship with Benjamin Franklin. In 1762, he was appointed Colonel of the Third Suffolk Regiment, and was thereafter known as Col. Quincy. During this time, the young John Adams made friends with his older neighbor, recording in his diary visits and even a fishing outing with Quincy. Adams recorded in his diary, for example, in January 1759, "Drank tea at Coll. Quincies. Spent the Evening there, and the next morning."²² The relationship was made closer by John Adams's marriage in 1763 to Abigail Smith, who, like Josiah I, was descended from Edmund Quincy (1627-1698), and by the friendship of Josiah Quincy's third wife, Ann Marsh with Abigail Adams. The close association of the town's two leading families was strengthened by common interests and continued in succeeding generations.²³

Josiah Quincy I was a strong supporter of the revolutionary cause and a friend of revolutionary leaders, including Franklin, Washington and Lafayette. During the siege of Boston, Col. Quincy monitored the movements of the British fleet in Boston Harbor for General Washington. He was pleased to record on a window pane (now displayed in the house), "October 10, 1775, governor Gage sailed for England with a fair wind."²⁴

Attorney Josiah Quincy II (1744-1775), youngest son of Josiah Quincy I, died at the age of 31 returning from London on a mission for the Massachusetts patriots. Had he not died so young, he would have inherited the Josiah Quincy House. A 1763 graduate of Harvard, he was admitted

²²L. H. Butterfield, ed., *The Adams Papers: Diary and Autobiography of John Adams*, vol. 1, Diary 1755-1770 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1961), 66.

²³Information about Josiah Quincy I (1710-1784) in these paragraphs is taken from Eliza Susan Quincy, "Josiah Quincy, Senior," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. 3 (1879): 182-184; and Clifford K. Shipton, *Sibley's Harvard Graduates*, vol. VIII, 1726-1730 (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1951), 463-475.

²⁴Edmund Quincy, *Life of Josiah Quincy of Massachusetts* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1867), 14.

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE**Page 15**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

to the bar in 1766. At his college commencement, he demonstrated his oratorical powers by delivering the English oration on the subject of Patriotism, no doubt leading to his sobriquet, "The Patriot." Seven years later on December 16, 1773, at the Old South Meetinghouse, he delivered a speech to "upwards of seven thousand"²⁵ persons in and around the building. Denouncing the tax on tea, he attacked Governor Hutchinson and "the most malignant and insatiable enemy of my country."²⁶ As he spoke, men dressed as Indians entered the meetinghouse; later they proceeded to Boston Harbor where they carried out the Boston Tea Party. John Adams called Josiah Quincy II "as ardent a patriot as any of his age and next to James Otis, the greatest orator."²⁷

In 1770, Josiah II and John Adams made the unpopular decision to defend the British soldiers who had taken part in the Boston Massacre in March of that year in which 5 colonists were killed. They secured the acquittal of the defendants and proved their point that Massachusetts laws were impartially administered. Josiah Quincy II was a skilled writer and propagandist for the Revolution. In 1774, he agreed to go to England to argue the colonists' cause against restrictive laws and military occupation to British leaders. Failing to persuade Parliament and in ill health, Josiah II sailed for Boston in March 1775. He died within sight of land in Gloucester Harbor on April 26, 1775.²⁸

Josiah Quincy III (1772-1863) inherited the Quincy homestead in 1784. When he was ten years old, his grandfather, Josiah Quincy I, anticipating that his grandson would follow the family tradition of public service wrote to him, ". . . It is indispensably requisite to the forming of a distinguished character in public life that Truth should be the invariable object of your pursuit, and your end the public good."²⁹ Indeed, Josiah III did serve the public with great distinction, first as a Federalist representative to Congress (1804-1813) and Massachusetts State senator (1813-1821), then as mayor of Boston (1823-1828), and finally as president of Harvard University (1829-1845).³⁰

Elected mayor just one year after Boston became a city, Josiah Quincy III affected great changes and improvements to the city, most notably the construction of Quincy Market. As President of

²⁵Joseph T. Buckingham, *Specimens of Newspaper Literature*, vol. 1 (Boston, 1852), 191, as quoted in Clifford K. Shipton, *Sibley's Harvard Graduates*, vol. XV, 1761-1763 (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1970), 486.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷"John Adams' Deeds to the Town of Quincy, 1822," as quoted in *Quincy History* (Spring 1994): 4.

²⁸Information about Josiah Quincy II (1744-1775) in these paragraphs comes also from Clifford K. Shipton, *Sibley's Harvard Graduates*, vol. XV, 1761-1763 (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1970), 479-491; and Josiah Quincy, *Memoir of the Life of Josiah Quincy Jr., of Massachusetts, 1744-1775* (Boston: John Wilson & Co., 1874).

²⁹Eliza Susan Quincy, "Josiah Quincy, Senior," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. 3 (1879): 185.

³⁰Information about Josiah Quincy III (1772-1864) given here comes from "Hon. Josiah Quincy," *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, vol. XIX (1865): 89-90; and Edmund Quincy, *Life of Josiah Quincy of Massachusetts* (Boston: Ticknor & Fields, 1867).

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE**Page 16**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Harvard, he “invigorated, expanded and enriched every old department,”³¹ introduced sound fiscal management, and improved the campus with two new buildings (Gore Hall, 1841, and the Harvard Observatory, 1843-1851). During his long term of almost continuous public service, Josiah III published many pamphlets, letters, and orations, and he wrote full length scholarly works, often assisted by his daughter, Eliza Susan Quincy (1798-1884). His works included *A Memoir of the Life of Josiah Quincy, Junior of Massachusetts, 1744-1775* (1825), the *History of Harvard University* (1840), the *Journals of Major Samuel Shaw* (1847, Josiah’s uncle, the first American to open trade with China), the *History of the Boston Athenaeum* (1851), the *Municipal History of the Town and City of Boston* (1852), and the *Life of John Quincy Adams* (1858).

Josiah III spent his summers at the Josiah Quincy House residing in Boston or Cambridge the rest of the year. During his public and academic career, he entertained many distinguished visitors at the Quincy homestead including Lafayette, John Adams, John Quincy Adams, James Monroe, Daniel Webster and Commodore Matthew Perry. Taking a lively interest in horticulture and agriculture, Josiah III, at the age of 18 planted elms along a quarter of a mile drive to the house (now Elm Street).³² Quincy was a trustee of the Massachusetts Society for Promoting Agriculture from 1805-1826 and published frequently in the Society’s journal.³³ In 1814, he “took up farming in earnest, assuming management of the diary farm from his tenant, . . . Alpheas Cary, to conduct experiments with various types of cattle feed and feeding techniques.”³⁴

Josiah Quincy III died in 1864, leaving life tenancy of the Quincy House to his three unmarried daughters; Eliza Susan Quincy (1798-1884), Abigail Phillips Quincy (1803-1893) and Maria Sophia Quincy (1805-1886). These women comprised the triumvirate known as the “famous Quincy Sisters of Boston Society” or “The Articulate Sisters,” the title Mark Anthony DeWolfe Howe, son-in-law of Josiah Phillips Quincy (1829-1910), gave to his book excerpting passages from their journals and letters.³⁵ Eliza Susan’s two married sisters were: Margaret Morton Quincy Greene (1806-1882) and Anna Cabot Lowell Quincy Waterston (b. 1812).

Although all five daughters of Josiah III and Eliza Susan Morton were accomplished, it was Eliza Susan who was the self-styled documentarian of the Quincy family and the Josiah Quincy House.

A respected historian in her time, Eliza Susan Quincy in her published and manuscript works recorded the history of the Quincy family and described first-hand historic events and social occasions, many of them at the Quincy homestead, that she witnessed. Her eye witness accounts documented the 1815 proclamation of peace ending the War of 1812, the Boston visits of

³¹Robert C. Winthrop, *Tribute of the Massachusetts Historical Society to the Memory of Josiah Quincy: July 14, 1864* (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1964), 14.

³²Edmund Quincy, *Life of Josiah Quincy of Massachusetts* (Boston: Ticknor & Fields, 1867), 365.

³³Tamara Plakins Thornton, *Cultivating Gentlemen: The Meaning of Country Life among the Boston Elite, 1785-1850* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1989), 114.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 116.

³⁵Mark Anthony DeWolfe Howe, *The Articulate Sisters* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1946).

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE**Page 17**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

General Lafayette in 1824 and the Duke of Saxe-Weimar in 1825.³⁶ Among Eliza Susan's biographical works were the editing of her mother's autobiography, *Memoir of the Life of Eliza S. M. Quincy* (1861); "Josiah Quincy, Senior," (*Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 1879); "Memoir of Edmund Quincy (1681-1738) of Braintree, Massachusetts Bay," (*New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, 1884); and her own two volume memoir. Eliza Susan Quincy and her nephew, Josiah Phillips Quincy, left 13 scrapbooks relating to various members of the Quincy family to the Massachusetts Historical Society. She corresponded with well-known persons of her day whom she met primarily through her family associations. Often she presented them with her drawings. For example, President John Quincy Adams corresponded with her in November and December of 1831, and requested a copy of her earlier drawing of the Adams houses in Quincy, "the dwellings in which my father and myself were born," for his Washington residence. Adams himself had composed "a few stanzas" which he proposed "to have inscribed under your portrait of the house of my own nativity."³⁷ Lafayette also received one of her drawings and declared himself, "doubly happy in your present so valuable by its intrinsic merit and the kindness of the giver."³⁸

Eliza Susan Quincy documented the Josiah Quincy House, her permanent home from 1855 until her death in 1884, and the history she saw being shaped within it. It is largely through her efforts that the Josiah Quincy House has long been recognized as an icon of the Quincy family; she spent a good portion of her life protecting it, writing about it, and retrieving from far flung family members original Quincy furnishings. Some of the specific documents she left were her meticulous inventory, the List of Pictures and Furniture in the House built 1770 (1879) and her finely detailed 1822 watercolors of both the house and the view to Boston Harbor from the house. The Massachusetts Historical Society, in 1975, published additional paintings by Eliza Susan entitled: *A Portfolio of Nine Water Color Views Relating to Certain Members of the Adams and Quincy Families*.³⁹

Josiah Quincy IV (1802-1882) spent his childhood summers with his family at the Josiah Quincy House and was a frequent visitor thereafter. As a young man, he was active in the development of the Boston and Worcester Railroad.⁴⁰ Between 1845 and 1849, he served as mayor of Boston. His outstanding accomplishment while mayor was to secure an adequate water supply for the city. The celebration of the completion of the municipal waterworks, which took place on Boston Common on Oct. 12, 1848, climaxed with the display of a geyser 80 feet in height. In

³⁶Josiah Phillips Quincy, "Tribute to Miss Eliza Quincy," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, I, 2nd series (1884): 35.

³⁷Eliza Susan Quincy, Correspondence with John Quincy Adams. Five letters, Nov. 1 - Dec. 30, 1831. Quincy Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

³⁸Journal of General Lafayette's Visit to Boston (Aug. 22, 1824 to Sept. 2, 1824). The letter to Eliza Susan Quincy from Lafayette is dated Sept. 20, 1824. Quincy Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

³⁹Information about Eliza Susan Quincy (1798-1884) given here comes from Josiah Phillips Quincy, "Tribute to Miss Eliza Quincy," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, I, 2nd Series (1884): 34-39; and Robert C. Winthrop, "Remarks at a Meeting of the Massachusetts Historical Society, February 14, 1884," *Addresses and Speeches on Various Occasions, from 1878 to 1886* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1886): 485-486.

⁴⁰James R. Cameron, *The Public Service of Josiah Quincy, Jr., 1802-1882* (Quincy, Massachusetts: the Quincy Cooperative Bank, 1964), 11, 15.

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE**Page 18**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

later life, Josiah Quincy IV was a promoter of cooperative banks in Massachusetts, and largely through his efforts, the law enabling incorporation of cooperative loan and banking associations was enacted on May 14, 1877.⁴¹ Josiah IV returned to Quincy after his third term as mayor and lived in a house nearby that he built in 1855.

Following the death of his aunt, Abigail Phillips Quincy in 1893, Josiah Phillips Quincy (Josiah V) (1827-1910) inherited the house and farm. Josiah V continued the family traditions of interest in history and literature and his son, Josiah VI (1859-1919) carried on the family's tradition of public service by serving as mayor of Boston between 1895 and 1898.⁴² In 1895, Josiah V sold for development the entire farm surrounding the Josiah Quincy House. The house and its immediate site he sold to Mr. and Mrs. Frank E. Hall of Amesbury. In 1937 Edmund Quincy and the noted historian, Alice Bache Gould, both grandchildren of Josiah V, joined with other direct descendants of Josiah Quincy, members of the Quincy family and concerned donors to secure the preservation of the Josiah Quincy House. They raised the necessary funds, bought the house from the Halls and presented it to the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities on October 19, 1937. Since then, SPNEA has maintained the building as a house museum.

⁴¹Ibid., 23, 25.

⁴²Mark Anthony DeWolfe Howe, "Memoir of Josiah Phillips Quincy," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* (December 1911), 341-344; and *Harvard College: Class of 1880, Fortieth Anniversary Report*. Report IX, 156-157.

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE**Page 19**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE**Page 20**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 21

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE**Page 22**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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1857 - Map of the Town of Quincy, Norfolk County, Mass. Surveyor: H. F. Walling

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1897 - Atlas of the City of Quincy, Norfolk County, Mass., Plate 23.
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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.

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: # MA-2-42

Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record:

Primary Location of Additional Data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other (Specify Repository): Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities
Massachusetts Historical Society
Quincy Historical Society



10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: 3/4 acre

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
	A 19	333790	4681680

Verbal Boundary Description:

Plot 16, city of Quincy Assessor's Map #5033

Boundary Justification:

The nominated property includes the 3/4 acre parcel, remaining from the original acreage associated with the Josiah Quincy House.

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE**Page 24**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE**Page 25**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

LIST OF PLANS

1. US Geodetic Survey Map, Boston, South, Massachusetts.
2. Current Assessor's Plan - Sheet 5033.
3. City of Quincy area map with property lines, 1995.
- 4-16. Historic American Buildings Survey. Josiah Quincy House, Quincy, Massachusetts. MA 2-42, 1929. (13 Sheets).

LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Setting: Muirhead Street with neighboring residences and mature trees.
Direction: northwest.
2. South facade and west elevation.
Direction: north.
3. North facade showing porch on east elevation and 2-story wing at north end of west elevation. Direction: south.
4. Southwest corner of modillioned and denticulated cornice with section of roof balustrade, direction northwest.
5. West corner of modillioned and denticulated closed pediment of entry porch on south facade, direction north.
6. Interior. West parlor. West wall and chimney wall (north), direction northwest.
7. Interior. West parlor. Detail of chimney on north wall showing mitered corners decorated with egg and dart molding, direction north.
8. Interior. East parlor. East wall and chimney wall (north), direction northeast.
9. Interior. East parlor. Detail of chimney breast decorative trim, direction north.
10. Interior. Dining-room. West wall and chimney wall (south), direction southwest.
11. Interior. Stair hall and north wall, direction north.
12. Interior. West Chamber. Fireplace panelled wall, north, direction northeast.

QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE**Page 26**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

13. Interior. Monitor roof, southeast room, direction southeast.
14. Sketch of the Josiah Quincy House by Eliza Susan Quincy, 1822.
Massachusetts Historical Society.

LIST OF SLIDES (submitted with the nomination form)

1. Setting: Muirhead Street with neighboring residences and mature trees, facing south, direction northwest.
2. South facade with west elevation and 2-story wing, direction north.
3. South facade, Muirhead Street, direction northwest.
4. South facade, entrance portico and part of balustrade, direction north.
5. South facade, detail of portico and closed pediment, direction north.
6. South facade, east side of portico with entablature and modillioned cornice, direction west.
7. South facade and east elevation, hip roof balustrade and monitor roof with balustrade, direction north.
8. Southwest corner: Details of quoins and balustrade, direction north.
9. North facade with east elevation porch and 2-story wing at west elevation, direction south.
10. North facade, pedimented entrance, direction south.
11. South facade, east elevation with Greek Revival porch, direction northwest.
12. East elevation, Greek Revival porch, direction northwest.
13. South facade, Details: sash windows, granite foundation with slate infill.
14. Historic Photograph at Josiah Quincy House. SPNEA Archives
15. Sketch of the Josiah Quincy House by Eliza Susan Quincy, 1823.
Massachusetts Historical Society.
16. West parlor. West wall and chimney wall, direction northwest.
17. West parlor. Detail of chimney on north wall showing mitered corners decorated with egg and dart molding, direction north.

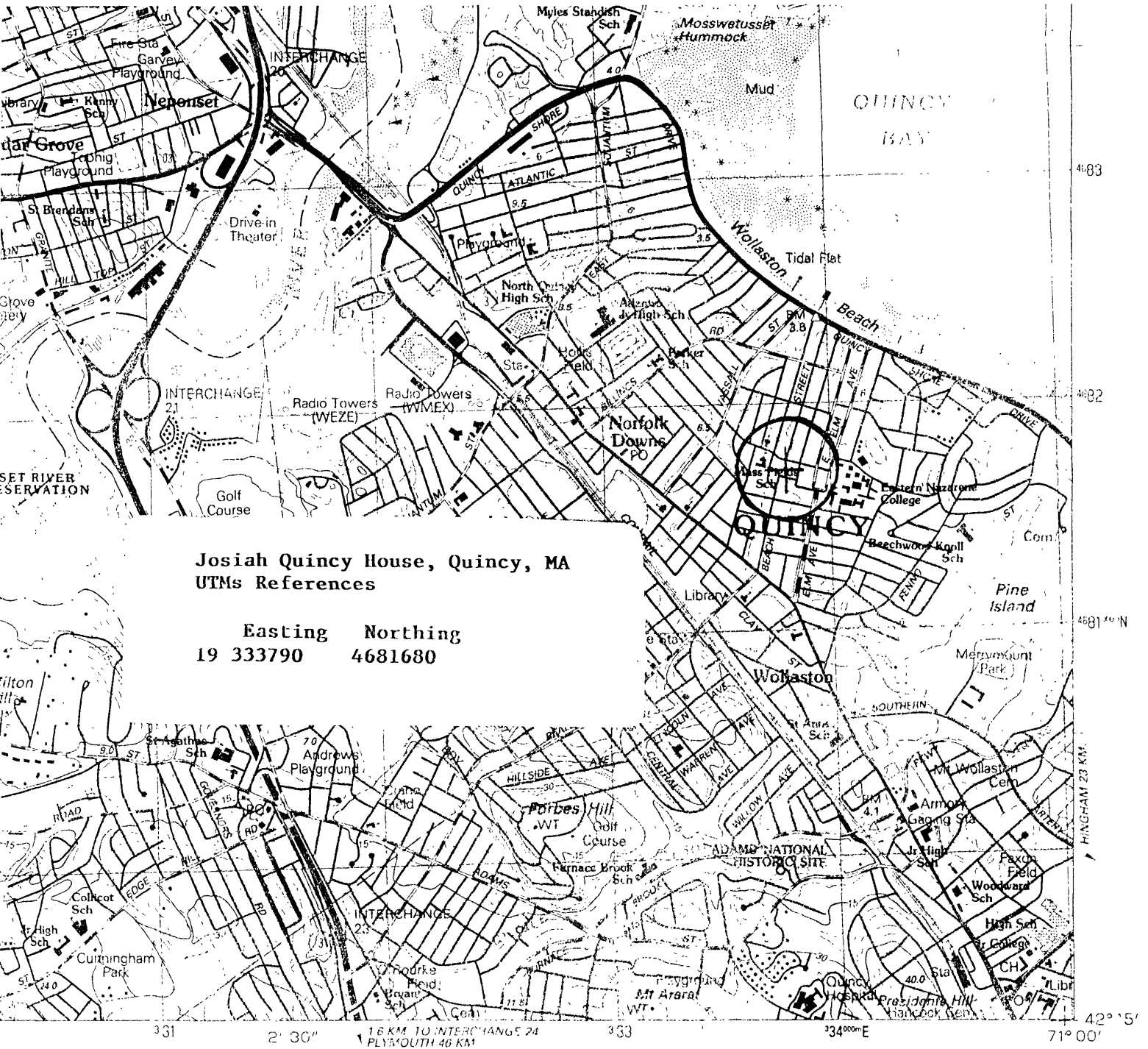
QUINCY, JOSIAH, HOUSE**Page 27**

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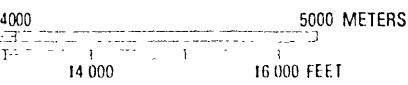
18. West parlor. Southwest corner, direction southwest.
19. East parlor. East wall and chimney wall, direction northeast.
20. East parlor. Detail of chimney mantel decorative trim, direction north.
21. East parlor. East wall with door leading to Greek Revival porch.
22. Dining-room. West wall and chimney wall, direction southwest.
23. Dining-room. Detail chimney wall, direction south.
24. Stair hall. South wall, direction south.
25. Stair hall. North wall and staircase, direction north.
26. Stair hall. Detail of newel post and stairs.
27. West chamber. North wall, direction north.
28. West chamber. Japanned chest of drawers of Colonel Josiah Quincy I
(1710- 1784).
29. Third floor. Monitor roof, southeast room, direction southeast.

**JOSIAH QUINCY HOUSE
QUINCY, NORFOLK COUNTY, MA**



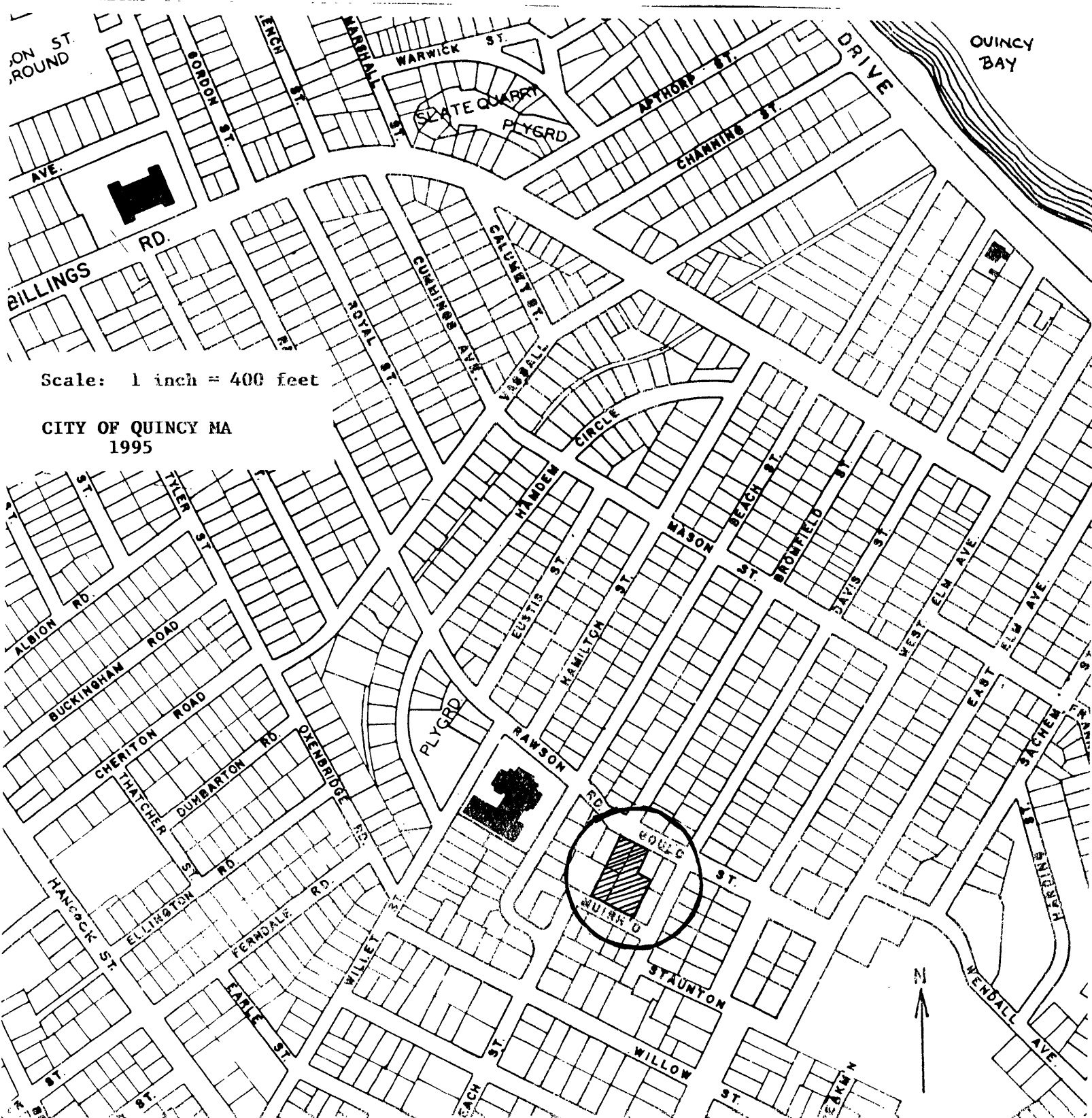
**Josiah Quincy House, Quincy, MA
UTMs References**

**Easting Northing
19 333790 4681680**



**BOSTON SOUTH, MASSACHUSETTS
42071-C1-TM-025**

JOSIAH QUINCY HOUSE
QUINCY, NORFOLK COUNTY, MA



Scale: 1 inch = 400 feet

CITY OF QUINCY MA
1995

