

**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 19 1982**
date entered **APR 15 1982**

1. Name

historic The Port Royal House

and/or common Nickerson Homestead

2. Location

street & number 606 Main Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Chatham

N/A vicinity of

congressional district Twelfth

state Massachusetts

code

025

county

Barnstable

code 001

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 Mrs. John Nickerson (Jane M.)

street & number 427 Stoney Hill Road

city, town North Chatham

N/A vicinity of

state Massachusetts

5. Location of Legal Description

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

street & number Main Street

city, town Barnstable

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 January, 1979

☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Massachusetts Historical Commission

city, town Boston

state Massachusetts

7. Description

The Port Royal House

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 Port Royal House stands within its original setting, overlooking a major traffic intersection and the Veteran's Park with its Civil War monument. The building is approached by three low terraces and is generously setback from the street and from its neighboring structures.

Port Royal was built in 1863 in the Tuscan Villa style. The small but imposing two-story house is rectangular in plan with a horizontal emphasis achieved by its flat roof, full-length front veranda, and heavy horizontal trim. The building is wood frame with clapboard siding.

The overall design includes a pronounced roof overhang which is supported by ornately carved paired brackets; a panelled entablature and panelled corner pilasters complete the basic surface ornamentation. Original porch and roof balustrades and a balustraded fence have since been destroyed.

The building has a simple three-bay facade with a center doorway. A one-story veranda across the front has a smaller-scale reproduction of the main entablature, supported by four fluted Doric columns on panelled pedestals. The center entrance has double glazed doors framed by panelled pilasters and a bold segmental arched entablature with paired brackets. Above the doorway is a single window with a segmental arched cornice. The outer windows on the facade are paired and have flat cornices.

The side elevations, two bays wide, and the rear elevation have symmetrical single windows. Common to all of the house's windows are original 2/2 sash, heavy cornices on paired brackets, shouldered architraves, and small sill brackets.

A one-story ell centered at the rear of the building (added soon after the original construction) has a flat roof, 2/2 windows with plain architraves, and much smaller and simpler paired entablature brackets. An original outhouse also repeats the primary motifs in its flat roof, corner pilasters and simple sawn paired brackets.

The interior of the house is largely unaltered, boasting ornately inlaid floors, tremendous door and window frames, graining, tin ceilings, a dumbwaiter, and a door to the roof which gives an exceptional view of the town.

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 1863 Builder/Architect Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Port Royal House is a remarkably intact representation of Cape Cod's maritime prosperity in the nineteenth century. The building is associated with several distinguished families and is an excellent example of the Tuscan Villa style in the region; thus it meets criteria B and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

In 1862 Captain Seth Eldridge, a sailing master of Chatham, saw a house in Port Royal, Jamaica, which he so admired that he procured the plans and had such a house built for himself in Chatham the following year (1863). In 1872, the house was bought from Eldridge's estate by Emma Nickerson, whose husband John "followed the sea in early life" and afterwards became a carpenter. The house has remained in the ownership of the well-known Nickerson family (local merchants) ever since.

When Port Royal was built, the center of Chatham was located several miles east on the Coast by the "Twin Lights". However, an 1877 storm cut so deeply into the shoreline that many buildings were moved away from the area of the lighthouses to the part of town in which the Port Royal House stands. This area of Main Street became, and continues to be, the hub of local activity, presently containing the town shopping center, three churches, town hall, and a fine range of over a dozen nineteenth century architectural styles. The Port Royal House is one of the most clearly stated examples of the Tuscan Villa style extant on the Cape Cod and has remained virtually unchanged in its 117 years of life.

9. Map or Bibliographical References

Files of: Chatham Historical Commission
P.O. Box 46
Chatham, MA 02633

Deyo, Simeon, History of Barnstable
County, Vol. II. (New York: H. W.
Blake and Co., 1890).

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1/4

ACREAGE NOT LIMITED

Quadrangle name Chatham

Quadrangle scale 1:24 000

UMT References

UTM NOT VERIFIED

A 19 420090 41614730
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

See attached Assessor's map.

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

state	code	county	code
<u>N/A</u>			
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Wendy Frontiero, Preservation Planner with Jack Clarke, Cape Cod Planning and Economic Development Commission

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission

date November, 1980

street & number 294 Washington Street

telephone 727-8470

city or town Boston

state Massachusetts 02108

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

 national state X 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 L. Weslow

title Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical Commission

date 2/25/82

For HCPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 4/15/82

for Keeper of the National Register

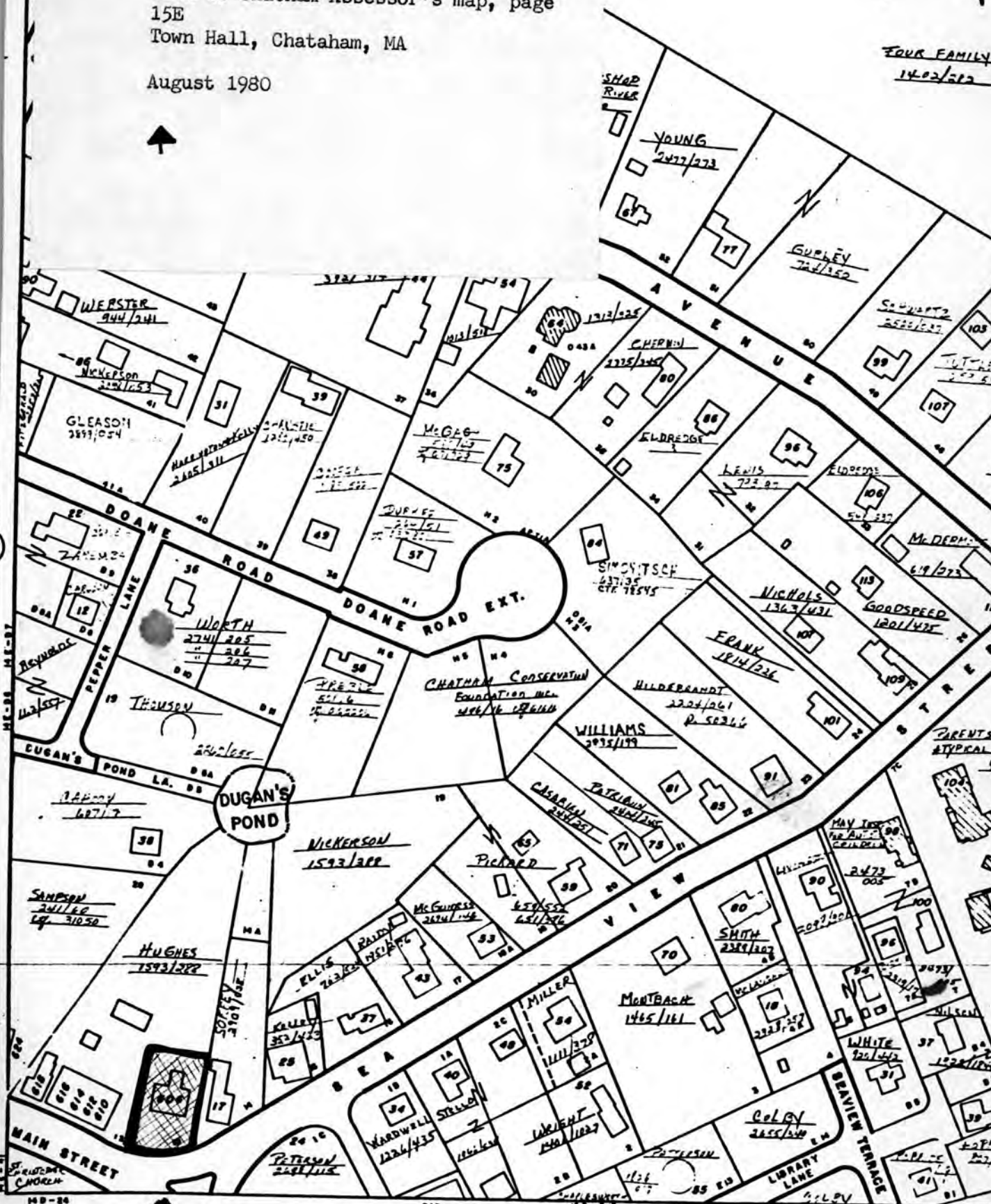
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

Nickerson Homestead, "Port Royal House"
 Town of Chatham Assessor's map, page
 15E
 Town Hall, Chatham, MA

August 1980



606 Main St.

Nickerson Homestead, "Port Royal House"

PG 15E

Nickerson Homestead, "Port Royal House"
Town of Chatham Assessor's map, page 15E
Town Hall
Chatham, MA 02633
August, 1980.



NATIONAL REGIST OF HISTORIC PLACE
EVALUATION / RETURN SHEET

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

82069943

Property: Port Royal House
State, County: MA, Barnstable
Federal Agency: _____

Working No. 318 82-809

Fed. Reg. Date: 2-1-83

Date Due: 4-15-82 / 5-2-82

Action: ☒ ACCEPT 4/15/82

☐ RETURN

☐ REJECT

Entered in the
National Register

photos ☒

maps ☒

- ☐ 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	Status	Present Use
☒ Public Acquisition	☒ Accessible		

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
☐ excellent	☐ deteriorated	☐ unaltered
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ altered
☐ fair	☐ unexposed	☐ original site
		☐ moved date _____

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 _____

UNIT 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: 202 272 - 3504

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



Port Royal House
606 Main St.
Chatham, MA

Main facade S.E. at Memorial Triangle
Baisly, 1978 for Chatham Historical Commission

CHATHAM, MA
Port Royal House

South and east
elevations, 1979
Photo by Clair Baisly,
negative at Chatham
Historical Commission,
P.O. Box 46, Chatham

#10P2



about
1870-73

Port Royal House
S.E. facade at Memorial
Park

606 Main St
Chatham Historical Commission

Coby Photographer
unknown

(7)

BENJAMIN G. SAWIN
POSTCARDS 945-2661 PHOTOGRAPHY
MORRIS ISLAND ROAD
CHATHAM, MASSACHUSETTS 02633

CHATHAM, MA
Port Royal House

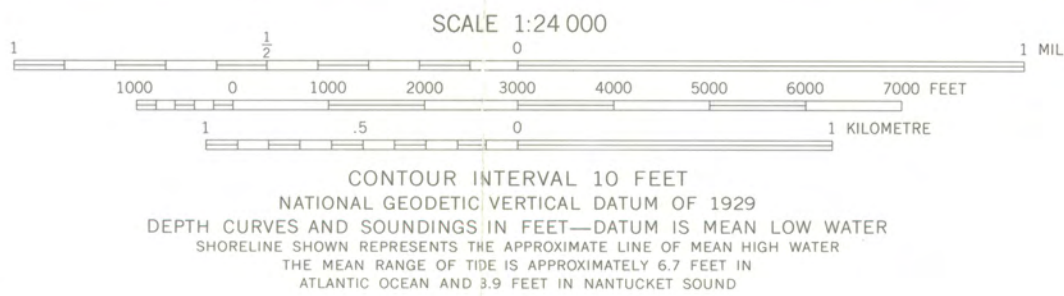
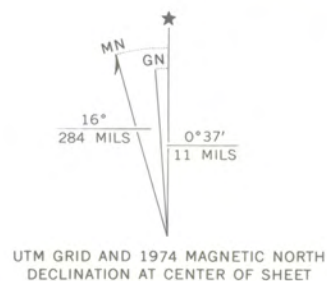
South and east
elevations (ca. 1870)
Photographer unknown,
original at Chatham
Historical Commission
P.O. Box 46, Chatham

#2 of 2

CHATHAM, MA
Port Royal House
UTM Reference:
19/420090/4614730



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1939. Topography by planimetric surveys 1940. Revised
from aerial photographs taken 1973. Field checked 1974
Selected hydrographic data compiled from NOS 257 (1972) and
270 (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-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 19, shown in blue



ROAD CLASSIFICATION	
Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route

CHATHAM, MASS.
N4137.5—W6952.5/7.5

1974

AMS 7067 III NW—SERIES V814

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

STATE MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered APRIL 15, 1982

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Lafayette-Durfee House	Fall River Bristol County
Port Royal House	Chatham Barnstable County
Harlow, Sgt. William, Family Homestead	Plymouth Plymouth County

Notified

Honorable Margaret M. Heckler
Honorable Gerry E. Studts
Honorable Edward M. Kennedy
Honorable Paul E. Tsongas

Mid-Atlantic Regional Office
North Atlantic Regional Office

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