

photos

- 16:23 Right-hand room
- :24 Right-hand room
- :26 Right-hand chamber
- :31 Exterior view

Town Ipswich 009

Address 37 Heartbreak Road

Historic Name James Burnham House

Use: Present Residential

Original Residential

DESCRIPTION

Date c. 1677-1703

Source Waters, Candlewood

Style First Period core/Colonial

Architect unknown Revival Exterior

Exterior Wall Fabric shingles

Outbuildings garage designed by

McKim, Mead and White - early 20th

Major Alterations (with dates) left-hand  
cell and rear ell added: 18th C.

Condition good

Moved no Date

Acreage 4.2 acres

Setting semi-rural. abutting marsh

and woodlands on road with widely

spaced houses of mixed 18-20th C.

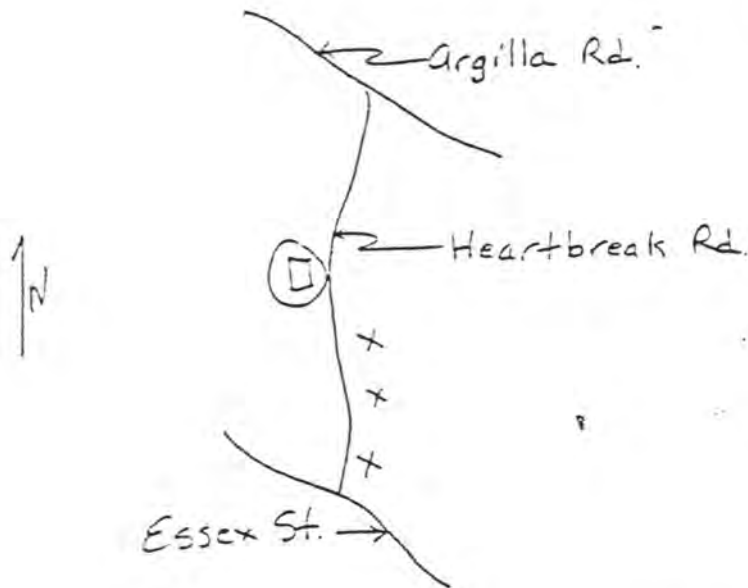
construction

Recorded by Anne Gradv

Organization B.U.

Date Aug., 1985

Sketch Map:



M REFERENCE Z E N  
19 / 350-000 / 4725-000

GS QUADRANGLE Ipswich

SCALE 1:25,000

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: IPSWICH	Form No: 34
Property Name: James Burnham House	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

SIGNIFICANCE

The Burnham house retains integrity of location, design, setting, and association in its First Period. Integrity of materials and workmanship is presumed, but cannot be verified until First Period construction is examined on the interior. There is strong evidence, however, both physical and documentary, that a significant First Period structure is enclosed within the later finishes of this house, making the house eligible under Criterion D as likely to yield information important to First Period architectural history.

Physical evidence of First Period construction includes: 1) joist spacing of 17 to 18 1/2 inches (among houses examined by Cummings, those with comparable joist spacing were all built before 1683; 2) steep roof pitch; 3) nearly 20 feet square room dimensions (consistent with other major 17th century buildings in Ipswich); 4) extreme width of summer beam boxes on both floors, suggesting that the enclosed summer beams are among the widest on record; 5) the disparity in wall width between the first and second floors on the three outer walls of the right-hand room (deeper walls on the first floor are often a telltale sign that overhanging second stories were later closed in, cf. the Ross Tavern). One of these features alone would not be sufficient proof of First Period construction, but together they provide compelling evidence that the Burnham house was constructed in the First Period. The house, in room dimension, suspected presence of overhangs, and possible presence of crossed summer beams most closely resembles the Whipple House and the Ross Tavern in Ipswich, and may, therefore, like those houses, be part of what Cummings called the distinctively elegant regional school of architecture that flowered in Ipswich in the late 17th century.[1]

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The James Burnham House is a 5 bay wide, 2 1/2 story, one room deep structure with rear ell. The right-hand room and chimney bay comprise the earliest part of the house. The left-hand rooms and the rear ell were added in the 18th century. A 20th century, 2 story porch abuts the west end. The house retains First Period massing with steeply pitched roof and the original central chimney. The facade reflects updatings of the house at several periods. Windows, Second Period vernacular in style and small in size, are asymmetrically placed. Two windows light the ample east rooms, while a single window on each floor lights the smaller west rooms. The exterior incorporates subtle shingle style detailing in the form of slight, curved projections over some of the windows. An early 20th century enclosed, one story entrance porch and dormer windows added in the 1950s give the house a Colonial Revival character.

MAJOR FIRST PERIOD FEATURES

No First Period features are exposed in the house. However, the combined evidence of room dimensions, beam size and configuration, joist spacing,

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the probable presence of overhangs on three sides enclosed within the walls, and steep roof pitch is sufficient to presume First Period construction.

The right-hand room is a spacious 19 1/2 feet wide by 18 1/2 feet deep. The longitudinal summer beam is enclosed in a box 18 1/2 inches wide. At the outer wall, the summer beam is supported by a post with box of equally ample dimensions. The shallowness of the summer beam box and the size of the room in fact suggest the possibility of a crossing transverse summer beam now totally hidden within the ceilings, a framing system which would be consistent with the overhangs suspected on three sides (see below). Joist spacing as indicated by nail evidence is 17 to 18 1/2 inches on centers. The walls of the room, as indicated by the depth of the window reveals are one foot thick.

In the right-hand chamber, the longitudinal summer beam also encased in an 18 1/2 inch wide box. The box of the post which supports the summer beam at the outer wall is only 10 inches wide, however. The outer walls of the upstairs room are at 5 inches thick, as opposed to a foot thick in the downstairs room.

In the attic no framing is visible because the space has been finished off for living quarters. The owner reports that roof framing is of principal rafters and common purlins. The cellar extends only under the right-hand rooms and rear of the house. The field stone chimney foundation and foundation walls have a recent facing of brick, which replaced and earlier deteriorated brick facing (like that which survives at the Low House across the street). The framing of the first floor visible in the cellar is composed of a transverse spanning beam with wide flat chamfer and joists with butt cogs.

LATER SIGNIFICANT FEATURES

The interiors received a thorough remodeling in the Federal Period. Simple mantelpieces with pilasters, broad friezes, or mitered moldings around the fireplace opening are found in all rooms. The staircase is in a simple, but graceful Federal style.

A garage north of the house with a diamond paned window and elliptical arches above the doors was designed by McKim, Mead and White.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Deed research by the Rev. Thomas Franklin Waters of Ipswich in the early 20th century strongly suggests the house was one of three owned by James Burnham before 1703 on Heartbreak Road: 1) the house Burnham acquired from Samuel Poad in 1677 [2]; 2) a new house Burnham built before 1687 [3]; or 3) another house in which James Burnham lived in 1703. [4] The many transfers of land with vague boundary descriptions among people with

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similar names makes it difficult to determine which of the three houses mentioned is the present Burnham house, but the location of pre 1677 house seems to match best the location of the current house.

James Burnham, son of Thomas Burnham who built the Giddings-Burnham House on Argilla Road (Form # 36) served as a trooper in King Phillips War, fighting in the Narragansett winter campaign under Major Samuel Appleton of Ipswich. James Burnham was also a witness in the Salem witch trials of 1692. His real estate dealings in the Candlewood section of Ipswich suggest that he was a man of some wealth, who could have afforded to construct or acquire a house comparable to the Whipple House. James Burnham's son who died 8 years after his father left an estate of 5000 pounds.

REFERENCES

1. Cummings, The Framed Houses of Massachusetts Bay, Cambridge, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1979: 127.
2. Essex County Registry of Deeds. Ipswich deed 4:281.
3. Thomas Franklin Waters, Candlewood, Publication of the Ipswich Historical Society XVI:5.
4. Ibid:8.

Thomas Franklin Waters, Ipswich in the Massachusetts Bay Colony.  
Ipswich: Ipswich Historical Society, 1905.

1/24/90

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name First Period Buildings of Eastern Massachusetts TR  
State \_\_\_\_\_

Nomination/Type of Review		Date/Signature
Cover		Keeper <u>Beth L. Savage 3/9/90</u>
3/14 1. Abbot--Stinson House	Substantive Review	Keeper <u>Beth L. Savage 3/9/90</u> Attest _____
2. Adams, Abraham, House	Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Melrose Byrum 3/9/90</u> Attest _____
5/16 3. Adams--Clarke House	Substantive Review	Keeper <u>Beth L. Savage 3/9/90</u> Attest _____
4. 4. Beverly Grammar School	Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Melrose Byrum 3/9/90</u> Attest _____
5/15 5. Blanchard--Upton House	Substantive Review	Keeper <u>Beth L. Savage 3/9/90</u> Attest _____
6. Brown House	Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Melrose Byrum 3/9/90</u> Attest _____
5/17 7. Brown, Austin, House	Substantive Review	Keeper <u>Beth L. Savage 3/9/90</u> Attest _____
5/18 8. Burnham, James, House	Substantive Review	Keeper <u>Beth L. Savage 3/9/90</u> Attest _____
5/19 9. Carlton--Frie--Tucker House	Substantive Review	Keeper <u>Beth L. Savage 3/9/90</u> Attest _____
10. Chase, Samuel, House	Entered in the National Register	Keeper <u>Melrose Byrum 3/9/90</u> Attest _____

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_


### SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 90000236      Date Listed: 03/09/90

Burnham, James, House                      Essex                      MA  
Property Name                                      County                      State

First Period Buildings of Eastern Massachusetts TR  
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

  
Signature of the Keeper

03/09/90  
Date of Action

=====  
Amended Items in Nomination:

Geographical Data:    VBD

The handwritten scale on the sketch map supersedes the typed or printed one: the handwritten scale is the appropriate scale for the reduced map.

This information has been confirmed with Ann Tait, MASHPO, by telephone.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without attachment)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Burnham, James, House

MULTIPLE NAME: First Period Buildings of Eastern Massachusetts TR

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Essex

DATE RECEIVED: 1/24/90      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 2/07/90  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 2/23/90      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/10/90  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 90000236

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: Y NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    3/9/90 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept C&D  
REVIEWER Savage  
DISCIPLINE Architectural History  
DATE 3/9/90

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y  N  see attached SLR  N

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CLASSIFICATION

count       resource type

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STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

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FUNCTION

historic       current

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DESCRIPTION

architectural classification  
 materials  
 descriptive text

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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

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

acreage       verbal boundary description  
 UTMs       boundary justification

---

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

sketch maps       USGS maps       photographs       presentation

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OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



James Burnham House  
37 Heartbreak Rd  
Ipswich, MA

1st Period Buildings of E. Ma., TR

16-31



Burnham, James, House

1st Period Buildings of E. Ma., TR

16-24

37 Heartbreak Rd

right 1st fl. room



16-23

37 Heartbreak Rd

Ipswich

Burnham, James, Hall

Right room 1<sup>st</sup> floor

1<sup>st</sup> Period Buildings of E. Me., TR



16-24

Burnham, James, House

37 Heartbreak Rd

Right chamber

1st Period Building of E. May, TR



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Burnham, James, Hees  
 Ipswich, MA  
 37 Heartbreak Rd  
 Map 54-9  
 → 54C  
 Scale: 1" = 200'

SCALE 1"=100'  
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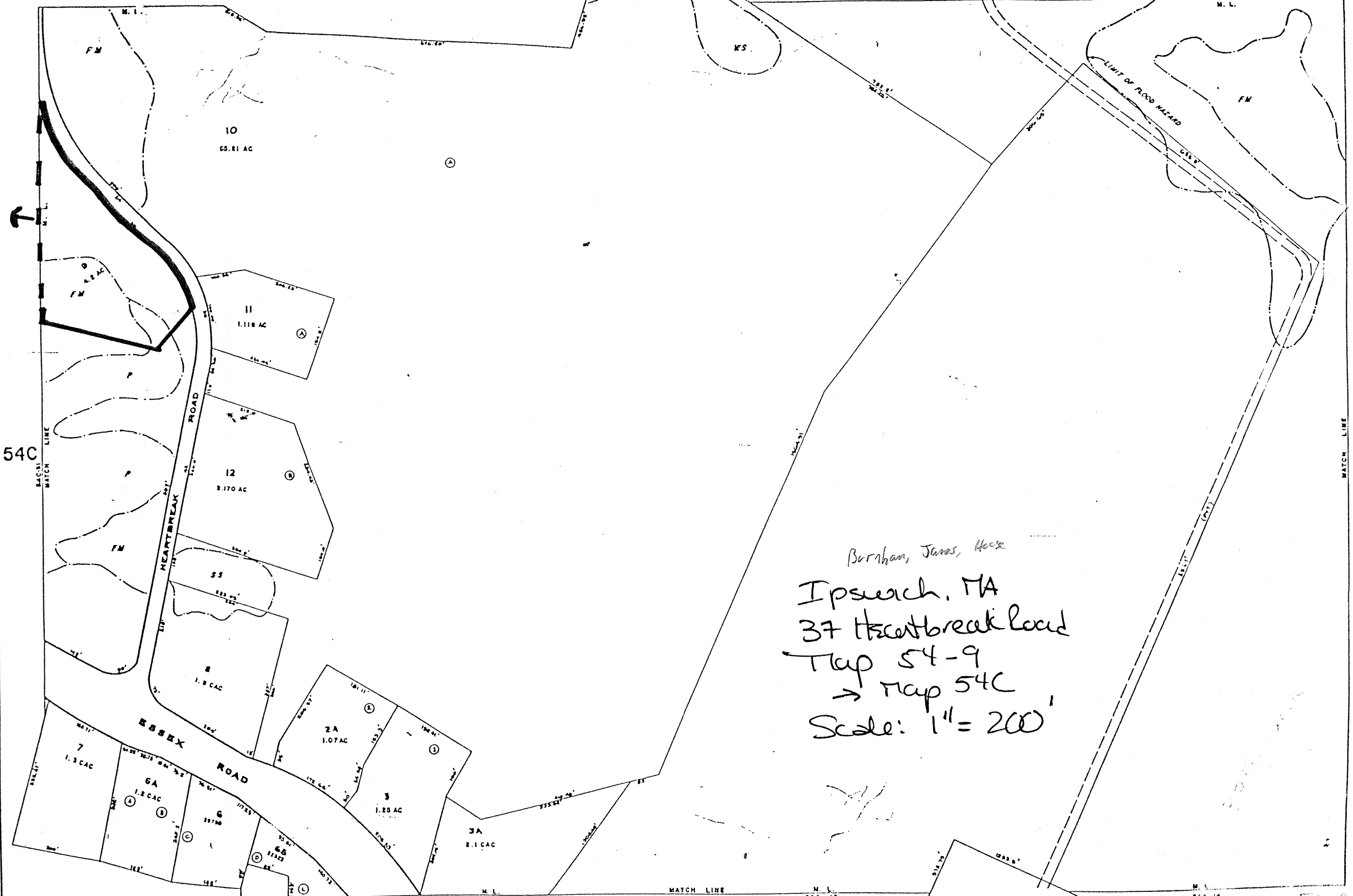
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Burnham, Texas, Hesse  
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 37 Heartbreak Road  
 Map 54-9  
 → Map 54C  
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Please refer to the map in the  
Multiple Property Cover Sheet  
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000281