

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

JAN 02 1990

Town Swansea, Mass. MRA
SWANSEA

Address 703 Pearse Road

Historic Name John Brown IV House

Use: Present residence

Original farmstead

DESCRIPTION

Date ca. 1752

Source will of John Brown, 1752

Style Georgian

Architect unknown

Exterior Wall Fabric clapboard

Outbuildings garage (ca. 1950)

Major Alterations (with dates) _____

entry portico, triple window, S bay (ca. 193

Condition excellent

Moved no Date ---

Acreage approximately 1.84 acres

Setting Seaside location with sweeping

view of Cole's River. Surrounding

residential construction primarily

late 19th/early 20th century.

Recorded by G. Goff/K. Flynn/K. Broomer

Organization Swansea Historical Commission

Date 1978/February 1986/November 1989

Photo (3"x3" or 3"x5", black and white) Indicate address of property on back of photo. Staple to left side of form.

Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection(s).
Indicate north

(see attached)

UTM REFERENCE 19 314680 4621740

USGS QUADRANGLE Fall River, MA-RI 1967/1979

SCALE 1:25000

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The John Brown House, 703 Pearse Road, retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and association and meets Criteria A and C on the local level. An excellent Georgian style house located in the Touisset section of South Swansea, the structure is a well-preserved example of the dispersed farmsteads that characterized settlement at Touisset and other shoreline areas in town prior to rapid summer resort development and suburbanization at the turn of the 20th century.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.

This 2½-story, 5-bay Georgian house with center-chimney, double-pile plan is an excellent example of its type in Swansea, representing the high-style structures built by the area's more prosperous families of the 18th century. Distinguishing features include a dentil cornice, cornerboards, molded heads on windows containing 12/12 sash, and two pedimented dormers containing 8/8 sash. The Colonial Revival style is displayed by the semi-enclosed entry portico, triple window above, and square bay window on the south side, all ca. 1932 additions.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.

A fine example of the fashionable homes built by prosperous residents in Old Swansea, 703 Pearse Road is situated along the Cole's River and roughly one-half mile from the eastern border of Warren, Rhode Island. Deed research has shown that the property belonged to John Brown IV (1675-1752), a member of the prominent Brown family of Plymouth Colony and Rhode Island. Brown was "a man of importance in public affairs and one of the leading men of the [Plymouth] Colony." [Wright, 200] It is unclear whether Brown and his wife Abigail lived in this house or another Georgian house at 793 Pearse Road to the south. Both houses were owned by the family. The original farm of 56 acres extended west from the Cole River, with a dilapidated family cemetery at the western end of the property. The present house lot of almost two acres consists of open lawns and woodlot.

Maintaining a sweeping view of the Cole's River and Gardner's Neck beyond, the Brown House at Touisset presents a striking contrast to the other extant mid- to late 18th-century farmhouses on Gardner's Neck, which are modest single-story capes. Both areas were characterized by widespread farms until the second half of the 19th century, when construction of the Fall River & Providence Railroad spurred summer resort and later suburban development here. The Brown House today is surrounded by this later residential construction, and displays cosmetic alterations executed ca. 1932.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

-Deed Research: Will of John Brown (1675-1752) to his son Jeremiah (1710-1776), Book 13, p. 134, Probate Court of Taunton. Jeremiah left no will but his son Jarvis (1733-1809) describes the property in his will, Book 45, pp.95-97. On 1/13/1911 George P. Brown sold the homestead to Job L. Davis, Fall River Registry of (see continuation sheet)

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: SWANSEA, MA.	Form No:
Property Name: John Brown IV House	

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

Bibliography and/or References (continued)

Deeds, Book 162, p. 543, who in 10/7/1925 deeded it to Robert L. Anthony, Book 348, p. 54, from whom the present owner Richard Bowen in 1951 bought the property.

- Wright, O.O., History of Swansea, 1917, p. 200.
- Maps
- Mrs. Helen Pierce, Swansea Historical Society, interview, 11/89.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Brown, John, IV, House

MULTIPLE NAME: Swansea MRA

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Bristol

DATE RECEIVED: 1/02/90 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/17/90
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 2/01/90 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 2/16/90
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 90000064

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: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 2/16/90 DATE

Entered in the
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA _____
REVIEWER _____
DISCIPLINE _____
DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

CLASSIFICATION

count resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

historic current

DESCRIPTION

architectural classification
 materials
 descriptive text

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

acreage verbal boundary description
 UTMs boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

sketch maps USGS maps photographs presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

Phone _____

Signed _____

Date _____



703 Pearse Rd
Swansea, MA.

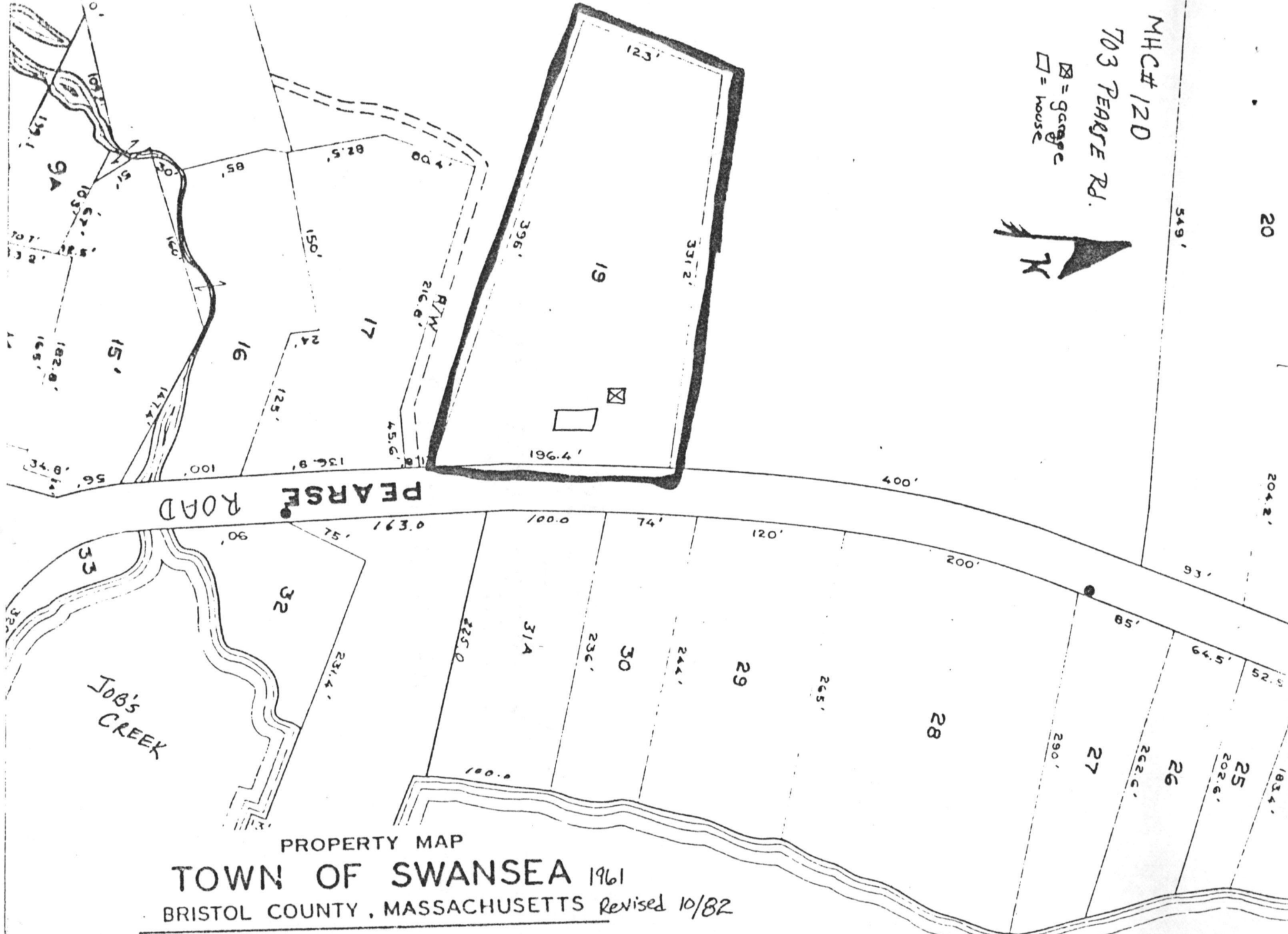
John Brown IV House (MHC#120)
703 Pearse Road
Swansea, Mass. MRA

1988

View SW

MHC# 12D
703 PEARSE RD.

☒ = garage
☐ = house



PROPERTY MAP
TOWN OF SWANSEA 1961
BRISTOL COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS Revised 10/82

JAMES W. SEWALL COMPANY
SCALE 1 INCH = 100 ± FEET

OLD TOWN, MAINE
FOR ASSESSING PURPOSES ONLY

47

COLE RIVER

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000296