

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	SWN.120
Historic Name:	Brown, John IV House
Common Name:	
Address:	703 Pearse Rd
City/Town:	Swansea
Village/Neighborhood:	Touisset;
Local No:	20;
Year Constructed:	C 1752
Architectural Style(s):	Georgian;
Use(s):	Agricultural; Single Family Dwelling House;
Significance:	Agriculture; Architecture;
Area(s):	
Designation(s):	Nat'l Register Individual Property (02/16/1990); Nat'l Register MRA (02/16/1990);
Building Materials:	Roof: Wood Shingle; Wall: Wood Clapboard;
Demolished	No



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

NR IND 7 2/16/90
NR MRA

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USGS-FALL
AREA
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FORM NO.

120

Swansea, Mass. MRA
SWANSEA

Address 703 Pearse Road

Historic Name John Brown IV House

Present residence

Original farmstead

DESCRIPTION

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. 1932)

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

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:

120

Property Name: John Brown IV House

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

Bibliography and/or References (continued)

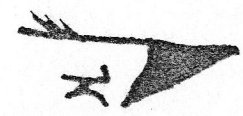
Deeds, Book 162, p. 543, who in 10/7/1925 deeded it to Robert L. Anthony, Book 348, p. 54, from whom the present owner Richard Bowen in 1951 bought the property.

- Wright, O.O., History of Swansea, 1917, p. 200.

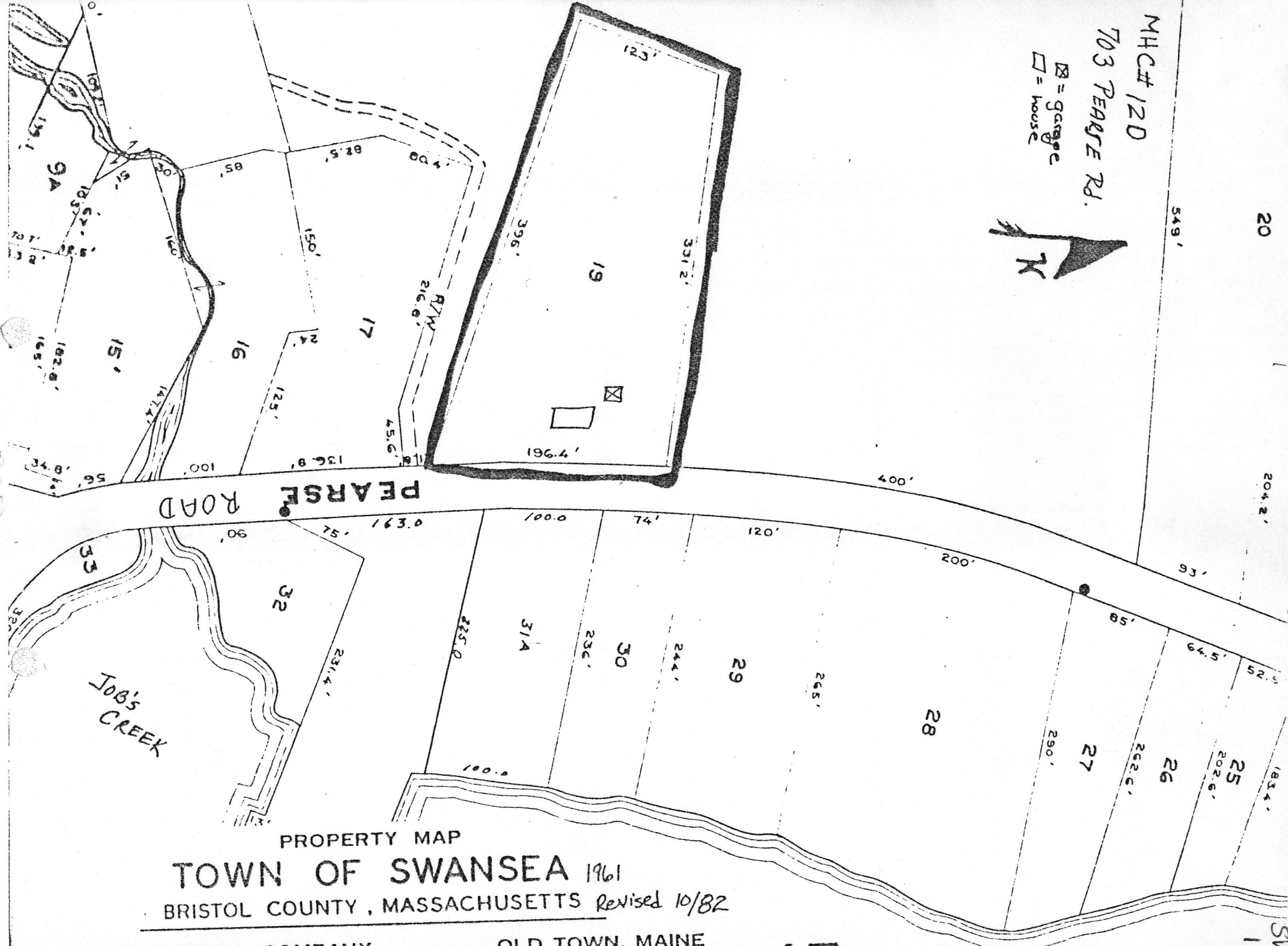
- Maps

- Mrs. Helen Pierce, Swansea Historical Society, interview, 11/89.

☒ = garage
☐ = house



MHC# 120
703 PEARSE RD.



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

SWN.
120

PL - TOV
USGS - RML

NRIND
NEMRA 7/21/1990
W12

AREA E FORM NO. 1020

1C
INK

Town SWANSEA

Address 703 Pearse Road

Historic Name John Brown IV House

Use: Present Residence

Original Farmstead

DESCRIPTION

Date C. 1752

Source Will of John Brown 1752

Style Georgian Colonial

Architect Unknown

Exterior Wall Fabric Clapboard

Outbuildings Garage

Major Alterations (with dates) _____

Extensive Restorations 1932

Condition In excellent state of restoration with some alterations

Moved No Date _____

Acreage Over one acre

Setting Situated on an extended lot of 20 acres, which includes the Brown Cemetary at the rear of property.

Sited to overlook the Cole River in a

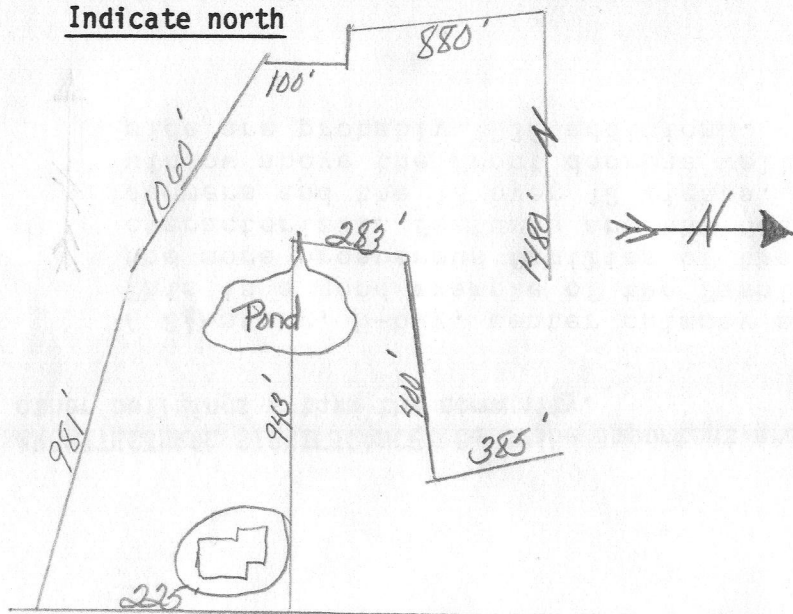
gracious residential setting.

Recorded by Kay Flynn/G. Goff '78

Organization Swansea Historical Commission

Date February, 1986

Intersection(s).
Indicate north



703 PEARSE RD.

UTM REFERENCE _____

USGS QUADRANGLE Fall River, MA-R.I. (NW)

1967/79

SCALE _____

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The only intact 2½-story gambrel Colonial of the mid-18th century extant in Swansea. A grand house typical of a wealthy family of that era.

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

A 2½-story, 5-bay, center chimney structure possibly dating from 1752. This is a good example of the fashionable structures that were built by the more prosperous families of the 18th century. The distinguishing characteristic features are the decorative dentils, the two pedimented dormers and the 12 over 12 lights. The portico entry and the triple window above the front door as well as the box-bay window on the south side are probably 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.

No. 703 Pearse Road is a fine illustration of fashionable family homes that were being built by the prosperous of the Colony in the 18th century. Deed research has shown that it belonged to John Brown IV (1675-1752.) As stated in Wright, pg. 200, "he was a man of importance in public affairs and one of the leading men of the Colony." There is a discrepancy in research as to which house John and Abigail Brown IV actually lived in - No. 793 Pearse Road is also a Brown house. Both houses were probably on Brown property. The original farm of 56 acres reached from Cole River west to Joseph Butterworth, north by the Great Swamp. Fine grounds and landscaping. The Brown family cemetery lying west of the house contained 35 stones in 1952.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Deed Research:

Will of John Brown (1) 1675 -1752 to his son Jeremiah (2) 1710 - 1776, Bk.13 pg. 134 Probate Court of Taunton. Jeremiah left no will but his son Jarvis (3) 1733 - 1809 describes the property in his will Bk. 45 pgs. 95-97 to his son John (4) 1755-1803. On 1/13/1911 George P. Brown sold the homestead to Job L. Davis, Fall River Registry of deeds Bk. 162 pg. 543, who in 10/7/1925 deeded to Robert :/ Amtjpmu. Bk. 348 pg. 54, from whom the present owner Richard Bowen in 1951 bought the property Wright, O.O., History of Swansea, 1917, pg.200.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston

Form no.

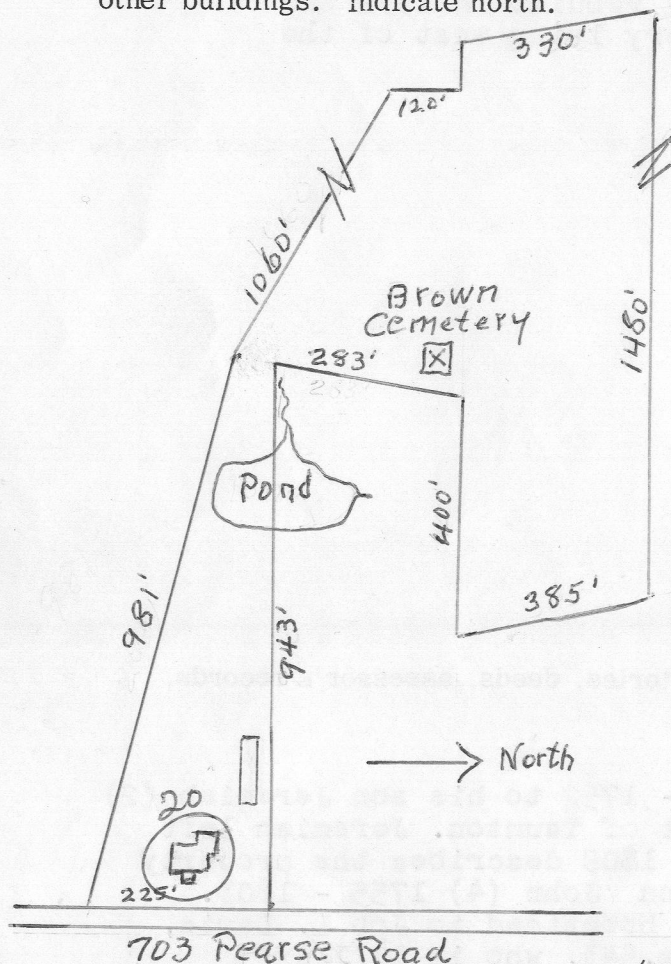
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Date November 1, 1978

4. Map. Draw sketch of building location in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings. Indicate north.



(over)

7. Original owner (if known) John Brown

Original use Farmhouse

Subsequent uses (if any) and dates _____

8. Themes (check as many as applicable)

Aboriginal	_____	Conservation	_____	Recreation	_____
Agricultural	<u>x</u>	Education	_____	Religion	_____
Architectural	<u>x</u>	Exploration/ settlement	_____	Science/ invention	_____
The Arts	_____	Industry	_____	Social/ humanitarian	_____
Commerce	_____	Military	_____	Transportation	_____
Communication	_____	Political	_____		
Community development	_____				

9. Historical significance (include explanation of themes checked above)

A large early house with authentic details throughout. Wood shingled roof. Front portico and enclosed rear entry. The original farm of 56 acres reached from Cole River west to Joseph Butterworth, north by the Great Swamp. Fine grounds and landscaping. House was extensively rebuilt in 1932 and portico added. The Brown family cemetery lying west of the house contained 35 stones in 1952.

10. Bibliography and/or references (such as local histories, deeds, assessor's records, early maps, etc.)

See will of John Brown (1) 1675 - 1752 to his son Jeremiah (2) 1710 - 1776, Bk.13 pg.134 Probate Court of Taunton. Jeremiah left no will but his son Jarvis (3) 1733 - 1809 describes the property in his will Bk.45 pgs 95 -97 to his son John (4) 1755 - 1803. On 1/13/1911 George P. Brown sold the homestead to Job L. Davis, Fall River Registry of deeds Bk.162 pg.543, who in 10/7/1925 deeded it to Robert L. Anthony, Bk.348 pg.54, from whom the present owner Richard Bowen in 1951 bought the property