

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



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This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name School Street Barn
other names/site number Hampden County Jail Farm

2. Location

street & number 551 School Street not for publication
city or town Agawam vicinity
state Massachusetts code MA county Hampden code 013 zip code 01001

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide local

Brona Simon July 18, 2012
Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____
Brona Simon, SHPO

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

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

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

4. 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:) _____

for Eason W. Beall 9.10.12
Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
 (Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
 (Check only one box.)

Number of Resources within Property
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
1	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

AGRICULTURE/animal facility, agricultural outbuilding
GOVERNMENT/Correctional Facility/jail farm

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION/outdoor recreation/park/storage

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: BRICK; CONCRETE
 walls: WOOD
 roof: ASPHALT
 other: _____

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The School Street Barn stands in Agawam, Massachusetts, a town on the west bank of the Connecticut River. The barn is located on the floodplain in Agawam Center near the intersection of School Street and River Road several hundred feet from the river, and approximately 58 feet above its water level. The double-ramp, New England-style barn, which dates to ca. 1880, is large in scale and raised level, with its ramps at either gable end (Photograph 1). Because it is elevated within the landscape, it has become a visual landmark. Set back from School Street, the barn stands within a 49-acre, town-owned park. For purposes of this nomination, the boundary of the School Street Barn encompasses approximately two acres of parkland that immediately surround the barn (see figure 1). Also within this smaller acreage is a paved parking area. The larger area of the park was once farmland associated with the barn, and as such it continues to contribute to the setting of the listed property. The barn and parkland are surrounded by a largely suburban residential neighborhood that retains several 19th-century farmhouses. The site of a ca. 1840 farmhouse is located east of the barn, near School Street. While the house no longer stands, the site marks the farmhouse associated with the barn, and is a contributing site in this nomination.

Narrative Description

The Connecticut River valley town of Agawam is bounded on the east by the Connecticut River and the city of Springfield. West Springfield is to Agawam's north, Southwick to its west, and the state of Connecticut forms its south boundary. The eastern half of Agawam is wholly located on the flood plain of the Connecticut River and is divided from the western half, which begins to rise in elevation, by the north/south-running Provin Mountain. The eastern half of the town is known as Agawam Center, and the western half is known as Feeding Hills. The town's north boundary with West Springfield is formed by a branch of the Westfield River, known as the "Agawam River," flowing eastward into the Connecticut River.

The School Street Barn stands along School Street on the south side of an irregularly shaped, 49.3-acre parcel. The property is currently in the ownership of the City of Agawam and serves as the School Street Park, which has open space, cultivated lawns, and playing fields. A vegetation-lined stream runs from north to south through the park.

Set back from School Street, the barn is oriented with the axis of its gable-roof ridge running in a north-northwest/south-southeast direction, the direction of prevailing winds in this region. On its southeast side are a mature maple tree and two smaller maples lined up in a one-sided allee marking a former roadway leading from the barn to School Street. The site of the 19th-century farmhouse (demolished in 2000) is located between the barn and the street (figure 1). There is nothing of the house visible above ground. The relationship of the barn to the former house reflects 19th-century agricultural practices, in which barns were constructed within a short distance of a water supply and close enough to the house for work, but far enough so that odors did not mingle.

The barn is surrounded on all sides by lawns, but to its northwest by about 50 feet is the heavily vegetated stream valley where tall maple and American sycamore trees line the banks. Underbrush of wild grapes, blackberries, Virginia Creeper and sumac provide a dense riverine environment (Photograph 2). This vegetation (which along with the stream is outside the two-acre boundary of the nomination) extends from School Street on the south to the rear lot lines of the houses north of the park, and then across the northern boundary of the park as a clear buffer between a residential section and the open

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land of the park. West of the stream is an open space bordered, on the east and south by additional woodland (Photograph 3). At the south end of the park is the School Street Barn, standing as the most prominent feature of the landscape (Photograph 5).

Exterior Description

The School Street Barn, a double-ramp, New England-style barn, is fifty feet, seven inches long by 41 feet wide and approximately 30 feet in height from sill to gable peak (Photograph 6). It has an asphalt-shingle roof. While the barn is oriented in a north-by-northwest to south-by-southeast fashion, for purposes of this description the directions will be simplified into the four main compass points. The barn sits on parged brick and concrete foundations that are five-and-a-half feet high on the east and six-and-a-half feet high on the west to accommodate a slope in the landscape. New England in style, the School Street barn has large doors in its north and south gable ends that are reached by ramps. On the south, the ramp is about 51 feet long, partially covered by tarmac. Where the ramp rises considerably above the ground its visible construction is of local brownstone (Photograph 7). The ramp has a poured concrete wing-wall repair approximately six feet in length on its east side. The shorter north ramp of the barn is 28 feet long and appears to have had a portion of its length removed, but it has a tarmac surface as well and has been reinforced with broken aggregate concrete pieces at each side.

The barn's high foundations allow for openings into the lowest level. On the foundation's east elevation are four window openings that are currently blocked in (Photograph 1). On the west, the foundation is composed of replacement concrete blocks (Photograph 8). The west foundation's openings consist of a double-wide doorway, now boarded up, followed by a single pedestrian entry and two window openings, all closed in to secure the barn from vandalism.

On the south, the foundations are parged brick, and on the east side of the ramp and next to it is a concrete block section that may have been a repair or the infill to a previous pedestrian door. There is a window opening that has been enclosed on each side of the ramp as well (Photograph 1).

On the north elevation, the four-feet-six-inch-high foundations are parged brick, and there are blocked-in window openings on each side of the ramp (Photograph 9).

Above its foundations the barn is vertically sided in tongue-and-groove boards. The oldest and presumably original siding boards are nailed with Type B cut nails (produced 1820-1900). A few newer siding boards are nailed with wire nails (produced 1890-present). There are three stall windows on both the east and west elevations, each with three-light hoppers. The window openings have flat surrounds and narrow sills. Cornerboards frame the barn, and the asphalt-shingled roof has thinly boxed eaves. On the north and south elevations, each of the large door openings contains a single sliding door on an interior track. The doors are paneled and ornamented with a cross-buck pattern. The door openings have flat surrounds as well. Above the doors at each elevation are twelve-light transoms. In the gable ends at attic level are single windows. On the south the window has a fixed, two-light sash, and on the north it has a fixed, single-light sash, a later alteration.

A six-inch-wide skirtboard partially encircles the building. It has been replaced in areas with plywood, which has delaminated.

Interior Description

The School Street Barn is a four-bent, three-bay, New England-style barn, three stories in height. It is a timber-frame barn that is square-ruled, post and beam in construction, and its timbers are all sawn (Photograph 10). The major timbers are of uniform dimensions: the sill and plate, the posts, tie beams, and mid-level wall girts are seven by seven inches.

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The braces and secondary wall girts are four by three inches and four-and-a-half by three inches. These dimensions depart from the standard eight-by-eight-inch or nine-by-nine-inch framing members and the uniform four-by-four-inch secondary members in most New England barns of the era, reflecting a local sawmill practice.

Following the common practice of roof construction found in western Massachusetts, the barn roof is a common-rafter roof. Here in this large New England-style barn, the rafters are let into a single purlin that is midway on the roof slope, and into the wall plate (Photograph 11). The purlins are necessary to stabilize the long rafters of the large barn, and to hold the third-floor tie beams that are mortised into them. There is no ridgepole connecting the rafters, and the contemporary (not original) roof sheathing is horizontally laid, adding stability to the bents. In a typical western Massachusetts practice, the principal tie beams are mortised into the posts below the plates rather than above them. The principal tie beams are also known as dropped girts. Joints are mortise and tenoned, secured by wood pegs. The timber frame members and roof framing members are circular-saw cut, a form of saw that was generally available after 1870 in the region.

There are no remaining flooring or hay mow poles at either the second- or the third-floor levels between the tie beams. And, with two stories of tie beams intact, it is clear that the barn did not have a hay fork on a track. In the gable ends the windows are fixed, and their size is domestic rather than large enough to serve as hay loading ports, so the barn was built to be loaded with hay from below with pitchforks or a horse-powered loader.

The main floor of the barn's three bays is wood. The center-aisle floor is horizontally laid (from east to west), and its nine-inch-wide tongue-and-groove boards provide a tight fit for threshing in particular (Photograph 12). The floorboards are nailed to the floor joists with large Type B spikes. The floorboards of the lateral bays are laid perpendicular (north to south) to those of the center aisle, and are butted together rather than joined in the tongue-and-groove technique. They are rougher in surface, variable in width from seven to fourteen inches, and are also nailed with Type B spikes.

The barn walls are a single layer of vertical, nine-and-a-half-inch-wide, tongue-and-groove planks nailed from the exterior to three interior wall girts (Photograph 13). This was the most common form of barn siding in western Massachusetts at the turn of the century. Where the planks have shrunk or split, interior battens have been attached as repairs. Two bays are fully enclosed on the main floor to create a horse stall and what was recently a workshop, but originally a feed room (Photograph 12). The former feed room is in the east bay at the barn's southeast corner, and the stall is in the second bent, west bay. They each have ladders built onto their exterior walls to the ceiling space above, and they have hitching hardware attached to posts nearest the center bay. The stall's walls are chicken wire above wood; the workshop's walls are horizontal boards that meet the dropped ceiling to seal the room off. Because the joints of the posts and beams of the two enclosed spaces have been nailed to the existing barn posts, it is evident that these two spaces were added after construction. The stall was created with reused wood that has mortise holes in it.

The inner posts of the four bents of the barn's east bays all have mortise holes approximately three-and-a-half feet above the floor, indicating that originally this side of the barn was set off as a row of stalls or pens and the posts were connected by a low wall on which a feeding trough would have been mounted. The windows correspond with interior stalls. There are no mortise holes in the posts on the opposite or west side.

The two large barn doors are mounted on a metal track, whose wheels are enclosed within the track, rather than riding above it, suggesting it may have been an alteration dating from the 1930s-1940s.

The ground-level story, often called the basement, has a floor-to-ceiling height of six feet, two inches. It has a poured concrete floor in all but the west entry area, where the dirt floor remains. On the east side of the space two large, low pens, six by eight feet, have been constructed of concrete blocks (Photograph 14). Two additional, smaller pens—constructed of concrete blocks and measuring approximately six by four feet—are against the north foundation wall. On the west wall is a large horse stall with parged brick walls measuring twelve by ten feet. The foundation walls on the

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north, south, and east are brick; the wall on the west is made up of concrete blocks. Brick piers, repaired with concrete blocks serve to support the main-floor structure of the barn. The joists and crossbeams are mortise and tenoned together (Photograph 15). The cross beams of seven inches by seven inches span the 41-foot width of the barn, and shorter spans from pier to pier cross its length. They rest on the sills and piers, and into them are let in the smaller joists that are three by six inches in dimension. At the southeast corner of the ceiling, an opening exists between stories. The framing members of this opening are mortise and tenon joined, making the opening part of the original construction of the barn (Photograph 16).

Archaeological Description

One ancient Native American site may be located on the barn property, and nine ancient sites are known in the general area (within one mile). Most sites are located on the floodplain and riverine terraces of the Connecticut River, including the Westfield River and several unnamed streams. The Granfield Site (19-HD-167) is located south and west of the nominated property, and north of 439 School Street. The site was collected for years by several generations of the property owner's family and tested in 1984 by the Springfield Science Museum. While the symbolism used to represent the site on the Inventory of Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth clearly shows the site as being within the western boundary of the nominated property, archaeological site testing shows a north/south elongated estimated site boundary extending north from School Street, east of a brook, and west of the house and barn. Incomplete sampling, however, indicates these boundaries are approximate. The actual site boundaries could easily extend to the east or north to the barn property. Collections research and archaeological testing indicate the site is a multicomponent site with occupations spanning the Early Archaic through Woodland Periods.

Environmental characteristics of the property represent locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, proximity to wetlands) that are favorable for the presence of Native sites. The School Street Barn is located on a level to moderately sloping first terrace of the Connecticut River floodplain. Soil types in the area are moderately well-drained, silty loam formed in silty alluvium. The area lies in the Connecticut River drainage, with the river lying within 1,000 feet of the eastern boundary of the nominated property. The property is also traversed midway by an unnamed stream from north to south.

Given the above information, the size of the nominated property (two acres), and the amount of undeveloped land, the presence of ancient Native American sites may be documented, and a high potential exists for locating additional ancient Native American sites on the School Street Barn property.

A high potential exists for locating historic archaeological resources on the School Street Barn property. A farmstead had been located on this property since School Street was first laid out between 1831 and 1837. While no buildings survive above ground from this period of the farmsteads occupation, structural evidence of house and early barn may survive as archaeological resources. The site of the former 19th-century house (demolished in 2000) is located to the south of the extant barn between the barn and the street. Structural evidence of domestic- and agricultural-related outbuildings and evidence of occupational-related features (trash pits, privies, wells) may also survive from the early post-1831 occupation of the farm and later 20th-century occupations. Structural evidence may also survive from a mid 19th-century schoolhouse (location unknown) that was located on the property.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE

LAW

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

ca. 1880-1962

Significant Dates

1949 – sold to Hampden County

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins with construction of the barn, ca. 1880, and ends in 1962, which is the standard 50-year cutoff for historical significance. The significant date of 1949 is the point at which the barn became part of the jail farm.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The School Street Barn is historically significant as the last remaining 19th-century barn in Agawam Center. Standing as a reminder of the area's agricultural history, it is an all-purpose barn that held most of the farm's produce and was the location of the activities that characterized farming in Agawam from the late 19th century through the 20th century. It is also historically significant for its close relationship with the neighboring city of Springfield, whose residents invested in Agawam farmland and brought about a complex history of ownership and use. Its ownership history reflects the shift in Agawam from the farm as family owned for generations, to the farm as a leased commercial asset for an urban center. The shift culminated in the use of the School Street Barn for more than 50 years as the main farm building of a county jail farm program. Each year, between 1938 and the late 1980s, the farm fed hundreds of Hampden County inmates in Springfield, and played a role in the life of the inmates who worked on the farm.

In use as a working barn for approximately 100 years, the School Street Barn is the only double-ramp barn in Agawam and one of only two known, extant, double-ramp barns in western Massachusetts. (The other is in Ashfield, Franklin County.) The double-ramp form is architecturally significant as an uncommon agricultural design solution to farming on a floodplain, the efficacy of which was proven in the floods of 1936. The barn is also significant as a good example of late 19th-century, post-and-beam or heavy timber-frame construction, a framing method that was chosen over plank or balloon framing by farmers who were conservatively investing for the future. The barn retains integrity of location, design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling, and association, and meets National Register criteria A and C with a local level of significance.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

AGRICULTURE. The School Street Barn is significant as the only remaining barn in Agawam Center. The town of Agawam provided food not only for its residents, but also for those of the nearby city of Springfield from the time of Colonial settlement into the 20th century. The School Street Barn therefore represents the town's long history of agriculture, which was made possible by the rich soil of the Connecticut River's floodplain.

ARCHITECTURE. The School Street Barn is architecturally significant as the only remaining double-ramp barn in Agawam, an extremely rare barn form in western Massachusetts. It is significant as an example of agricultural adaptation of a new building form to improve farm economy, in terms of both physical labor and financial expense, for its adaptability to various forms of agriculture from the general farming of late 19th-century owners to the market garden farming of the 20th century, and as a representative of the post-and-beam form of barn construction that persisted into the early 20th century as the preferred form of construction for longevity and functionality.

LAW. The School Street Barn is significant for its uncommon use as a major component of a city jail farm, as distinct from a prison farm. In a project that was understood at its time as ground-breaking, the barn was used for the farming activities of the Springfield jail that enabled the jail system to put its minor offenders to work, to raise enough produce to feed inmates, and to save considerable amounts of money. The barn, a

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central part of the jail's farm program, is where the farm produce was processed, animals were housed and fed, and equipment was stored.

SOCIAL HISTORY. The School Street Barn is historically significant as a reflection of late 19th- and early 20th-century farming practices and for its role in furthering the community's efforts to promote the welfare of those who, because of minor offenses, were incarcerated in Hampshire County's jail system.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

The School Street Barn is approximately 130 years old but its surrounding land has been in cultivation for at least four centuries.

Plantation Period (1620-1675)

The land on which the School Street Barn is located was described by Springfield's first explorers in 1633 as being used by Native Americans for growing corn and hemp. In fact, Agawam's plain along the river was initially favored by newcomers for settlement in 1634, but they were persuaded by Native Americans to move to the east bank of the river to avoid flooding. With settlement established on the east side of the river, Springfield's proprietors then set out land on the west, or Agawam, side as the primary planting fields, which were then allotted to the plantation's settlers. The allotment plan indicates that this section of Agawam was included in the plan, and we know from letters written by William Pynchon, among others, that both Indian and English corn were planted on the west side, and that cattle were grazed on the fields along the river. There was a natural fording spot at low water between the two sides of the river at the junction of the Westfield and Connecticut Rivers in this section of Agawam, and it was to be a factor in the development of the area.

Colonial Period (1675-1775)

Before the Revolution, orchards were begun in Agawam; rye and wheat were grown; and sheep were introduced, which offered farmers the opportunity to earn cash from their wool. Agawam's fields continued to supply Springfield's population with meat, produce, and hay and as settlers arrived, the land divided to support the new families. By ca. 1695, there were about 32 families and a total of about 200 people in Agawam, which at the time included West Springfield. Clearly, the population was sparse and dispersed.

Federal Period (1775-1830)

During the Federal period, farms in Agawam Center were developed on Main Street and River Road, running parallel to the Connecticut River. Expansive field systems extended south from the Agawam River between the two roads and east to the Connecticut River. As agricultural methods improved, smaller farms were increasingly productive, allowing subsequent generations to live on reduced acreage. Agawam's economy was dominated by its agriculture. Springfield maintained its close religious, commercial, and governmental connection with Agawam, and resisted efforts by its residents to establish a separate parish. The connection between the two sides of the river was mutual, however, as Agawam depended on Springfield for its commerce and industry during the entire Federal period.

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Early Industrial Period (1830-1870)

The 1831 map of Agawam indicates that the two roads that ran parallel to the Connecticut River, still known as River Road and Main Street, were connected by an east-west road (Meadow Street) to a bridge across the river (the South Bridge). The bridge, constructed at the fording spot used during the Plantation Period, acted as a focus of settlement in Agawam. There was no School Street then; rather, the land between River Road and Main Street—where School Street was later to be laid out—continued to serve the large farms along the two earlier roads as fields.

While the 1831 map shows that School Street had not yet been put in, the map does include the stream that continues to flow to the west of the barn and cross School Street. Between 1831 and 1837, School Street was laid out, and the land began to be divided into smaller farms. This is confirmed by an 1837 deed to Daniel Austin Jr., who bought the land on which the School Street Barn now stands. Austin, from the nearby town of Longmeadow, built a house between 1837 and 1847 (demolished in 2000) on the property. That the house was standing by 1847 is clear because it was mentioned in a deed of that year. The 2½-story, center-chimney house was stylistically conservative for its post-1831 date, but the house was representative of local building practices (see Historic Photograph 1).

By 1870, there were three farms shown on the eastern end of School Street. Two of the farms, including the farm on which the School Street barn is now located, had previously been owned by Alexander and Mary Dubois of Springfield. The Dubois were listed in the federal censuses of 1850 and 1860 as Springfield residents. In 1850, Alexander Dubois was listed as a steward, and in 1860 as either a farmer or a tanner who had been born in the West Indies. In 1862, Dubois sold fourteen acres, which included the land and buildings north of School Street and west of River Road, to William Ware of Oakham, a carpenter. Significant in the deed is the reserve made by Alexander Dubois of the rents and profits the farm made between October—when the sale was recorded—and April. This provision was important, as it set a general pattern (with few exceptions) that would be followed for decades to come. Just as Springfield's settlers in 1634 came to the west banks of the Connecticut River to cultivate their crops, Springfield residents of the 19th century continued to buy Agawam Center's farmland to supply their food needs directly or as worthy investments. Leasing farmland was, and continues to be, a practice throughout the Connecticut River valley among farmers. But here in Agawam the pattern differed as the School Street Barn was part of a farm that brought leasing returns to its nonresident and often non-farming owners for many decades.

A second note of interest is that by 1862 there was at least one barn among the buildings on the farm. Dubois reserved it from the sale of the other buildings on the land, and promised to move it off the land by that same April. Provision was also made to exempt a schoolhouse that had been on the property as an easement since 1852 (location now unknown).

When William and Lydia Ware bought the farm from Dubois in 1862, they did not move there. Rather, they remained in Oakham and added to the farm's acreage. Oakham is a rural agricultural community in distant Worcester County, so it may be presumed that the Agawam farm was leased out to others for farming and, indeed, Charles and Mary Ann Norris are identified on the state census of 1865 as living on this property as renters. After William Ware's death the farm was divided into three parcels now totaling nineteen acres, which were sold at auction to Frank Norris for \$3,000 in 1869. Norris, a widower, continued to rent the farm to Charles and Mary Ann Norris (relationship to Frank unknown), who farmed it for two decades, until 1884.

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Charles and Mary Ann Norris's sons, George and Willie, worked on the farm with their parents; the family had a teenaged hired man, James Lanier, living and working with them as well.

Late Industrial Period (1870-1915)

Frank Norris sold the three parcels, now 22 acres, and the buildings of the farm to Agawam farmers Elijah and Abigail Allen in March of 1884 for \$2,700. The Allens, who did not live there, sold the farm just six months later, but reserved the crops that were on it. Their deed indicates that the farm had been growing rowen (the second crop of grass or hay grown in a single season), apples, turnips, and corn. The presence of hay, corn, and turnips in the crop lineup suggests the farm also had livestock such as cows, horses, and pigs. It is highly likely that the School Street Barn was built during the Norrises' ownership, because their crops would have required a nearby barn suitable for hay and livestock. In addition, the barn's construction techniques all fall within the last quarter of the 19th century, when the Norrises were the longstanding farmers. The barn was built to the north of the 2½-story, center-chimney, ca. 1840 farmhouse (See Historic Photograph 1).

By the late 19th century, mixed farming in Massachusetts was practiced in a much more intensive manner, with the results that farmers had almost doubled the harvest of two previous generations. They were keeping more livestock than those two earlier generations as well. At the same time, farmers had a better understanding of the benefits of improved shelter for their animals and better management of their crops, implements, and tools of farming. The School Street barn—as a large, general-purpose barn—is part of the movement for improved barns that was being explored in the farming journals and agricultural book series, starting in the 1860s, and cresting during the early 1900s. The School Street barn was designed to be large, in order to contain space for animals, equipment, animals' food, and tools in one building, rather than the multiple, diverse, and smaller outbuildings that had previously been the norm. Farmers were further encouraged to build these large barns for the economy of materials and upkeep. A tall barn, it was pointed out, was cheaper to build and used fewer siding and roofing materials than multiple barns, and it cost less to maintain.

Heavy timber construction was still being recommended for large barns as late as 1911, but at that date the journals recommended replacing mortise-and-tenon joints by spikes. More commonly, farm building guidebooks were recommending that farmers use plank framing and a lateral bracing system that allowed a hay fork to be installed for raising hay to the upper mows. It should be noted here that Agawam is about 30 miles from Amherst and what was then the Massachusetts Agricultural College (now University of Massachusetts), which was publishing and disseminating to state farmers the latest research in agricultural practices. The School Street Barn's structural system indicates that its design was on the cusp of the new movement for large barns, but its frame and means of joining members were still part of the 18th- and 19th-centuries' traditional techniques.

The choice of a double-ramp barn was highly unusual for Agawam, but it derives from a New England movement in farming to improve efficiency and labor. From about 1850, farmers were turning to bank barns and single-ramp barns as a means of working more efficiently. According to its advocates, a bank barn offered a major improvement in that it allowed farmers to use gravity to their advantage in forking manure or hay from an upper story to a lower one. Prior to the 1850s, manure was shoveled out the windows of a ground-level barn in the spring, and hay was laboriously loaded to an upper mow by pitchforks from a wagon

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below and then pitched down again for animals. After 1850, farmers who could afford new barns located them on slopes, and those who could not afford new barns often moved their old ground-level barns to new, sloped sites and placed them on new foundations. Farmers without slopes had to be more inventive, and the double-ramp barn was one of the inventions, as it allowed a large barn to be entered on its two ends to a main floor above a ground-level floor. This provided two advantages to the farmer. The double ramp continued to allow horses to pull a wagon of hay onto the main level, unload, and then, without turning around, pass straight through. Hay could then be pitched to the lower ground level for livestock. Alternatively, animals could be stalled on the main level and their manure collected at the ground level in a wagon for spreading in the spring. School Street's double-ramp barn was constructed to allow both animals and storage at its ground level, as it was built on high brick foundations. There was a slight slope to the School Street Barn's lot (one foot over 41 feet down to the west). The barn builders took advantage of that slope to build the foundations on that side as brick piers rather than a solid brick foundation wall, which allowed animals and equipment to move in and out of the lower level. With an open west side and fenestrated east side, the ground level could hold large animals that would receive adequate air and sunshine and could be easily moved in and out. The open basement could also serve as an equipment shed, as it had adequate space between piers to admit a wagon.

A secondary consideration in building a double-ramp barn may have been the proximity of the Connecticut River. As the Native Americans had accurately warned 17th-century settlers, this land was susceptible to flooding, so raising valuable livestock, crop, and equipment space above flood level would have been wise.

In 1884, the Allens sold the three parcels of the farm, now 36 acres, with buildings to Emily Ruby of Springfield for \$3,500. The Allens' \$800 profit may reflect an increase in value due to construction of the School Street Barn, but this cannot be said with certainty, since their ownership was only six months long, and the acreage appears to have increased. It is clear that Emily Ruby's purchase was an investment, for she continued to appear in the census records and directories of Springfield. While Agawam's population was growing at a relatively slow pace, Springfield's population was booming, having doubled between 1895 and 1915 as the city became an industrial center with more than 500 manufacturing plants by 1900.

Investing in productive farmland was a good strategy. We do not know who leased the farm from Ruby, but we can say that the barn during this period was used as an all-purpose barn, and would have stored produce from the farmland and a few livestock for the farm family. While the operation may have been relatively modest in size, the barn would have been essential. At the time, larger farms in Agawam specialized in market gardening and growing tobacco. Had tobacco been grown commercially on the Ruby farm, the School Street Barn would show evidence of having been adapted for that use. There is no evidence in the siding or interior arrangement that the barn was used for tobacco.

Emily Ruby died within fifteen years of her investment, and at her death she left the farm to eight nieces and nephews to divide among themselves. The map of 1895 identifies one of the members of the inheriting families as occupying the house, one A. B. Howes. In 1895, within a few months of inheriting the farm, the heirs sold at a loss what had become four parcels of the property for \$2,900. The buyer, Herman Lampe, was a Springfield resident and cigar broker who had immigrated to the United States from Germany. He apparently saw an opportunity to make money, and in the same year turned the property over by selling it to Gustave and Bertha Brandt for \$3,100. He took back part of the purchase as a mortgage. The Brandts had bought farmland elsewhere in Agawam so they were active farmers, but they defaulted on their mortgage and

(continued)

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the farm was sold by foreclosure in 1902 to Jerre Adams of Agawam. Adams was himself a farmer and lived with his son Scott, a lawyer, and two servants in the neighborhood of the School Street barn. He added seven acres that he had bought earlier through a foreclosure. He sold all four parcels the following year, 1903, to Emily Louisa Lerche and at this point the volatility of the farm ownership came to an end.

The Lerches, a family of German immigrants, were largely Springfield-based, and when Emily Lerche died her property was probated among the family members. The farmstead went to Emil Lerche and his wife Louise. Emil Lerche was a Springfield beer bottler and lager brewer who started out working at the Springfield Armory, then operated a boardinghouse and saloon. The boardinghouse business expanded to the point that Emil established a hotel in Springfield at 93-95 State Street, named "Lerche's Hotel." He owned the hotel and ran it with a relative, Gustave Lerche. It is likely that the farm furnished produce for the hotel. Gustave, a butcher, moved to the farm in 1911 when, at Emil's death, he inherited a portion of the hotel along with his brother Rudolph Lerche. The atlas of 1912 depicts the farmhouse and the barn on the property as belonging to the heirs of E. Lerche. Gustave and his wife Myra stayed on the farm until about 1916. They sold off one of the four parcels to Walter Allen, the seven-acre parcel north of the barn, but kept 19 acres that included the house and the barn. Gustave and Myra Lerche left farming in 1916, and rented the farm in the 1920s and 1930s to Walter L. and Etta C. Smith. The Smiths were part of an American trend, toward farm rental, which continued to grow until, by 1949, nearly half of all the farms in the United States were tenant-operated.

Early Modern Period (1915-1940)

Etta and Walter Smith raised vegetables, and are likely to have had chickens and a few cows that they kept in the lower level of the barn. Commercial tobacco and market gardening continued in Agawam, but mainly in Feeding Hills. Meanwhile, the Smiths with their nineteen acres would have had a general farm, and sold some of their produce at a roadside stand. The all-purpose barn would have served them well with space for chickens, cows, a feed room, and horse stalls. It is during their ownership that the main-floor horse stall would likely have been added to the barn. Horses continued to be the main source of power in Agawam farming for the smaller farms. In 1890, there were 521 horses in use in the town, and by 1915, the number had reached 612. This was also a period in which poultry farming increased considerably. In 1890, there were no chickens recorded on farms in Agawam, but in 1915 there were 9,440, and the number continued to climb for several decades. Dairy farming began to decline slowly, but there were still substantial numbers of cows on Agawam farms. In 1890, there were 1,642 cows, and in 1915 there were 1,331.

It was in the 1930s that the Hampden County Jail began to buy up Agawam farmland on School Street. The Great Depression, combined with a flood of the Connecticut River in 1927, made this a difficult period for Agawam farmers, and land prices dropped. Impetus for buying farmland came from Hampden County Sheriff David J. Manning, who decided to create a farm jail program for inmates of Springfield's York Street jail. Once again an Agawam farm would be feeding Springfield residents. While prison farms were fairly common throughout the country, a jail farm worked by prisoners serving shorter sentences was more unusual. Manning aimed to bring food into the system and to use his minor offenders (mostly arrested for drunkenness) as farmhands. Those who were soon to be released and presented a lower escape risk were selected to do the work. In 1934, the county bought the first small amount of acreage in Agawam Center, amounting to a few acres.

(continued)

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The hurricane of 1936 may have made land purchases easier for Manning, as it caused significant flooding along the Connecticut River, which rose to inundate River Road, stopping at its intersection with School Street. The School Street Barn was left high and dry as a photograph indicates; the house was much closer to the floodline (Historic Photograph 1). At this point, the west side of the barn remained fully open and resting on brick piers. This arrangement allowed livestock such as pigs and chickens to occupy the ground floor, and a horse stall on the main level of the barn was probably in use. Whether the flood precipitated the Smith's departure was not recorded, but the surrounding acreage by 1938 was considered in one newspaper report to have become a "sterile waste." The great Hurricane of 1938 no doubt contributed to the condition of the land so close to the Connecticut River and to the willingness of its landowners to sell.

In 1938, the heirs of Alson Allen, whose farmhouse was on Meadow Street just north of School Street, sold additional acreage of their farmland for the jail farm. The Allen land extended south from Meadow Street to the Lerche property. In all, the Allen family sold more than 37 acres to Hampden County, and inmates were brought daily to work the farm.

The School Street Barn farmland was added to the jail farm in two purchases of 1943 and 1949. Myra Lerche initially sold five acres in 1943 to Hampden County for the jail farm, and then eight acres in 1949. The eight acres sold in 1949 included the buildings (house and barn). She kept the right to develop lots 200 feet in from River Road on School Street, which had been zoned as business. The lots were not developed.

Modern Period (1940-1990)

In 1943, Nathan and Barbara Sherwood came to live in the house and were there through the 1980s. Nathan was the Hampden County Jail farm manager and guard. He oversaw 30 to 40 inmates who came daily to the farm to work, raising the crops that grew well in the loamy soil. The farm produced tomatoes, carrots, cabbage, cucumbers, potatoes, onions, and corn and Manning's plan became highly successful. In 1943, when the first of the Lerche property was added to the farm, the inmates canned 1,500 gallons of tomatoes, 450 gallons of green tomato relish, 300 gallons of spinach, 125 gallons of carrots, 200 gallons and 12 barrels of sauerkraut, and 10 barrels of pickles. Besides raising vegetables, they also raised chickens and pigs beginning in 1943.

Livestock was kept in the School Street Barn on the ground floor, where the pens that were added ca. 1949 are still extant. Fencing on the side of the barn allowed the animals to emerge for sunlight and air. Hampden County is responsible for the concrete block piers installed to support the barn's faltering floor joists, for the concrete-block pens, and for the concrete-block horse stall on the ground floor. Hay for food and straw for bedding for the animals' pens could be kept on the main floor and passed down a chute in the floor at the southeast corner. During the jail's use of the barn, the feed room on the main floor was converted to a workshop where a chicken waterer and a foot-driven apple quartering machine remain stored.

The following year it was recorded that during harvest time, inmates working from 7 a.m. until 2:45 p.m. dug 100 bushels of potatoes a day, and at the end of the season had harvested 400 bushels of onions and 600 bushels of corn—all of which helped prove, according to the Springfield Republican, "...Sheriff Manning's original contention that the farm not only would be an excellent morale builder for the men, but would contribute materially in keeping down food costs at the jail." The Springfield paper reported that Sheriff Manning was nationally recognized for the success of the jail farm program. The program continued

(continued)

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throughout the 1950s and 1960s, and turkeys were added to the chickens and pigs already being raised. At holidays the farm produced dinners for its inmates with 27-pound, farm-raised turkeys, and many preserved vegetables. News accounts reported that everything but the cranberries came from the farm. The farm produce went from feeding slightly fewer than 200 prisoners in the mid-1940s to feeding more than 600 by the late 1980s. An abundance of produce allowed the jail farm to send the excess to homeless families in both Springfield and the neighboring city of Holyoke. In 1984 alone the farm produced 10,000 ears of corn, 1,400 head of cabbage, and 700 bushels of other vegetables, which saved Hampden County an estimated \$7,728.

People arrested for public inebriation constituted the largest number of workers on the farm, so when public inebriation was de-criminalized in 1973, there were no longer enough prisoners to work on the farm, and its operations were suspended for two years. But in 1975, crops were once again planted and the produce grown and cultivated by jail inmates. The farm was operated until the York Street Jail was closed in 1992. During more than 40 years, with only light supervision by guards, only a handful of prisoners ever escaped. Between 1992 and 2005, the farmland was fallow.

In 1998 when Hampden County was dissolved as a governmental entity, the farm, along with the house and barn, went to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In December 1999, as required by Agawam's Demolition Delay Ordinance, the Agawam Historical Commission held a public hearing regarding an application to demolish the farmhouse. Finding that the house was in an "advanced stage of deterioration," the Commission approved the application to demolish with the provision that the following items be removed from the house for display in the town's historical museum: the banister and railing of the main staircase (see 1999 photograph), the fireplace surround and mantel (see 1999 photograph), crown molding from the front parlor, and a large stone step near the back porch (January 7, 2000, letter from the Agawam Historical Commission to the Agawam building inspector).

In 2002, the county jail's 49.3 acres were handed over to the town of Agawam, which maintained the land by mowing. The Commonwealth provided funding in 2005 to assist in making a park of the farmland; the barn has served the town for storage of school equipment. The park itself was designed and constructed in 2007-2008. The School Street Barn has been cleaned out in preparation for rehabilitation according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. It will become a community barn.

Preservation Issues

Preservation and eventual rehabilitation of the School Street Barn has the strong support of the Agawam Historical Commission, the Town of Agawam's Planning Department, and the residents of Agawam, individually, and as a study committee. It is through the support of these residents and the Community Preservation Act (CPA) that this National Register nomination has been prepared and a feasibility study enabled. Application for funding from the CPA will next be made to act as a match when Agawam applies to the Massachusetts Historical Commission's Preservation Projects Fund.

The planning concerns are those common to large vacant buildings: vandalism and deterioration. While the town has sealed the barn, these measures do not replace the security provided by an actively used building.

(continued)

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Archaeological Significance

Since patterns of ancient Native American settlement in Agawam are poorly understood, any surviving sites could be significant. Ancient sites located on the barn property may contribute important information related to the study of Native American adaptations to a temperate forest riverine environment, a habitat unique within the state of Massachusetts. Potential sites in this area may contribute information indicating the overall importance of sites along secondary drainages to sites along the main course of the Connecticut River. Ancient sites along the unnamed stream within the nominated property and the nearby Westfield River may have a seasonal or functional role in a larger Native American settlement and subsistence system based at larger sites along the Connecticut River. Information may be present indicating a relationship or development between ancient site distributions and later Native American core areas recognized during the Contact and Plantation Periods. The possibility of locating stratified prehistoric sites in alluvial deposits also indicates a high potential for recovering information important in the research of tool assemblies and chronologies and ceramic technology and style. The location of the district, in close proximity to river drainages that functioned as important north/south and east/west transportation corridors, also indicated the potential for locating sites and information that contribute to the analysis of prehistoric exchange.

Historic archaeological resources described above may contribute important information relating to the original construction date for the farmstead located on the School Street Barn property, and related to later renovations through the 19th and 20th centuries. Additional documentary research, combined with archaeological testing, may identify exactly when the house was built, architectural changes, and when changes occurred. Construction features and artifacts may identify construction techniques and materials used in renovations during the house's long period of occupancy. Identification and careful mapping of barns and outbuildings may identify buildings no longer extant on the property; their spatial organization on the property and different strategies and techniques used in agricultural and livestock production as the farm was transformed from a family-owned enterprise to a leased commercial asset for an urban center. Important information may exist that indicates how the farmstead's facilities and organization contributed to the shift or transformation noted above, and the barn's function as the main farm building in a prosperous county jail program that supplied much of the food for Hampden County inmates from 1938 to the late 1980s. Detailed analysis of the contents of occupational-related features may also contribute important information related to agricultural and livestock production and potential manufacturing activities that may have been pursued as a type of cottage industry. The contents of occupational-related features may also contribute important social, cultural, and economic information related to the inhabitants of the farm and the overall population of Agawam.

Structural remains of the mid 19th-century schoolhouse and detailed analysis of occupational-related features may contribute important information related to the history of 19th-century education in Agawam. Structural remains may contribute information related to the architectural features of the school, its capacity, and related facilities. Detailed analysis of occupational-related features may contribute information related to educational methods used at the school, and the social, cultural, and economic characteristics of students that attended the school and their families.

(end)

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Maps and Atlases

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LaFrancis, Edith. Agawam, Massachusetts: A Town History. Springfield, 1980.

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Wooley, John C. Farm Buildings. New York, 1946.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

Primary location of additional data:

- 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
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): AGA.472

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately 2 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u>	<u>699140</u>	<u>4660806</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The School Street Barn stands at the southern edge of a 49.3-acre town park. A line of convenience, shown on the attached assessor's map (Parcel ID: N12 8 26), was drawn to establish the northern boundary of the nomination. The line of convenience is drawn from the northeast corner of the property that is west of the barn to the southwest corner of the property east of the barn.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Boundaries were selected to include the barn and the site of the farmhouse with which it was associated historically, but to exclude the larger public park, its playgrounds, courts, and other recreational facilities.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Bonnie Parsons and David Cecchi, consultants with Betsy Friedberg, NR director, MHC
organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date July 2012
street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone 617-727-8470
city or town Boston state MA zip code 02125
e-mail _____

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: School Street Barn

City or Vicinity: Agawam

County: Hampden

State: MA

Photographer: Richard Bennett (Photo #1, 10, 11, 12) Bonnie Parsons (Photo #s 2-9; 13-16)

Date Photographed: May (Photo #1, 10, 11, 12) and August, 2011 (Photos #s 2-9; 13-16)

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. View to the West | 2. View of park to north | 3. View of park to south |
| 4. View of park up drive | 5. View of park to south | 6. North, east elevations of barn |
| 7. Barn ramp, view northwest | 8. South, east elevations of barn | 9. View to south |
| 10. Purlin and braces | 11. Common rafter roof | 12. View towards School Street |
| 13. Interior wall sheathing | 14. Basement animal pens | 15. Basement joist joint with girt |
| 16. Chute from main floor | | |

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Historic Photographs

1. 1936, School Street Barn and Farmhouse
2. 1999, farmhouse from east
3. 1999, farmhouse banister
4. 1999, farmhouse mantel

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Town of Agawam
street & number 36 Main Street telephone 413-786-04000
city or town Agawam state MA zip code 01001

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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School Street Barn (left) and farmhouse, 1936 (Historic photograph 1)

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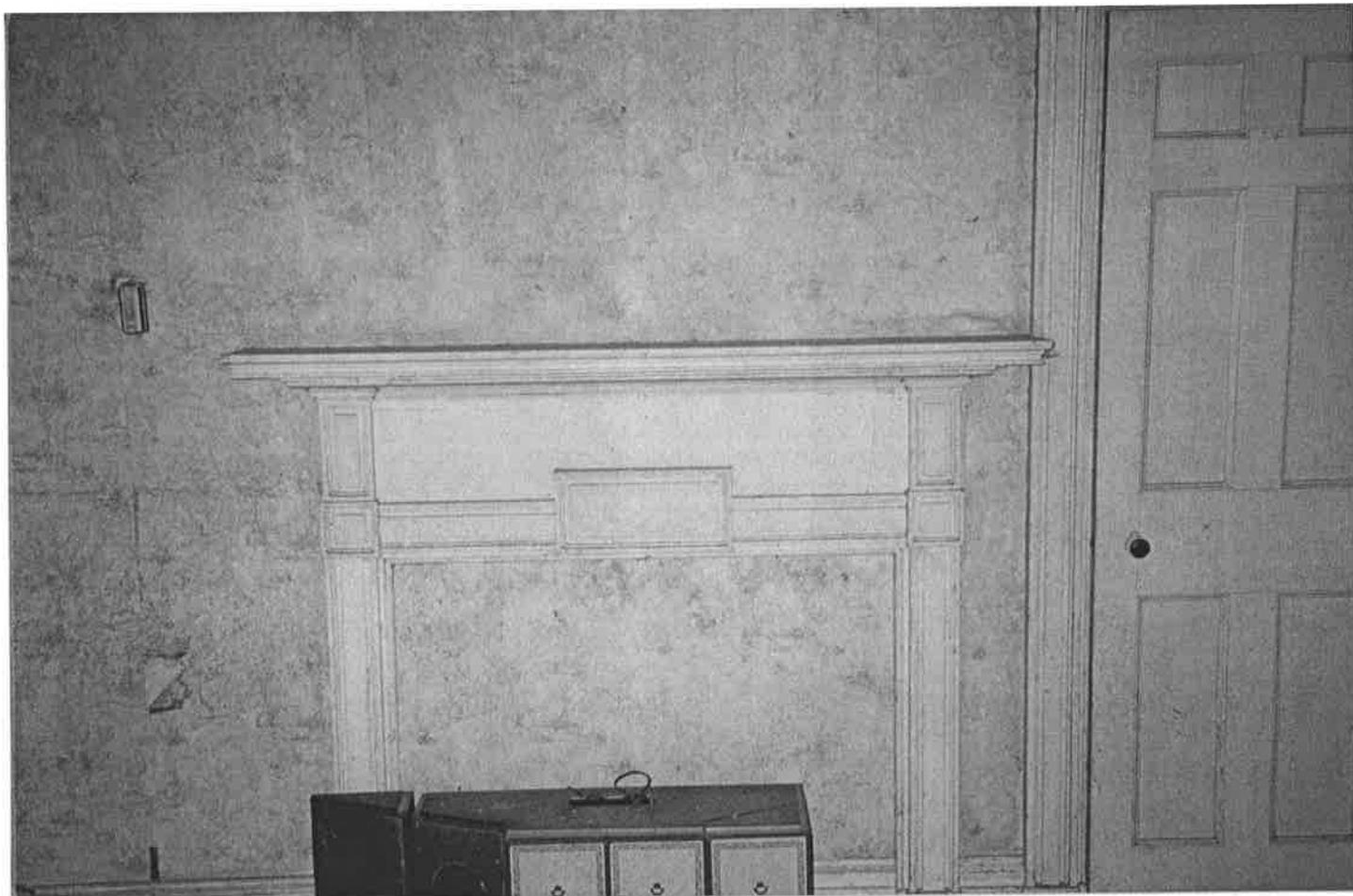
Farmhouse, from east, 1999 (demolished)



Farmhouse banister, 1999

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Farmhouse mantel, photo 1999 (since demolished)

School Street Barn, Agawam, Hampden Co., MA



Interactive Map



Date: 4/27/12



Scale: 1"=806' (1:9670)

4/27/12



Interactive Map



Date: 4/27/12

0 806 1612 Feet



Scale: 1"=806' (1:9670)











