



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

1170

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name The Wilder Homestead

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Ashfield Road _____ not for publication

city or town Buckland _____ vicinity _____

state Massachusetts code MA county Franklin code 011 zip code 01338

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Brana Simon

November 24, 2010

Signature of certifying official/Title Brana Simon, Executive Director Date
Massachusetts Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Edson H. Beall

1.24.11

Name of Property: The Wilder Homestead

County and State: Franklin, MA

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

(Check only one box)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	1	building
1		sites
		structures
1		objects
4	1	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

- DOMESTIC/single dwelling
- AGRICULTURE/agricultural field/pasture
- AGRICULTURE/animal facility/barn
- COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store/shoe shop
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

- RECREATION AND CULTURE/museum/historic house
- AGRICULTURE/agricultural field
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

- COLONIAL/Georgian; EARLY REPUBLIC/Federal
- _____
- _____

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation STONE; CONCRETE
- walls WOOD/Weatherboard
- roof STONE; slate
- other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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DESCRIPTION

The Wilder Homestead is located in the western Massachusetts town of Buckland, in Franklin County. Buckland, a rural town, is bounded on the north by the town of Charlemont, on the west by Hawley, on the south by Ashfield, and on the east by Shelburne. The homestead is located on Ashfield Road, or MA Route 112, which runs in a north-south direction following a floodplain formed by Clesson Brook. Clesson Brook runs northward, empties into the Deerfield River, and forms the northern border of Buckland, separating it from the town of Charlemont. Located on the floodplain, the Wilder Homestead is at about 550 feet in elevation, with Johnson Hill (900 feet) on its east and Walnut Hill (1,300 feet) to the west. The property is approximately a mile and a half north of Buckland Center, and three miles from Shelburne Falls, a village composed of portions of Buckland and Shelburne.

The Wilder Homestead is comprised of three buildings (a house, barn, and shoe shop), one object (a hitching post), and flat open fields, which remain in agricultural use and are a character-defining feature of the landscape. Except for the shoe shop, which was moved to the site in 1991, the buildings, object, and site are all contributing resources. Although the shoe shop dates to the first quarter of the 19th century, it is considered noncontributing because its associations with the Wilder Homestead are less than 50 years, since it was moved to the property in 1991. The Wilder Homestead has been owned by the Buckland Historical Society since 1981, and serves as a historic house museum.

The three buildings, which stand relatively closely to each other, are set back from the road several hundred feet and reached by a straight dirt drive. The Wilder House, which faces west, is nearest the road. Approximately 30 feet northeast of the house is the shoe shop, with its entry facing south. East of both the house and shoe shop is the barn. The granite hitching post, dating to the late 19th century, is located near the northern entry to the house. In the west yard is a specimen maple tree. (Photograph #3) From the homestead there are distant views to north and south, and views of hillsides to east and west. To travelers along Route 112, the Wilder Homestead is a singular landmark in the open agricultural floodplain.

Wilder House

Exterior

The ca. 1775 Wilder house is a 2½-story, center-chimney, Georgian/Federal-style house. (Photograph #1) The west-facing main block of the clapboard-sided house is five bays wide and three deep. The side-gabled roof, which is covered with slate, has a rear slope that extends to the first floor, creating the iconic saltbox profile that was relatively common throughout the Georgian period in New England. A 1½-story, 3-bay ell extends from the east side of the house. (Photograph #6) Circular-sawmarks on the interior suggest that the ell dates after 1870. Both the house and its ell rest on fieldstone foundations, but the foundations of the house are low, revealing only one or two layers of stones above grade, as is typical of houses built in the region prior to 1776. Windows in the main block of the house have double-hung sash. The tall and narrow openings of the principal (west) façade are set close to the eaves on the second floor. On this elevation the sashes have 9/9 lights, while windows on the north, east, and south elevations are a mixture of 12/12 and 9/9. On the ell the windows are 12/12. Window surrounds are flat, with drip edges at the lintels. The door surround, centered on the west façade, is tall and relatively narrow. Slender pilasters that support a full entablature with a double-height frieze frame the opening. (Photograph #2) The cornice of the surround projects unusually far, a feature that is repeated inside on the fireplace woodwork. The door surround encloses a five-light transom above a six-panel door. There is a secondary entry on the north elevation, where the window surrounds are composed of flat stock with a drip edge across the top.

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The transitional style of the house may be understood as a Georgian form on which Federal details were placed. This is not an uncommon blending of form and style in the region, where conservative building practices persisted. Though the center-chimney form is early Georgian with roots in the First Period, it persisted in western Massachusetts for the first decade of the 19th century. Double interior chimneys, favored in more urban areas of the state, were not as widely accepted in the region. Similarly, the smaller, Georgian-style windows found at the Wilder House were more common in western Massachusetts than the larger sash with 6/6 lights that were typical of the Federal style. On the other hand, decorative features of the developing Federal style were more readily incorporated. The Wilder House's tall and narrow door surround is a feature that developed during the Federal stylistic period. This, along with the widely projecting and delicately proportioned cornice, is evidence that the builder was aware of contemporary architectural trends. Another architectural feature that reveals the builder's awareness of new stylistic features is the use of substantial roof eaves, which are boxed, trimmed with molding, and make returns at the gable ends, as opposed to the Georgian style's preference for tight eaves. (Photograph #7)

In contrast, the ell serves as a practical addition without decorative detail. But its clapboards, stone foundations, windows, and gable roof complement the architecture of the main house.

Interior

The Wilder House is a post and beam-framed building that appears, from the rafter joinery, to have been constructed according to the scribe-rule framing system, in which each post is flared to accommodate its own tightly fit English tying joint. It has a center chimney, saltbox roofline, and double-pile depth, which allows for a four-room floor plan on the first floor. The second floor has two principal rooms, plus two eaves rooms. In the center of the basement, reached by a bulkhead in the ell, is a dry-laid stone chimney foundation that is approximately 20 feet long and 20 feet wide, ample by any measure.

In the attic of the main block, the roof framing is common rafter with a five-sided ridgepole into which the rafters are framed by mortise and tenon joints, pegged with riven treenails. The major structural members—plate, ridgepole, rafters, and chimney girts—are hewn. The lesser members, studs (visible in second floor extension space) and floor joists (visible in basement), are up-and-down sawn. Lath is splitboard and attached with hand-wrought nails. Roof sheathing boards vary in width between 15 inches and approximately 20 inches in width. The attic is floored with wide boards ranging from 8 to about 18 inches in width. The brick chimney has been parged at the second floor and attic levels.

On the first floor of the main block of the house, the center-entry hall is a small, wallpapered room with a narrow, steep flight of stairs to the second floor. The stair railing is composed of turned newel posts with carved ball terminals at the foot of the stairs and at the dogleg turn. The turned newel posts are repeated in a smaller scale at the fireplace surround in the adjacent parlor. Balusters are slender and square, and fit into a molded handrail. Beneath the stairs, a two-panel door opens to a closet. Narrow and shallowly incised borders on an otherwise planar surface form the door's panels. The door hardware consists of a brass knob and catch. (Photograph # 8) The entry hall, or foyer, is lit by the five-light transom over the entry door. The wallpaper in the entry is contemporary, and the wide-board floor is painted.

Left of the foyer is the hall, a principal room where the family typically gathered. The door leading from the foyer has four recessed panels and a Blake latch—a type of Norfolk latch that appeared after about 1836. The hall has plastered walls and ceilings, and the corner posts have been cased. (Photograph #9) The painted floors have wide boards, as found throughout the house. Window and door surrounds and baseboards are flat stock, and the windows have a narrow carved

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sill. An unusual feature of the front rooms of both first and second floors is the placement, mid-way between the two front windows, of two molded strips of wood, similar to chair rails, about five inches apart. Their effect is that of a panel between the two windows. (Photograph #11) The shallow hall fireplace on the inner (south) wall is brick-lined and has a brick hearth. It has a molded architrave surround beneath an entablature, with a wide frieze and projecting cornice for the mantel. This is a simple but elegant surround, Adamesque in its fine proportions and thinly carved molding. Above and left of the fireplace is an inset cabinet of two shelves, closed with a single, recessed-panel door. In the ceiling above the fireplace are two decorative metal grates to carry heat to the second floor.

To the right of the foyer is the parlor, a formal principal room for entertaining guests. It has two four-panel doors, one from the foyer and one from the kitchen. The parlor has plastered walls and ceiling, and painted wide-board wood floors. The door surrounds, unlike the flat stock of the other rooms of the house, are molded. The cornerposts are boxed. The baseboards in this room have a quarter-round molding at the top, and window surrounds are architrave surrounds with molding profiles that are more complex than those of the hall. The window sills are also molded. As in the hall, two molding pieces span the space between the front windows, but in this more decorative room they have carved corner fans, a detail that is repeated on the room's fireplace surround. The fireplace surround, befitting the room's purpose as the "best room," is larger and more elaborate than that in the hall. Brick lined, it has a large stone hearth—probably gneiss from a local quarry. At each side of the opening, engaged, turned columns, which repeat the profile of the newel post in the entry hall, rest on plinths and support projecting sections of entablature. Between the projections, the entablature is composed of a wide frieze beneath a widely overhanging cornice. The frieze is ornamented with a square panel in its center and carved fans at each of its corners, and fans at the corners of the frieze as well. Somewhat more robust than the architrave surround of the hall, this woodwork is Federal with its engaged columns, its use of shallow carved fans, and finely molded mantel cornice. Small ornamental grates in the ceiling above the fireplace allow heated air into the second-floor chamber.

The space across the east side of the house is divided into four rooms. The largest central space, as is traditional, is the kitchen. The space to the south of the kitchen has been divided into a laundry room and a bathroom. Adjacent to the north end of the kitchen is a dining room, which has a door to the outside on the north wall. The laundry room and bathroom are both utilitarian spaces that were created during the 20th century. They have gypsum-board walls, stock lumber door and window surrounds, and vinyl tile floors. The kitchen is dominated by a large and shallow fireplace, with a broad brick hearth raised up from the level of the floor and bordered by a narrow wood strip. Above a full-width metal lintel, the chimney breast is composed of five unpainted, raised panels framed by floor-to-ceiling stiles at each end, all of which were built in the 1970s to reproduce the originals. Within the fireplace is a crane on the left, the firebox, and an oven on the right. (Photograph #13)

Opposite the fireplace on the east wall is a cast-iron sink set in a wood cabinet. In the southeast corner of the kitchen, a shallow closet acts as a room divider separating the main space of the kitchen from a small open pantry. The pantry is composed of a cupboard of upper and lower sections with beadboard doors. (Photograph #14) A beadboard wainscoting runs across the lower half of the east wall, as well. A fold-up wooden table with a hinged leg is attached to the end of the room-divider closet. The rear entrance to the house remains as an entry to the ell on the east wall. It is a broad board-and-batten door made of beaded boards on the inside, and on the outside it has been carved into six panels, a cross-and-bible pattern. It has a Suffolk latch. The door opens beneath a generous five-light transom which is hinged for opening.

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The north dining room is separated from the kitchen by a wood cupboard, with a door opening in its center. (Photograph #15) The dining room has horizontal beaded board wainscoting on its outer walls below plaster. The baseboards in this room are made of a flat stock backer with a narrower, square trim placed at its foot.

The second floor has two principal bedrooms (the hall and parlor chambers) along the west side, and two smaller rooms along the east side, in the attic space above the kitchen/dining area. One of the small rooms is a hired man's room, or attic bedroom, at the northeast corner of the house. The other room, at the southeast corner, is used for storage. An opening between the two spaces leads to the ell's attic. The full-sized bedroom, or hall chamber, at the southwest corner has a fireplace on its inner wall, a shallow closet with shelves beside it, and two doors on its east wall. (Photograph #16) One leads to a closet—a rarity for the period, but made possible by the extended roof profile—and the other to the roof extension space. The shallow, brick-lined fireplace has a stone hearth and an architrave surround with a projecting molded mantelpiece identical to that in the hall on the first floor.

The northwest bedroom, or parlor chamber, has a fireplace with a surround and mantelpiece identical to those of the south bedroom and hall. There is a second shallow closet with shelves beside the fireplace. Plaster walls and ceilings, quarter round-trimmed baseboards, and simple flat-stock window surrounds make up the interior finishes. Repeated in both north and south bedrooms are the panel-like molding pieces between the two front windows. The cornerposts and hall posts are cased and painted, but still project into the room. Doors on the second floor have four recessed panels with Blake latches.

The Wilder House Ell

Structure and Plan, and Interior Finishes

The ell is balloon-frame construction with a common-rafter roof. Framing members are circular sawn, a practice that began in the region after 1870. On the first floor, interior walls are a mixture of plywood and horizontal tongue-and-groove boards. The original back wall of the main block, where it connects to the ell, has had its clapboards removed to expose the sheathing. The ell is divided into two rooms: a full-width woodshed that now serves as a storage space, followed by a storeroom with a stair to the attic on its south side. Beyond the stair on the east, a privy has been divided off. A bulkhead to the basement is located in the woodshed. Both the first floor and attic floor of the ell are wood.

The Wilder Barn

Exterior

The Wilder Barn is composed of three parts: an English-style barn that dates to ca. 1775, a two-bay, full-height and full-width extension at the west end (ca. 1840), and an equipment shed that is attached to the southwest corner of the barn, only covering a portion of the west gable end. (Photograph #4)

The major character-defining feature of an English Barn is its side-gable form with the principal entrances on the eaves sides. The barn, including the extension, has double-door entries on north and south under a side-gable roof that is metal covered. The barn is set on flat land on low fieldstone foundations, without a basement or crawl space. The main block of the extended English barn is sided with vertical boards, and there are shadow lines in the gable ends. On the north is a pair of double doors hung with iron butterfly hinges. Above the opening is a small transom with two rows of six lights. There

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are no other openings on this elevation. The west elevation has a pedestrian door below a loading door that is centered on the elevation and opens into the mow level of the barn. The loading door is hung with a pair of long, iron strap hinges. Adjacent to the pedestrian door is a fixed, six-light sash, and in the gable peak is a fixed, eight-light sash. The south elevation has two asymmetrically placed double-door openings. There are no windows in this façade. The east elevation has neither doors nor windows.

The equipment shed is a 1½-story addition, with a side-gable roof covered with slate. On its north elevation are two equipment bays, and there is a pedestrian door on the east. The building is horizontally sided with flush weatherboard, and there is a hinged loading door in its west gable.

Interior

The earliest portion of the barn—the main English-style section—is post-and-beam construction, built according to the scribe-rule system, as was the house. The roof is a common-rafter structure with a continuous forty-foot ridgepole. Continuous, forty-foot purlin plates and purlins are also used. Tie beams connect the base of principal rafters and create a triangular truss. English tying joints, using three mortise-and-tenon joints and a half-lap dovetail, are used at the traditional eight-post positions. All the timbers are hand-hewn with a broad axe. Some braces were riven from oak and dressed with a broad axe. The rafters are made of beech; plates, ties, and some posts are of white pine and the main posts and most of the rafters are red oak.

The earliest section of the barn is divided into three bays (see floor plan). The central threshing bay, which is eleven feet wide, has an asphalt floor; the side bays have wood floors. The west bay is eighteen feet, four inches, wide. There are no partitions in this bay, but mortise holes in the transverse girt between the west bay and the threshing bay indicate that there was a feed rack for the horses or oxen, traditionally kept on the south end of this wider bay. There is an integral ladder in the threshing bay that leads to the mow above the west bay.

The east bay is ten feet, eight inches wide. Its whitewashed walls and ceiling confirm that cattle were kept in this bay. The studs that once divided part of the east bay from the threshing bay are missing, but there is mortise evidence that there was a stanchion for the cows facing a portion of the threshing floor. Above, slabs of wood laid across the bay, from plate to transverse girt, provided a haymow above the cattle.

The two-bay extension to the west end of the English barn is also post-and-beam, but it is square-rule constructed. The eighteen-foot-wide extension provided additional room for livestock, and more mow space above for hay storage. Its beech and oak frame shows mostly up-and-down saw marks. The addition is undivided, and its floor is concrete paving stones.

The attached, two-bay equipment shed is balloon-frame construction and dates from the 20th century.

The Shoe Shop

Exterior
The shoe shop is a 1½-story, clapboard-sided, wood-frame building set on concrete block footings. It is twenty feet wide and fourteen feet deep. Utilitarian in form and lacking in ornament, the building is nevertheless architecturally developed

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in its proportions, use of fine finishes on the interior, and in the scale of its window openings. According to architect and timber framer Jack Sobon, the shoe shop dates to between 1812 and 1820 as indicated by the use of the square-rule framing system, which was introduced in nearby Goshen in 1812 and had come into common use in Buckland by 1820. When the shop was moved to its present location, it was placed on a site that slopes down on the north. The shop's foundation is dry-laid fieldstone placed between the footings on the east, west, and south sides to enclose a crawl space. The north side, which is the highest above the ground, is open.

The shop is two bays wide on the south, and one bay deep under a side-gable roof that is metal-covered, and has exposed rafter tails at the eaves. (Photograph #5) The building does not have a chimney.

The side entry to the shop is reached by two steps made up of two large stone slabs placed on fieldstone foundations. The entry is framed by a wide flat surround with a small drip edge across the top. The door has a six-light glazed upper half and a paneled lower half, with three vertical panels beneath a single horizontal panel. Window surrounds and cornerboards are narrower than the door surround, but the window surrounds are also topped by a thin drip edge. The first floor windows, one per elevation, contain double-hung sash of 18/18 lights that allow maximum light into the interior. They are original to the building. The attic window contains an unusual 8/12 sash.

Interior

The shoe shop is square-rule, post-and-beam construction using hand-forged nails. It is fourteen feet deep and twenty feet wide. Its interior is divided into three spaces. Facing the entry is a short partition, which creates a small vestibule on one side of the main room. In the northeast corner of the main room, vertical wood panels and a door create a small closet about three feet deep and five feet long. (Photograph #17)

The interior walls of the shop are plastered, and paneled with wide horizontal boards that have a narrow beaded edge. The partition is plastered on the door side, and paneled from floor to ceiling on the room side. (Photograph #18) The ceiling is plastered in all spaces. The walls of the main room are an irregular combination of plaster and paneling. The south wall contains a large window in a wall that is plastered on its upper half and paneled below with horizontal boards, with a beaded edge, topped by a chair rail. On the left side of the window, near the ceiling, is a wood strip with mounted hooks for hanging materials. The east wall also contains a window, but its wall is paneled from floor to ceiling on the right side of the window, and wainscoted with horizontal paneling on the left side of the window. (Photograph #19)

The north wall has the wood closet to the right of its window, and to the left is a strip of plaster from floor to ceiling. It is about six inches wide, followed by paneling from the floor to within six inches of the ceiling.

The west wall is paneled at each side of its window. Floors in the building are unpainted, wide, wood planks. The shoe shop contains a few pieces of furniture for shoemaking, including a bench and shoemaker's stool that date from the 19th century. They have been donated by Buckland families and were not part of the shop's original equipment.

Archaeological Description

While no ancient Native American sites are currently known on the homestead or in the general area (within one mile), it is possible that sites are present. Environmental characteristics of the area represent locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, proximity to wetlands) that are favorable for the presence of Native sites. The homestead is located on a well-drained, level

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to moderately sloping floodplain terrace in close proximity to wetlands. Clesson Brook is located approximately 500 feet west of the house. The confluence of Clesson Brook and the Deerfield River lies approximately 1½ miles to the north. The town of Buckland lies within the Deerfield/Connecticut River drainage. Soils at the homestead are characterized by moderately coarse-textured alluvial sandy loam. Given the above information, the size of the homestead (58.5 acres), the availability of open space, and known Native American subsistence and settlement patterns for Connecticut River Valley and the Berkshire uplands, a moderate to high potential exists for locating ancient Native American resources at the Wilder Homestead.

A high potential exists for locating historic archaeological resources at the Wilder Homestead. Structural evidence, archaeological features, and artifacts may survive from construction of the Wilder house in the 18th century and later additions and renovations. Similar information may exist for the extant barn located on the property, and other barns that may survive in an archaeological context. Structural evidence may also survive for domestic and industrial-related outbuildings that may have existed on the property. Significant structural remains and archaeological features related to the extant shoe shop located on the property are not believed to exist, since the shop was moved to the property in 1991.

A high potential also exists for locating archaeological evidence of occupational-related features (trash pits, privies, wells) on the property. One privy has been identified in the Wilder House ell (after 1870); however, earlier privies may also exist.

(end)

Name of Property: The Wilder Homestead

County and State: Franklin, MA

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.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- A** owned by 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- 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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- AGRICULTURE _____
- ARCHITECTURE _____
- COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT _____
- _____
- _____

Period of Significance

ca. 1775 to 1960 _____

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

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Statement of Significance

The Wilder Homestead is significant as a representative, well-preserved, western Massachusetts farmstead from the late 18th century. Built by one of the town of Buckland's early settlers, it retains its 18th-century farm landscape setting. Cultivated fields extend in all directions, and woodlands are still visible on distant hillsides. In the development of the town, the Wilder Homestead is representative of the second round of building undertaken by those early settlers who had accumulated enough money to move from their first—and often temporary—buildings, and construct the barns and houses that would serve families for generations to come. In this regard, the Wilder Homestead is particularly significant because it served the family for five generations.

The house is typical of the fine English construction techniques and stylistic features that characterized the late Georgian period in western Massachusetts. It is one of the few saltbox-form houses remaining in Franklin County. Architecturally, the house is an excellent example of the regional Georgian style with its center chimney, traditional plan, and interior ornamental woodwork. The barn, which was built in the region between 1750 and 1850, is an excellent example of the English-barn form. While English barns are still to be found in western Massachusetts, the Wilder Barn is one of a dwindling number that remains, in good condition, with its original house.

A third building, moved to the Wilder Homestead in 1991, is the only remaining shoe shop in Buckland. Built in the first quarter of the 19th century and used as a shoe shop until 1902, it is cited in the Massachusetts Historical Commission's Reconnaissance Survey as a rare survival of the town's early industrial buildings. Its current setting is much the same as its original setting, which was half a mile away.

Owned by the Buckland Historical Society since 1981, the Wilder Homestead has integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. It meets National Register criteria A and C, with a local level of significance. The period of significance is ca. 1775, the construction date of the house, to 1960, at the standard 50-year date for significance. All resources are contributing, with the exception of the shoe shop. Despite its age, the shoe shop is a noncontributing resource because it was moved to the Wilder Homestead after the period of significance. Its status should be reevaluated when it has been associated with the Buckland Historical Society for at least 50 years.

Colonial Period (1675-1775)

In 1735, the General Court of Massachusetts bought from the descendents of the Pocumtucks the territory that is now Charlemont, Buckland, Hawley, Heath, Rowe, Munroe, and parts of Colrain and Shelburne. The Court then granted sections of this land for three general reasons: as reward for service, as compensation for mistakes in deeds elsewhere in Massachusetts, or as direct sales. The area from which Buckland would be carved was made up of land in Ashfield, Charlemont, and a section known as "No Town." Ashfield was created from a 1736 grant to descendents of men who had taken part in an expedition to Canada. Charlemont was a six-mile-square township that had been granted in 1735 to the town of Boston as compensation for the taxes its residents had paid. The "No Town" grants, which took their name from the fact that they were not within the boundaries of any township, were compensation for land that had been lost elsewhere due to recording errors. Grantees in Ashfield, Charlemont, and "No Town" did not necessarily settle on their land, but treated it as an asset to be sold for profit.

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Sale and settlement in what would, in 1779, become Buckland began in 1742, when Othiel Taylor bought 1,000 acres of land south of the Deerfield River in "No Town." After 1750, about ten families settled the area with Taylor. He farmed and set up a sawmill on Clesson Brook (ca.1769), but most of the families concentrated on agriculture and raising livestock. Among the earliest settlers were two branches of the Wilder family from central Massachusetts. Joseph Wilder, from Lancaster, appears to have been the first to arrive. He was a land speculator who bought and sold land and helped develop the settlement, but he had moved on before the end of the 18th century. It was Gardner Wilder whose descendants would remain in Buckland for generations. Born in 1741, Gardner Wilder came from Leominster to "No Town," buying land in 1771. The Wilder family followed a tradition of naming the first son in each generation Gardner and in at least one generation, two of the sons were named Gardner. Sorting out the various Gardner Wilders has been a challenge for later genealogists, who have traced the Gardner Wilders back to Martha Gardner Wilder. In 1638, she emigrated from England to Hingham with her two sons, one of whom was named Gardner. For purposes of this nomination, however, we will consider the first Gardner Wilder to be the one who bought land in present-day Buckland in 1771.

Thirty-year-old Gardner Wilder arrived with several of his Leominster friends and neighbors, including Lt. Josiah Johnson and the Carter brothers—Elias, Elisha, Samuel, and Asa. In 1775, the Carters were joined by their sister Thankful Carter, who married Gardner Wilder that year. In 1771, Wilder bought 200 acres to start his farm. His land had been part of an equivalent grant to one Zachariah Field, who had been the victim of several land registration errors. Field began selling his acreage to recoup his losses, and after an intermediate sale, Gardner Wilder bought 200 of Field's 400 acres in "No Town." Wilder and Josiah Johnson joined forces and built a house (not the present Wilder Homestead) for themselves on the Clesson Brook floodplain in the 200 acres, and began farming. With the other Colonial settlers, they would have concentrated on raising livestock and crops to feed their livestock and themselves.

The Wilders and their neighbors had to travel to Charlemont for church, school, and town meetings, which meant traveling up to six miles and crossing the Deerfield River no matter what the weather. Further away from the center of government in Charlemont, they had less voice and were given short shrift in the allocation of roads, schools, and other town privileges. Their distance disadvantage, they felt, also made their settlement less attractive to additional settlers.

It is believed that Gardner Wilder built the present Wilder House when he and Thankful Carter were married in 1775. The quality of the architecture (see section 7) indicates that Wilder spared neither materials nor labor. One of the outstanding features of the house is the large stone chimney foundation, which ranks as one of the finest in the region. It is referred to in the following poem by Washington Adams Nichols, written in 1879 for Buckland's Centennial.

How great the work of pioneers
But little do they know
Who reap the fruits in after years
Without their work to do.

The stately mansion broad and high,
Impression makes profound;
But never tells the passer by
The work of underground.
What massive stones at the foundation!
What trial to place them there!
All which is needful preparation to rear the structure fair.

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So when a hundred years have finished
The work long since begun,
Rude obstacles are so diminished,
The farming is but fun.

Federal Period (1775-1830)

The "No Town" settlers wrapped up all of their complaints in a petition for incorporation, and one of them, Jonathan Ward, made the long trip to Boston to deliver it to the Massachusetts General Court in December 1778. Gardner Wilder was one of the petition signatories. In April 1779, the petition was granted, boundaries accepted, and the new town took its name from Lord Buckland in England.

Active in town affairs from the beginning, Gardner Wilder was the town's first treasurer. The local historian Fanny Kendrick captured Wilder's sense of civic responsibility in her History of Buckland. She reported that in the town's first year, a severe snowstorm took place when the town meeting was scheduled. Gardner Wilder and two other men in town strapped on their snowshoes and made their way to the meeting, where they were the only ones to appear.

In 1876, a fire destroyed the town's records from 1779 to 1876. Subsequent historians have had to search collateral records and interview residents to piece together the town history. The record gap affects our understanding of the role Buckland's citizens played in the Revolutionary War, because the men signed up as residents of Charlemont or Ashfield before 1779, when Buckland was incorporated. What we do know is that Gardner Wilder served for 38 days as a private in Captain Samuel Taylor's Company and Colonel Porter's Regiment. He enlisted on July 10, 1777, and that very day began a march from Charlemont to reinforce the Northern army after the evacuation of Fort Ticonderoga. There are no other service notes.

In the meantime, Thankful Wilder followed family tradition and named their first son, born in 1776, Gardner. He was followed by Nathaniel in 1777, Prudence in 1780, and Polly in 1785. The 1790 census lists 718 people in Buckland, and nine were living in the Wilder House.

In 1779, the town had laid out nine school districts. District No. 2, the North District, served the Wilder children, who were of school age starting about 1782-1785. Their schoolhouse was, like all the first schools built, a rudimentary one of frame construction. It served all the Wilder children, since a new school was not built until 1806. The need for a new school was in part a reflection of the increasing population of the town, to 1,097 in 1810 but then holding steady to the end of the period and reaching 1,084 in 1830.

None of the nearby towns were particularly well off after the war. Newly formed Buckland and Heath, for instance, had been able to give little support to families whose men were away, as their treasuries were hardly established. Between 1779 and 1785, Buckland families continued to go to Heath for their church services. In 1785, a Congregational Church Society was formed in Buckland, and ministers from Charlemont and Heath alternated coming to the town for services that were held in people's homes. Given the economy, it is not surprising that townspeople were slow to donate money for a church. Finally, a meetinghouse was constructed in Buckland Center in 1793, and Gardner Wilder was part of the effort. Using a team of oxen, he moved large stones from his pasture up a substantial hill to the new meetinghouse. The stones were used to build a high platform and steps in front of the meetinghouse, for riders to dismount and for carriages to drop off passengers.

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During most of this period, Buckland's farmers, who included the Wilders, raised rye, oats, and corn, then added wheat and barley towards its end. They kept cows and a few horses, a team of oxen, and small herds of sheep for their wool and for keeping fields clear of brush. Buckland farmers are also noted as having grown and dried herbs for medicinal use, and maintaining orchards for cider and sauce. They grew flax and produced linen. There have, indeed, been a number of spinning wheels donated by Buckland families to the Wilder Homestead and kept in its attic today. The historian Fannie Kendrick noted that some of the wealthier families in town kept geese for their feathers.

Thankful Carter Wilder died between 1790 and 1802; her exact death date is lost. The census of 1800 lists one woman over 45 in the household, suggesting she was alive then. Gardner remarried in 1802 (another source reports 1803), so a new wife entered the house that year. She was a widow, Molly White Stearns, and was about 50 years old; Gardner was 61. Of the children, Prudence was the first to leave home when she married in 1802, and went on to have twelve children, nine of whom survived. Polly left in 1808, also when she married. Polly and Prudence continued to live with their families in Buckland, but Nathaniel left Buckland altogether in 1828 and joined the westward migration going to New York, where he married and had nine children.

We do not have a death date for Gardner Wilder I, but when he died the house passed to Gardner II, who had married the same year that his father remarried (1802). Gardner II married a woman who shared his mother's name, Thankful. Thankful Colburn was from Buckland, and was two years older than her husband. They had six children and named their third child, the first boy, Gardner (Gardner III). Their other children were Thankful, Verona, Ebenezer, Polly, and Charles. The Wilder house continued to be fully occupied.

Gardner II was a farmer, but was also engaged in Buckland's civic life. In 1804, when he was 28, he became a captain in the Buckland infantry company of the 9th Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 4th Division. He was always known as Capt. Wilder, and in that capacity he was paid by the town for making cartridges in 1815. That same year, he served as a town selectman.

Architecture

It was during the lifetime of the first Gardner Wilder that the English barn was constructed. Its construction tools, namely a shell augur, date it before 1798. It may, in fact, have been built before the ca. 1775 house, but the earliest confirmed date would derive from the augur use. According to timber-frame historian Jack Sobon, its scribe-rule construction technique was in use until about 1812 in the region, when square-rule framing took over. The barn was built for cattle, horses and/or oxen and hay storage, and would have been constructed of wood cut nearby. The English-style barn was the sole and standard barn form until about 1850. Its side-gable orientation with doors on the long north and south sides captured wind for threshing time, to blow away chaff in the center bay, which was tightly floored to save the falling grains. Following tradition, the Wilders kept their cows on the east side, horses and oxen on the west. The two outer bays were not floored, but throughout the winter, manure was collected, straw laid down, and then the mix shoveled out a window to be spread on the fields in spring. It was traditional during the early decades of the 18th century to place the barn in the fields further from the house, but by 1775, farmers were either moving or building their barns closer to the house for convenience, and this is the pattern that Gardner Wilder chose.

History of the Shoe Shop

After the Revolutionary War, Dan Townsley (1763-1852) moved from upstate New York to settle in Buckland and began his trade as shoemaker, along with farming. He built his shoe shop between 1812 and 1820 in a form commonly known as a

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“ten footer.” A utilitarian building, its interior was nevertheless finished with plaster and wood paneling. It appears to have been built without a chimney, and was thus unheated. The unusually large windows indicate that Townsley wished to draw as much light into the building as possible to extend his working day. At the time of its construction the shop had a basement, which is no longer present.

One of Townsley’s account records of 1819 shows that he mended and made boots and shoes, averaging about two to three pairs a month. A new pair of boots brought him about \$1.35, while mending usually earned him 25 to 33 cents. A new pair of shoes was anywhere from 42 cents to \$1.67. It appears, however, that farming was Townsley’s principal occupation. He was noted in reminiscences of 1838 to have been shipping his agricultural produce to market in Boston with other Buckland farmers, in a wagon pulled by a six-horse team.

Dan and his wife Rachel had eleven children, one of whom, Nuel Townsley (1796-1871), became a tanner in Buckland. He was known for tanning hides, but especially for tanning calf skins that were made into girls’ and women’s dress shoes. The calf skins were called in jest “deacon’s skins.” It is not specifically stated in Kendrick’s accounts of Nuel and his family whether he was also a shoe and boot maker in addition to being a tanner, but his son Dan Colton Townsley (1824-1902) was a boot and shoemaker, following his grandfather’s trade in the very same shoe shop. He, in fact, listed himself primarily as a boot and shoemaker, rather than a farmer, on federal censuses.

Early Industrial Period (1830-1870)

Gardner Wilder II died in 1838. Following tradition, the eldest son Gardner Wilder III inherited the homestead, but his siblings Thankful, Verona, Ebenezer, Polly, and Charles, and their mother remained in the house. Thankful Colburn Gardner lived until 1852 in the homestead. She was not listed as the head of the household, as some widows at the time were. By 1838, when Gardner II died, the Wilder Homestead had also become the home of Gardner III’s wife, Fidelia Griswold, whom he married in 1836. They were only married for eleven years before Fidelia died, but during those years they had five children: Gardner IV, Lorenzo, Jane, Joseph, and Mary. Gardner IV became a doctor and moved to Ohio, Lorenzo moved to Lulling, Texas, and the other children remained in Buckland.

Like his ancestors, Gardner III was primarily a farmer, but was also active in town government. In 1845, he was a representative to the State legislature. In an unexplained turn of events in 1846, Gardner III and Fidelia sold the house with 68.5 acres to Charles Wilder, Gardner’s younger, 30-year-old brother. At the time, the house was occupied by thirteen people, and the property extended on both sides of Ashfield Road (now Route 112).

Soon after the sale, Fidelia died in 1847, causing many things to change. The first change was that Gardner III remarried in 1848. His second wife was a widow, Sarah Brackett. They may have joined the household for a few years, but by 1850 Gardner and Sarah lived in a house of their own on the other side of Ashfield Road, on another section of Wilder property. The south-facing, large Greek Revival-style house is extant as Walnut Hill Farm.

Several of Gardner and Fidelia’s children moved with them to the new house, and two of Gardner III and Sarah’s children were born in it: Lydia in 1851 and Charles A. Wilder in 1859. Meanwhile, at the homestead, Charles Wilder had his mother Thankful, who lived until 1852, along with his sisters Thankful and Verona and his brother Ebenezer, none of whom were married. Polly married and moved to Ohio, joining the westward migration that her uncle Nathaniel and nephews Gardner and Lorenzo took part in.

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In 1855, when he was 39, Charles married 26-year-old Harriet Hartwell, and they added five children to the Wilder Homestead: Thankful, Julia, Harriet, Mary Verona and Gardner Edmund Wilder, who went by the name Edmund rather than Gardner. Charles and Harriet continued to share the homestead with Charles' sisters Thankful and Verona. Something happened to the homestead about 1860, possibly spring floods, because in that year when the census takers came around, Charles and Harriet, their first two children (Thankful and Julia), and sisters Verona and Thankful were all living with Eber Stratton, 31, whose farm was just north of Gardner III's new Greek Revival house on Ashfield Road. As boarders of Stratton, the Wilders' real estate was not evaluated in the census.

Listed next in sequence by the census taker in 1860, to the south on the road were Dan Colton Townsley, his wife Eliza Townsley, and their three children Ellen, 11, Edgar, 9, and George, 7. Dan's primary occupation was listed as shoemaker and the value of their real estate was \$900, which included the shoe shop and was about average for Buckland in 1860.

During these years, the Townsley and Wilder children were in the District 2 School. Due to an increase in the school-age population, the schoolhouse was taken down and replaced with a new brick schoolhouse in 1840. Early in the period, Mary Lyon, a Buckland resident who went on to found Mt. Holyoke College, raised the educational standards in town for all children—but especially for girls—by introducing better textbooks and improved teaching methods aimed at all the children, not just the boys.

In 1850 the population had fallen to 1,056 people in Buckland, but by 1860 there were 1,702, an increase that came from the growth of industry in both Buckland and Shelburne Falls, and from the arrival of the railroad. By 1870, Buckland's population was 1,946.

Buckland sent about 229 men to the Civil War in a variety of companies. Although the town accepted substitutes to meet its quota if there were not enough volunteers from the town, Joseph Wilder, son of Gardner III and Fidelia, enlisted in October 1862. Joseph, who was 21 years old and had spent most of his childhood at the homestead, served for eight months before being killed in New Orleans in June 1863.

Sisters Verona and Thankful Wilder died two months apart in 1865, at ages 60 and 62. Their deaths left Charles and Harriet in the house with their first three children—Thankful who was 10, Julia who was 5, and Hattie who was under a year—and an eighteen-year-old hired man named Franklin, who helped out on the farm. Within two years, the fourth and fifth children, Mary and Gardner Edmund, were born. Having live-in help or "hired men" when children were too young to work was not uncommon, especially as competition from farmers in the Midwest developed. Through organizations such as the Grange, farmers learned better methods of raising crops, keeping their livestock healthy, and getting the best prices for their produce. The Grange was short-lived in Buckland, but the Buckland Farmer's Club, an equivalent organization, was far more successful. It was chartered in 1878, and Charles Wilder was one of the signatories. The Farmer's Club brought in speakers who gave lectures on agriculture, but also on social and cultural topics, becoming an important organization in the town's history.

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Architecture

During the early industrial period prior to 1850, the Wilders extended their English-style barn by two bays to house additional livestock. Extending an existing English barn was a common means of increasing space for an enlarged herd. Progressive farming brought about improvements to barns and the health and care of livestock. The impetus for improvement extended to the health and efficiency of households, as well. This movement is reflected at the Wilder Homestead in an ell extension, which was built after 1860 to contain a woodshed and a privy. Connecting outbuildings to the house was a convenience adopted by New England farmers. It allowed activities to take place within the bounds of the house, which was especially appealing during the winter months. Some farmers connected their houses to their barns, while others, like the Wilders, elected to keep the barn separate as a precaution against spreading fire.

Late Industrial Period (1870-1915)

During the Late Industrial Period, Buckland's agriculture was surpassed by industry as an economic driver. At the same time, the overall population slowly decreased from 1,946 to 1,569. The farmers who remained continued their emphasis on dairy production, and counted among their number Charles and Harriet Wilder. In 1880, Charles was 63, Harriet 50, and their three youngest children—ages 16, 14, and 13—were still in school. Buckland's dairy farmers were productive and joined with others from Ashfield, Charlemont, and Colrain to form a cooperative creamery for the processing and marketing of their milk. The creamery operated from 1885 to 1904.

It is clear from the census that the Wilder children were staying in school. At this point, they were attending the high school in Shelburne Falls. Hattie would continue through Normal School and become a teacher, the first woman in the family to work outside the household. Charles died in 1892, and Harriet continued to live in the house with several of their children. Julia married and left home in 1879; Mary married William Taylor and left the household in 1886. Hattie and Thankful remained at home with Edmund. Following tradition, Edmund inherited the house, but also following tradition his unmarried siblings and mother remained in the house. Harriet Hartwell Wilder died in 1898 at age 68, and the farm was officially taken over by Edmund. Like his father before him, Edmund ran the farm with his two sisters, Thankful and Harriet. Harriet would eventually marry and leave, but Thankful remained in the house for a few years. By 1910 she had moved away, and she died in 1929. Meanwhile, Mary Verona Wilder Taylor and William Taylor had a son, Charles W. Taylor, in 1902 in Shelburne Falls.

Edmund married relatively late in life—in 1901—when he was 34. He married Harriet Bertha Sanderson, who came to live at the Wilder Homestead. Harriet Bertha Sanderson Wilder often went by the name Bertha. Edmund and Bertha had an infant daughter who did not survive, and after Thankful moved, the two of them lived alone and farmed. In 1910 Edmund listed his type of farming as "general." In 1923, he bought 60 acres of land from his neighbor Henry B. Wells. It was on the west side of Ashfield Road, opposite the present homestead, but adjacent to the land he already owned on that side of the road. Thus he increased the size of his farm from 68½ acres to over 128 acres.

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The house could have been electrified as early as 1896, when the Shelburne Falls Electric Light and Power Company was organized and began producing electricity with a gas engine. Electrification was more universal after 1910, when two companies joined as the New England Power Company and began producing electricity with four hydroelectric plants, two of which were in Buckland.

According to the MHC inventory form completed by Charles Taylor in 1973, the first-floor plan at the rear of the house was altered in 1900. Originally the kitchen was in the center of the rear pile with the fireplace as its focus. Flanking the kitchen were a small chamber and pantry on the south, and the back stairs and another small chamber on the north (see original plan). Although the alterations were not described on the inventory form, it is likely that the pantry became a bathroom and closet, while an open pantry and sink were installed on the east wall of the kitchen. The installation of plumbing and use of beadboard on the pantry walls and cupboards is consistent with the 1900 date. It is probable that the hitching post was put up during this part of the late 19th century.

Shoe Shop History during the Late Industrial Period

In 1890, Dan Coulton Townsley sold his property with the shoe shop on it to Mrs. Olive Shedd. Townsley died on Christmas Day in 1902.

Early Modern Period (1915-1940)

The house did not remain quite as under-populated as it had been in the early 1900s. By 1920, the Wilders had taken in Harriet Bertha's mother, 80-year-old Harriet Sanderson, to live out her life with them. The Wilders continued farming into the 1930s, with Edmund listing the type of farming on the census of that year as dairy. He and Bertha were both 62 and were active in Buckland civic life. They took part in raising money during World War I, and Harriet and a Mrs. Elmer led a fund drive to provide money for a liberty bond loan. Theirs was the fourth, and most successful, bond drive in Buckland, bringing in \$25,000. Edmund Wilder served at least one term as selectman of Buckland prior to 1935.

As a town, Buckland's population continued to diminish slightly during the Early Modern Period. In 1925 there were 1,555 people, and in 1935 there were 1,540. The statistic with greater significance to the Wilders was that, by 1930, slightly fewer than one-third of the town's families were farming.

Modern Period (1940-1960)

Dairy farming was a subsistence form of agriculture in Buckland through the Early Modern and Modern periods. Many farmers responded to their loss of income by selling their farms for nonfarming use, by selling or leasing their fields to others, or by growing only corn and buying hay for their livestock. The Wilders responded by buying better farming equipment to support their dairy herd, as evidenced by the equipment shed.

The Wilders, without children, made their niece Eleanor W. Clark a partial owner of the homestead's two parcels of 68½ and 60 acres, through a quitclaim deed that they bought back for a dollar in 1942 from its holder, Ellen Parnell. When Edmund died the following year, Bertha and Eleanor were the owners of the homestead, and Eleanor came to live with her aunt Bertha.

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Eleanor Clark was the daughter of Edmund's sister Harriet, and she came to Buckland from Worthington where she had taught school in that town and others in the region. Once she arrived in Buckland, Eleanor quickly established herself in the town's social and institutional life. She was postmistress of the Buckland Post Office at the Center from 1944 to 1958. She joined the Buckland Ladies Club, the Shelburne Falls Women's Club, the Buckland and Deerfield Valley Pamona Granges, and the Daughters of the American Revolution. In addition to working for the post office, she was a correspondent for the Greenfield newspaper. From 1949 to 1955, Eleanor produced a small newspaper, called "Our Buckland," through the Grange. Most notably, she established weaving classes in Buckland, using both the second floor at the post office and the barn at the Wilder Homestead. She used antique equipment she found in the barn. (Photograph #25) The classes were so successful that a group of classmates formed the "Buckland Weavers," and they published a newsletter called "The Shuttle." The University of Massachusetts Extension Service invited Eleanor to give a weavers' seminar in 1955. It became an annual event, with people coming from all over New England, until she died suddenly in 1958. Within one month of Eleanor's death, Bertha passed away.

Before her death, Bertha Sanderson Wilder must have changed her will to make Charles W. Taylor her heir. Charles, the son of Edmund's sister Mary, was her nephew. He, like Eleanor Clark, was a schoolteacher, and while living in Concord had taught in Waltham, Massachusetts, for many years. He was married to another Eleanor, who died in 1960, but they had no children. Living alone in the homestead for many years, Charles took up life in Buckland with much the same zeal that Eleanor Clark had. He became a member of the Mary Lyon (Congregational) Church in Buckland Center, the Shelburne Falls-Buckland Council on Aging, and the Buckland Historical Society, where he was particularly active. He held the office of secretary, headed up the genealogy committee for a number of years, and for at least one historical society event, he gave tours of the homestead. He kept a pair of oxen that he entered in oxen pulls at Buckland's annual fairs, but he may not have done much active farming. One day in the 1960s, Loren Wilder, a relative from Texas who had come to research his ancestry, discovered the Wilder Homestead and met Charles Taylor. Loren Wilder was the grandson of the fourth Gardner Wilder, who had become a doctor and moved to Ohio in the 1830s. Pleased to have a Wilder to whom he could pass the homestead, Charles Taylor wrote a will in 1977 naming Loren heir to the homestead. Charles died that same year, and is buried in Center Cemetery.

Loren Wilder added his wife to the deed in 1978, but they lived in Texas. The distance made owning and managing the Gardner Homestead difficult, so in 1981 they donated the house to its current owners, the Buckland Historical Society, with 58.5 acres of land.

Architecture

During the occupancy of Edmund and Bertha in the 1950s and 1960s, the small chamber south of the kitchen may have become a laundry room. It was not until the 1970s, however, that a number of alterations were made on the first floor. In the late 1970s the paneling over the kitchen fireplace had deteriorated, so the panels were removed and replaced by reproductions. New flooring was installed in the kitchen, and a new sink replaced an earlier cast-iron sink on the east wall. Around the same time, the stairs on the rear of the first floor, which had become unusable, were removed. The stair opening was floored over, so that the small northeast corner bedroom and stairwell became a dining room.

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Shoe Shop

The shoe shop was moved in 1952 to save it from demolition when Route 112 was widened. Its original location was approximately half a mile southwest of the Wilder Homestead, on Route 112 and Upper Street. Its owners in 1952, Carrie and Nathaniel Cass, sold it for \$1 to Imogene and Charles Litchfield, who moved it to their property on nearby Cross Street. It was used for storage for many years until, in 1991, it was moved to the Wilder Homestead, where it could be preserved by the Buckland Historical Society.

Recent Preservation

The Buckland Historical Society has maintained the house, the barn, and the shoe shop with great care. The interior of the house is appropriately furnished with late 18th- and 19th-century furniture and textiles donated by Buckland families. The shoe shop, owned and operated over three generations of the Tinsley family, whose skills in tanning and shoemaking contributed to Buckland's early industrial economy, is a reminder of cottage industries that were once common in the area. In late 2007, the historical society had a barn condition report prepared by architect and timber-framer Jack Sobon. As a result of that report, they set to work repairing the most urgent problem with the barn, a rotted rafter. There is more work to be done on the buildings, and the society may, in the future, apply to the Massachusetts Historical Commission for Preservation Projects Fund support.

Archaeological Significance

Since patterns of ancient Native American settlement and subsistence in Buckland are poorly understood, any surviving sites could be significant. Ancient sites in this area can be important by contributing information that increases our understanding of Native American adaptations to temperate forest riverine environments in non-coastal areas. Potential sites in this area may contribute significant details related to the importance of settlement and subsistence in the vicinity of upland tributaries, and their relationship to site distributions and subsistence activities along the main course of the Connecticut River and its primary tributaries, including the Deerfield River. Native sites in this area may represent a specialized adaptation to upland environments, or they may be part of an overall riverine adaptation based in the Connecticut River Valley. Native sites in this area may also contain important information that identifies the associations within tool assemblages and cultural sequences in the local area and region. Information may be present from sites in the area to help analyze patterns of Native American exchange in the region. One interpretation for the region identifies the Connecticut River as an important north-south corridor for transportation and exchange. Secondary drainages of the Connecticut River, such as the Deerfield River and its tributaries including Clesson Brook, are hypothesized to have served as east-west corridors, enabling wider movement of people and goods. Ancient Native American sites in the district locale may contain information that helps test these models and/or offer alternative hypotheses.

Historic archaeological resources described above may contribute important information related to 18th- through 20th-century settlement and life in a rural western Massachusetts town, and more than five generations of occupation on the farmstead by the Wilder family, one of the early settlers of that town.

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Archaeological testing may contribute physical evidence of the construction date for the Wilder House and barn. Temporally diagnostic artifacts may be present in features and structural remains that can date when these buildings were constructed and whether the barn, thought to be built before 1798, predates the house, as hypothesized by the use of a shell augur in the barn's construction. Additional historical research, combined with archaeological survey and testing, may also locate the site of an earlier barn. The identification of the above buildings, features, and structural remains, combined with similar evidence from outbuildings and occupational-related features, may contribute important information related to the layout of structures or building patterns on early farmsteads in rural western Massachusetts in the 18th century. Important archaeological evidence of English construction techniques and stylistic features may also exist for the house and barn that were characteristic of the late Georgian period.

Much of the information described above, combined with structural evidence of outbuildings and detailed analysis of the contents of occupational-related features, may contribute important social, cultural, and economic information for five generations of the Wilder family, and the Buckland community, from the 18th through 20th centuries. This information can be extremely important since Buckland's entire town records from 1779 to 1876 burned in a fire that year. Additional historical research into the Wilder family may also produce written records that document aspects of the Wilder family occupancy during the periods identified above. Wilder family records, combined with archaeological data, have the potential to contribute detailed insights into the Wilder family, life on the farmstead, and the Buckland community that could not be attained through either source alone.

Shoemaking ceased in the shoe shop (1812-1820) after it was moved from its original site in the 1950s, then to its present site in 1991. Given that, a low potential exists for locating significant archaeological resources associated with this shop. Additional documentary research combined with archaeological testing may, however, contribute evidence that over five generations, some members of the Wilder family were engaged in shoemaking activities on the farmstead. Shoemaking was important to Buckland's early industrial economy and farmstead economy. Structural evidence of outbuildings no longer extant, and detailed analysis of the contents of occupational-related features, may contribute important evidence that some members of the Wilder family were engaged in shoemaking activities.

(end)

Name of Property: The Wilder Homestead

County and State: Franklin, MA

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 58.5 acres

UTM References See continuation sheet.

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1. 18	682100	4718560	3. 18	682360	4718680
Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
2. 18	682200	4718700	4. 18	682400	4718560
Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Bonnie Parsons, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, MHC

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date November 2010

street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone (617) 727-8470

city or town Boston state Massachusetts zip code 02125

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name Buckland Historical Society

street & number 32 Upper Street telephone 413 625-9811

city or town Buckland state MA zip code 01338

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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The Wilder Homestead
Buckland (Franklin), MA

Section number 9

Page 1

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(end)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

The Wilder Homestead
Buckland (Franklin), MA

Section number 10

Page 1

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of this nomination follow the property's lot lines as recorded on the attached Buckland assessor's map (map 5, lot 4).

Verbal Boundary Justification

The boundary defines the Wilder Homestead property as owned by the Buckland Historical Society.

Wilder Homestead Photograph List

Photographer: Chris Skelly

Date: August 2010

1. Wilder House: northwest façade, facing east
2. Wilder House: facing southeast
3. Wilder House: front façade and elm tree, facing south
4. Barn: facing southeast
5. Shoe Shop: southwest corner, facing northeast
6. Wilder House and Rear Ell: facing west
7. Wilder House and Rear Ell: facing northwest

Interiors, photographer: Bonnie Parsons, PVPC

* January 2008

** April 2008

8. House stairs, facing south **
9. Hall fireplace wall, facing southwest **
10. Parlor and fireplace, facing northwest **
11. Parlor panel, facing west **
12. View into dining room, facing north **
13. Kitchen fireplace, facing west **
14. Pantry, facing south **
15. Dining room **
16. South bedroom, facing southeast **
17. Shoe shop closet, facing northeast *
18. Shoe shop paneled wall, facing southwest *
19. Shoe shop window, facing west *

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

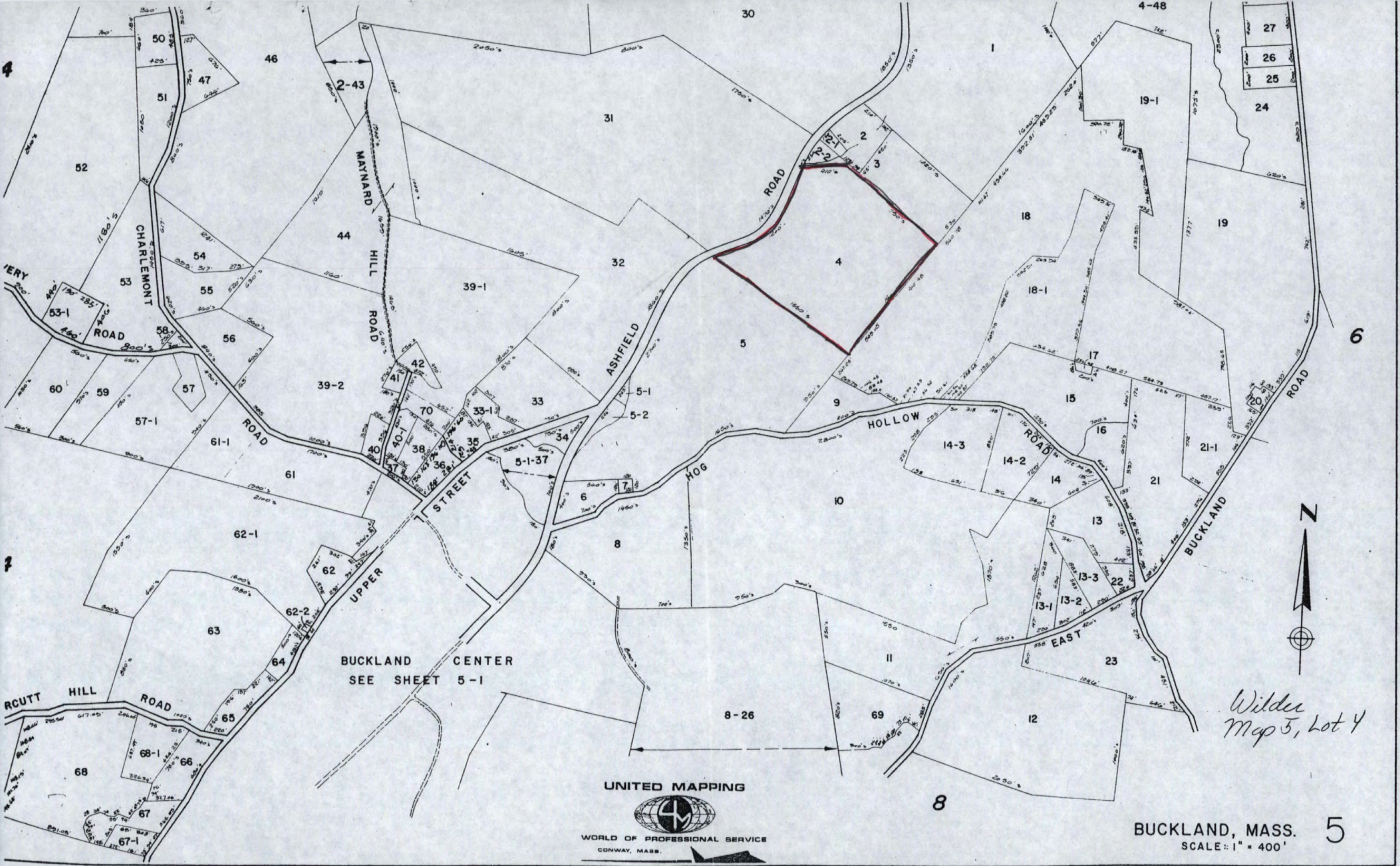
The Wilder Homestead
Buckland (Franklin), MA

Section number

Page

Datasheet

name	Style	date	resource	C/NC
Wilder House	Georgian/Federal	ca. 1775	Building	C
Wilder Barn	English style	pre-1798/ca.1840	Building	C
Shoe Shop	No style/ten-footer	Early 19thC/1991	Building	NC (moved)
Hitching Post	NA/granite post	Late-19 th C	Object	C
Fields and pastures	NA	NA	Site	C



*Wilder
Map 5, Lot 4*



BUCKLAND, MASS.
SCALE: 1" = 400'

WILDER HOMESTEAD
BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN), MA

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Wilder, Homestead, The

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Franklin

DATE RECEIVED: 12/09/10 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/06/11
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 1/21/11 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/24/11
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 10001178

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 1.24.11 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places**

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

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

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



WILDER HOMESTEAD

PHOTO 1

BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN), MA

CHRIS SKELLY PHOTO 2010

WILDER HOUSE, NW FACADE, FACING E

MA - BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN) - WILDER 01.tif



WILDER HOMESTEAD

PHOTO 2

BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN), MA

CHRIS SKELLY PHOTO

2010

WILDER HOUSE, FRONT FACADE, FACING SE

MA - BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN COUNTY) - WILDER 02. tif



WILDER HOMESTEAD
BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN) MA

PHOTO 3

CHRIS SKELLY PHOTO

2010

WILDER HOUSE, FRONT FACADE, FACING S

MA - BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN COUNTY) - WILDER03.tif



WILDER HOMESTEAD

PHOTO 4

BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN) MA

CHRIS SKELLY PHOTO

2010

BARN, FACING SE

MA - BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN COUNTY) - WILDEROY. tif



WILDER HOMESTEAD

PHOTO 5

BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN) MA

CHRIS SKELLY PHOTO

2010

SHOE SHOP, FACING NE

MA - BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN COUNTY) - WILDER OS. tif



WILDER HOMESTEAD

PHOTO 6

BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN) MA

CHRIS SKELLY PHOTO

2010

WILDER HOUSE & ELL, REAR FACADE, FACING W

MA - BUCKLAND (~~WILDE~~ FRANKLIN COUNTY) - WILDER 06. tif



WILDER HOMESTEAD
BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN) MA
CHRIS SKELLY PHOTO

PHOTO 7

2010

WILDER HOUSE & ELL, REAR FACADE, VIEW NW
MA - BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN COUNTY) - WILDER 07. tif



Wilder Homestead

Franklin, MA

Bonnie Parsons

April, 2008

PVPc

view to South

Photograph no. ~~1~~ 8

MA - BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN COUNTY) -
WILDER P8.tif

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Ritz, R1280E, 05/09/08



Wilder Homestead

Franklin, MA

Bonnie Parsons

April, 2008

PVPC

View to south west

Photograph No. 9

2309280, 2309280-R1-E015
R1tz, R1280E, 05/09/08

MA - BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN COUNTY) - WILDER⁰⁹. tif



Wilder Homestead

Franklin, MA

Bonnie Parsons

April, 2008

PVPC view to north west

Photograph no. 110

2309280, 2309280-R1-E08
Ritz, R1280E, 05/09/08

MA-BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN COUNTY) - WILDER 10.tif



Wilder Homestead

Franklin, MA

Bonnie Parsons

April, 2008

PVPC

View to west

Photograph No. 11

2309280, 2309280-R1-E03
R1tz, R1280E, 05/09/08

MA-BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN COUNTY) - WILDER^{!!}.tif



Wilder Homestead

Franklin, MA

Bonnie Parsons

April, 2008

PVPC

View to North

Photograph no. 102

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R1tz, R1280E, 05/09/08

MA-BUCKLAND(FRANKLINCOUNTY)-WILDER10².tif



Wilder Homestead
Franklin, MA
Bonnie Parsons
April, 2008
PVP
Views west
Photograph no. 17

2309280, 2309280-R1-E009
R1tz, R1280E, 05/09/08

MA - BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN COUNTY) - WILDER 17. tif



Wilder Homestead

Franklin, MA

Bonnie Parsons

April, 2009

PVPC

View to south

Photograph no-104

2309280, 2309280-R1-E012
Ritz, R1280E, 05/09/08

MA_BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN COUNTY) - WILDER 104.tif



Wilder Homestead

Franklin, MA

Bonnie Parsons

April, 2008

PVPC

Photograph no. 195

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Ritz, R1280E, 05/09/08

MA - BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN COUNTY) - WILDER 195.tif



Wilder Homestead

Franklin, MA

Bonnie Parsons

April, 2008

PVPC

View to south east

Photograph No. 16

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MA - ~~FRANKLIN~~ BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN COUNTY) - WILDER 216.tif



Wilder Homestead
Franklin, MA
Bonnie Parsons

January, 2008

PVPC

view to north east

Photograph No. ~~17~~ 17

2309280, 2309280-R1-E004
R1tz, R1280E, 05/09/08

MA-BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN COUNTY) - WILDER ¹⁷~~17~~.tif



Wilder Homestead

Franklin, MA

Bonnie Parsons

January, 2008

PVPC

View to southwest

Photograph No. 18

MA_BUCKLAND(FRANKLINCOUNTY)_WILDER 18

tif

2309280, 2309280-R1-E005
Ritz, R1280E, 05/09/08



Wilder Homestead
Franklin, MA

Bonnie Parsons

January, 2008

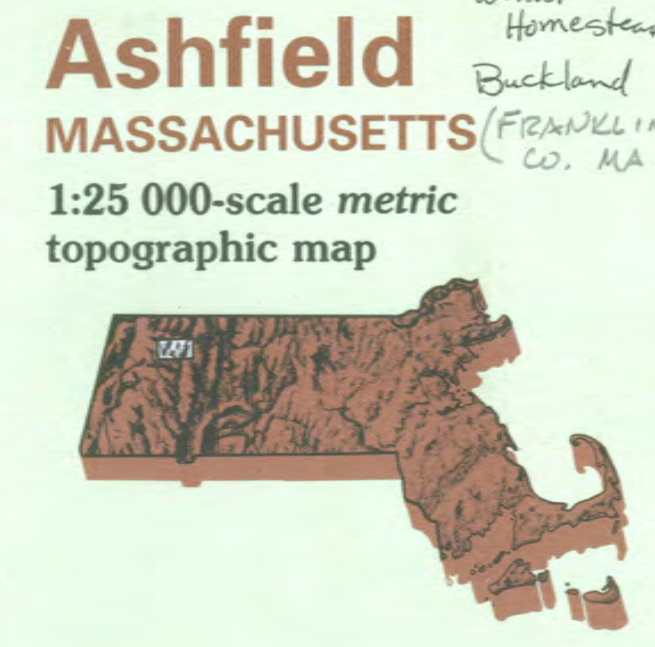
PVPc

View to west

Photograph No. ~~18~~ 19

2309280, 2309280-R1-E001
Ritz, R1280E, 05/09/08

MA_BUCKLAND (FRANKLIN COUNTY) - WILDER ¹⁹ ~~18~~.tif



- 7.5 X 15 MINUTE QUADRANGLE SHOWING
- Contours and elevations in meters
 - Highways, roads and other manmade structures
 - Water features
 - Woodland areas
 - Geographic names

U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Geological Survey
1998

Produced by the United States Geological Survey
Derived from imagery taken 1991 and other sources. Photostereoscopic using imagery taken 1998; no major culture or drainage change observed. Survey control current as of 1984.
Boundaries, other than corporate, revised 2000.
North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27). Projection and 1000-meter grid: Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 18 10 000-foot ticks: Massachusetts coordinate system, mainland zone North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software.
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map.

CONTOUR INTERVAL: 6 METERS
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
CONTOUR ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER
OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST METER

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

CONVERSION TABLE		DECLINATION DIAGRAM		ADJOINING MAPS		
Meters	Feet	1998	2000	1	2	3
1	3.2808	11° 58' 00"	11° 58' 00"	1	2	3
2	6.5617	11° 58' 00"	11° 58' 00"	4	5	6
3	9.8425	11° 58' 00"	11° 58' 00"	7	8	
4	13.1234	11° 58' 00"	11° 58' 00"			
5	16.4043	11° 58' 00"	11° 58' 00"			
6	19.6852	11° 58' 00"	11° 58' 00"			
7	22.9661	11° 58' 00"	11° 58' 00"			
8	26.2470	11° 58' 00"	11° 58' 00"			
9	29.5279	11° 58' 00"	11° 58' 00"			
10	32.8088	11° 58' 00"	11° 58' 00"			

To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808
To convert feet to meters multiply by 0.3048

UTM grid convergence (CM) at center of map is approximately 1.2 CM
Diagram is approximate

Map Number	Name
1	North Adams
2	Brewster
3	Pennamont
4	Greenfield
5	Cheshire
6	Franklin East
7	Cushman
8	Williamstown

ASHFIELD/PLAINFIELD
18 9020 6.00

Topographic Map Symbols

- Primary highway, hard surface
- Secondary highway, hard surface
- Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
- Unimproved road, trail
- Route marker: Interstate, U.S., State
- Railroad: standard gage, narrow gage
- Bridge: drawbridge
- Facilities: overpass, underpass
- Built-up area: only selected landmark buildings shown
- House: barn; church; school; large structure
- Boundary: National with monument; State; County, parish; Civil township, precinct, district; Incorporated city, village, town; National or State reservation; small park; Land grant with monument; found section corner; U.S. public lands survey; range, township, section; Range, township section line; location approximate; Fence or field line
- Power transmission line, located tower
- Dam; dam with lock
- Canterbury grave
- Campground; picnic area; U.S. location monument
- Well; water well; spring
- Mine shaft; prospect; adit or cave
- Control: horizontal station; vertical station; spot elevation
- Contours: index; intermediate; supplementary; depression
- Distorted surface: strip mine, lava, sand
- Bathymetric contours: index; intermediate
- Perennial lake and stream; intermittent lake and stream
- Rapid, large and small; falls, large and small
- Swamp; marsh
- Submerged marsh; land subject to controlled inundation
- Woodland: scattered trees
- Scrub; mangrove
- Orchard; vineyard

A pamphlet describing topographic maps is available on request.
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
P.O. BOX 22286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225

- 682100 4718560
- 682200 4718700
- 682360 4718680
- 682400 4718560
- 682260 4718380





The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

November 24, 2010

Mr. J. Paul Loether, Chief
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW 8th floor
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

The Wilder Homestead, Ashfield Road, Buckland (Franklin), MA

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. The owners of the property were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30 to 45 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betsy Friedberg".

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Enclosure

cc: Stefan Racz, Chair, Buckland Board of Selectmen
David Sand, Buckland Historical Commission
Bonnie Parsons, PVPC, consultant
John Gould, Buckland Planning Board
Buckland Historical Society