

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received MAY 16 1985

date entered 19

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Andrews-Luther Farm

and/or common Harley Luther Farm

2. Location

street & number Elmdale Road

N.A. not for publication

city, town Scituate

N.A. vicinity of

state Rhode Island

code 44

county Providence

code 007

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N.A. in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name Michael J. and Kathleen Flynn

street & number 3 Hawthorne Road

city, town Greenville

N.A. vicinity of

state Rhode Island 02828

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Town Hall

street & number Main Street

city, town North Scituate

state Rhode Island 02857

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Historic and Architectural Resources
title of Scituate, R.I.: A Preliminary Report
date May, 1980
has this property been determined eligible? yes no
 federal state county local

depository for survey records Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission
150 Benefit Street

city, town Providence

state Rhode Island 02903

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Andrews-Luther house is a well-preserved example of the vernacular farm house type that appeared throughout Rhode Island during the mid-eighteenth through early nineteenth centuries. Comprising about 45 acres, the farm is located on the south side of Elmdale Road in a rural section of the town of Scituate. The property includes a two-and-a-half-story, wood-frame, center-chimney, gable-roof eighteenth-century dwelling that is set off from the road by a picket fence. The adjoining farm complex consists of a late nineteenth/early twentieth-century corn crib, two late nineteenth/early twentieth-century wood-frame outhouses, and the stone foundations of several outbuildings. The property also contains the Luther family cemetery and numerous well-preserved stone walls, which bound former pastures and fields, now overgrown with brush (see land use map).

The Andrews-Luther house is of post and beam construction set upon a low, mortared fieldstone foundation. The exterior is covered by wooden clapboards, and asphalt shingles cover the roof. The original house, which was built c. 1768, is five bays wide, and two bays deep, with a full cellar. The centrally located front entrance is situated on the south side of the dwelling. Subsequent construction modifications include the addition of a small late eighteenth/early nineteenth-century one-story woodshed to the east end of the house, the addition of a one-and-a-half story kitchen ell (c. 1850) to the west end of the house, the enlargement of the front hallway, the addition of a porch running between the kitchen ell and the front door, and the rebuilding of the exterior portion of the center chimney in the early twentieth-century.

Exterior ornamentation is restricted to the cornice molding and the front doorway. The latter was enlarged and rebuilt in a vernacular treatment of the Greek Revival style. Flanking the twentieth-century front door are two slender sidelights with rectangular panes. The lintel over the doorway is topped with a low, plain pediment. Six-over-six sash replace almost all of the windows on the first floor--probably at the same time that the doorway was enlarged. Smaller, framed, nine-over-six sash, which date to the initial house construction, are found in two first-floor windows and throughout the second story. Window frames are simple, pegged plank construction with straight, narrow lintels capping the first-floor windows. Simply molded caps of the second-story windows project from the cornice molding.

The house is constructed following the traditional eighteenth-century, center-chimney, five-room plan (see floor plans). The timber-frame structure is sheathed in butt-end clapboards. Cornerposts in the interior are cased. The slightly enlarged front entry hall has triple-run stairs set in front of the brick chimney. Of heavy proportions, they have a plain, open string, turned posts with ball caps, acorn-shape drops, and square, flat balusters, all characteristic of eighteenth-century stairs. The balusters in the bottom run have been removed. Off the hallway

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

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are two large front rooms or parlors with plastered walls and ceilings. Both parlors contain the original bolection cornice molding, four-panel doors, and door frames. Doors are hung with wrought-iron H/L and strap hinges; however, the original latches have been replaced by nineteenth-century Blake-model cast-iron latches. The east parlor contains beaded base boards, whereas those in the west parlor are plain and are probably later replacements. Built into the north partition of the east parlor is a china closet with five shelves, all containing routed grooves to support plates. Molding around the outside frame is identical to that found on the other door frames, and indicates that the closet was constructed at the time that the house was built. The closet door is missing. Subsequent modifications include the replacement of the wide pine floorboards in these rooms as well as in the rest of the first floor with narrow oak floorboards. Windows in these rooms were replaced in the nineteenth century with six-over-six sash encased by plain, narrow plank frames. In the west parlor, the original fireplace mantel has been replaced by a plain, non-descript twentieth-century wooden mantel. The mantel in the east parlor has also been removed, and the fire box filled and/or covered. Both fireplaces have been sealed except for stove-pipe inserts.

A woodshed measuring eight by twelve feet was added to the east side of the house probably in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth-century. Entrance to the room is through a four-panel door in the east parlor or through two wood plank doors hung with strap hinges on the exterior. A large wooden cabinet measuring five by four feet, which was used for storing firewood, is situated in the northeast corner of the room. A stairway also provides access to the cellar. Attached to the west side of the house is a one-and-a-half-story kitchen ell dating to about the mid-nineteenth century. This room has been modernized into a contemporary kitchen, but it retains its narrow brick chimney.

The large rear center room may have been the original kitchen/keeping room. The plastered walls and ceiling are accented by a simple cornice molding. The plastered walls and ceiling are accented by a simple cornice molding. Base boards are beaded. As in the parlors, the fireplace in this room has been sealed to accommodate a stove. The mantel has been removed. While the large rear room in similar period Rhode Island homes was generally given over to kitchen/keeping room activities, in western Rhode Island the kitchen was also sometimes found in one of the front rooms. Because the firebox in this room and in the two front rooms are covered, the designation of this room as the original kitchen cannot be made with certainty. The two adjacent corner rooms are also plastered. A corner shelf and a wooden plank with eight turned pegs remain in the northwest corner room. The northeast corner room has been altered into a bathroom, and a linen closet has been built out from the north partition. However, it retains the original nine-over-six sash and narrow molded window frame.

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The second floor follows the plan of the first floor with some variation in the arrangement of rear rooms. Access to the large front chambers is through doorways in the narrow front hall. There are only two fireplaces on the second floor, one in each of the front rooms. As on the first floor, walls and ceilings are plastered and all corner posts are encased. All windows contain nine-over-six sash and narrow molded window frames. Wide pine floorboards, four-panel doors with H/L or strap hinges, and wrought-iron bean-shaped latches are found in every room. Both fireplace mantels are identical and appear to date to the original construction of the house. They are simply detailed and consist of several rows of stepped-molding rising from a freize section to support a stepped shelf.

To the rear (north side) are four smaller rooms. A six-foot-wide opening was made in the west partition of the northeast corner room sometime in the twentieth-century. A narrow pantry (which may be original to the initial construction of the house) contains four freestanding shelves seven feet in length, and a hanging rack of plank wood eleven feet long studded with seventeen uniformly spaced nails.

Access to the garret is through a stairway in the front hallway. The garret space is taken up by two rooms: one on each side of the brick chimney. Each is entered through plain plank doorways with batten doors containing post-1840 Blake-model cast-iron latches. These rooms, lacking fireplaces, contain wide pine floorboards, six-over-six or four-over-four sash, narrow molded window frames similar to those on the second floor, and plastered walls and ceilings. Some of the fallen plaster in both rooms has left exposed uniformly sawn wood laths attached to rafters with machine-cut nails--an indication that the garret rooms were plastered in the nineteenth century.

The Andrews-Luther house is situated approximately forty feet south of Elmdale Road. Along the road runs a plain turn-of-the-century picket fence (in good condition) supported by cut granite posts. To the south of the house stand three surviving outbuildings. These include a well-preserved late nineteenth or early twentieth-century wood-frame corn crib resting on eight cut-granite posts, and two late nineteenth/early twentieth-century privies or outhouses, both in poor condition.

The foundation of several outbuildings are also located adjacent to the house. To the west is a flat concrete surface measuring eleven by fourteen feet, which is all that remains of a turn-of-the-century carriage shed/garage. Adjoining this site to the south is a foundation measuring fourteen by twenty feet; the function of the building which stood here is unknown. The foundation is composed of several courses of unmortared

(See Continuation Sheet #3)

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fieldstones. To the south of it is a cellarhole with a substantial mortared fieldstone foundation. Luther family tradition maintains that it supported a wood-frame structure housing a small gasoline-powered saw-mill in the early nineteenth century, however it may have been constructed at an earlier period and served a different purpose--a nineteenth-century probate document indicates that carpentry and coopering activities occurred at the farm.

On the east side of the house, adjacent to a stone-lined well, is the mortared fieldstone foundation of an early nineteenth-century blacksmith shop, which was later used as a "summer house" for processing and preserving produce. The remains of the blacksmithing activities may exist as an archaeological component of the foundation. About 125 feet to the south of the house is the mortared fieldstone foundation of a large barn. According to Luther family tradition, there were two barns on this foundation: an earlier one, which burned in the nineteenth century, and a second, which was destroyed in the 1938 hurricane. A c. 1900 photograph probably depicts the second barn, which had a wood shingle exterior.

Several hundred yards to the southwest of the house is the Luther family cemetery. The cemetery contains about twenty inscribed headstones of slate and granite and enclosed by a cut granite stone wall. Here are buried many of the former owners and occupants of the farm including: John Whidden, Harley P. Luther, Abby Luther, and Harley Thayer Luther.

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At Whidden's death, his real and personal estate were bequeathed to his brother-in-law's son, Harley P. Luther (the Whiddens were childless). The will also carried the stipulation that Whidden's widow be allowed to occupy the four rooms (2 above and 2 below) in the east end of the house so long as she remained a widow. However, she soon remarried to one William Andrews and left the farm. Harley P. Luther (1805-1877), his wife, Abby (1804-1904), and their direct descendants held title to the farm until 1982, when it was purchased by the present owners.

Upon acquiring the farm, Harley Luther began purchasing additional adjoining farmland. At the time of his death in 1877, he had increased the size of the farm from 30 to 100 acres. Luther and his wife, Abby (Bowen), whom he married in 1828, raised eight children (6 sons, 2 daughters), seven of whom reached adulthood. In the 1840s and 1850s the Luther residence not only housed Harley's immediate family, but also his widowed father, Martin (died 1844), and his three bachelor brothers: Albert (1816-1898), William (1823-1851), and Isaac (?). It was probably between 1840 and 1850 that the kitchen ell was added to the main house and the garret space made into rooms to accommodate the enlarged household.

Throughout the nineteenth-century farming continued to be an important occupation in Scituate. During the course of the century, though, there was a steady decline in farm size. However the Luther Farm was one of the exceptions to this trend. In the 1830s and 1840s, the raising of sheep and swine as well as the cultivation of corn was the focus of agriculture in western Rhode Island and elsewhere in southeastern New England. In 1850, the prime crops in Scituate were Indian corn, Irish potatoes, rye, butter, cheese, orchard products, and vegetables, according to the 1850 Federal census. The census records that the Luther farm produced an annual yield of 250 bushels of potatoes, 240 bushels of corn, and 20 bushels of rye, as well as \$75.00 worth of orchard produce. After 1850, as western agriculture supplied ever greater quantities of inexpensive cereals, beef and pork to eastern markets, eastern farmers turned to market gardening and, particularly, the production of dairy products. This trend is evident fairly early at the Luther Farm. According to the 1850 census, Luther possessed 10 milkcows which produced an average annual yield of 500 lbs. of butter. Of the 295 Scituate farms reported, Luther had the seventh largest dairy herd.

Besides being a successful farmer, Luther held several minor town offices. In 1843, and again in 1846, he was elected town representative. Luther was also sympathetic to the Dorrite cause. Thomas W. Dorr, the leader of a movement for more liberal suffrage in Rhode Island an insurrection against the government of the state. In mid-June 1842, Dorr and his supporters, after failing in their attempt to capture the state

(See Continuation Sheet #4)

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arsenal at Providence, assembled at Chepachet village, Gloucester, to battle the government forces. The confrontation never took place because of the desertion of Dorr's supporters, and Dorr was subsequently imprisoned. An incident related by Abby Luther, then aged 99 in 1903 recalled that in June 1842, four Dorrite leaders, entrapped by the approaching state militia enroute to Chepachet, took refuge in the Luther barn. The force of 300 militiamen and artillery under the command of General John L. Hughes, assembled before the barn and demanded their surrender. The four men ran for the woods behind the barn, and not heeding the command to halt, they were fired upon but escaped unharmed. The troops did not give chase and continued on to Chepachet. For many years thereafter, the incident was recounted in the neighborhood.

In 1877, Harley Luther died at the age of 73 and bequeathed the farm to his wife. Within a few months of his demise, she sold the property to her youngest son, Harley Thayer Luther (1851-1934) and his wife, Emily (1852-1890), whom he had married in 1873. At the same time, Luther mortgaged the property to his mother. For several years prior to buying the farm, Harley Thayer Luther was apprenticed to his older brothers, who ran a successful lapidary company in Attleboro, Massachusetts. However, he left this trade to take up farming.

Luther, like many farmers in the late nineteenth century, took on other types of work to augment his income from the farm. By the early twentieth century he was operating a sawmill in an outbuilding to produce cordwood for sale locally. Nevertheless, Luther experienced numerous financial difficulties. As early as September 1878 he defaulted on his mortgage and ownership of the farm reverted back to his mother, who acquired it at public auction. A month later, his wife Emily divorced him on the grounds of chronic drunkenness. The following year he married Mercy Desire Turned (died 1916). He continued to work on the farm and shared the occupancy of the house with his mother. Finally, in 1897, Abby Luther again sold the farm to her son.

In later years Luther continued to experience financial set-backs. In 1917, 1926, and in 1930 he remortgaged the farm to town clerk Daniel Remington, who was also a land speculator. After Luther's death in 1934, the mortgaged farm was inherited by his daughter from his second marriage. Upon her demise in 1975, a nephew, Arthur Adams, acquired the property. Mr. Adams sold the farm to the present owners in 1982.

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Beers, J.H., Representative Men and Old Families of Rhode Island, 1908,
pp. 1293-1294, 1908-1909.

Providence Daily Journal, August 7, 1903, p. 17.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates c. 1768 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Harley Luther Farm is architecturally and agriculturally significant. The house, built c. 1768, is a well-preserved example of the typical eighteenth-century two-story, five-room plan rural Rhode Island dwelling. Although the house has undergone some modernization, the preservation of functional architectural details such as pantry shelving, and wooden peg and nail hangs is unusual. In addition, few eighteenth-century dwellings today retain such an expansive, intact, original setting little encroached upon by later development. The intact complex of farm outbuilding foundations and enclosed fields, coupled with the surviving outbuildings, clearly illustrates an agricultural existence which was viable here from the late eighteenth-century through the 1930s. The property's association with a minor and little known event of the Dorr War is also noteworthy in the context of local social history and lore. Additional research might also yield valuable information on Rhode Island farming. The diaries and account books of Harley and Harley Thayer Luther, dating from 1826 to 1917 are preserved by a Luther descendant. These records may prove to be valuable in understanding western Rhode Island farming practices during this period.

History of the Property

Scituate land records indicate that a 30 acre parcel of land was sold by Arthur Fenner to Jeremiah Andrews in 1768. Probably soon thereafter, Andrews erected the modest two-and-a-half-story center-chimney dwelling that, with subsequent enlargements, became the Andrews-Luther House. Andrews, a farmer, and his wife, Martha (whom he had married in 1766) sold the farm to John Whidden, a house carpenter, and his wife Chloe in 1796 for \$800.00. Whidden (1766-1836), a Quaker, did blacksmithing as well as farming and carpentry work. He eventually erected a blacksmith shop to the east of the house by the well. Some indication of Whidden's farming activities can be gleaned from the probate inventory of his estate filed a few weeks after his death in 1836, which lists 4½ tons of hay in the barn, 70 bushels of corn and 7½ bushels of rye in the corn crib, 2 heifers, 4 calves, 1 horse, and 2 oxen. The inventory also lists a large assortment of carpenter's and cooper's tools and benches--an indication that woodworking activities were being carried out in another outbuilding on the property.

(See Continuation Sheet #4)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Luther, Leslie L., The Luther Family in America, 1976, pp. 320-321, 566-567, 860-866.

(See Continuation Sheet #5)

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property c. 45 acres

Quadrangle name North Scituate, R.I.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

19	284170	46367010
Zone	Easting	Northing

B

19	284380	463162100
Zone	Easting	Northing

C

19	284060	4636500
Zone	Easting	Northing

D

19	283500	4636580
Zone	Easting	Northing

E

Zone	Easting	Northing

F

Zone	Easting	Northing

G

Zone	Easting	Northing

H

Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary for the Harley Luther Farm is the line of lot 14, Scituate Assessor's Plat 18. The lot is about 45 acres in size and consists of the remaining portion of the original Andrews-Luther Farm.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Michael A. Hebert

organization Consultant

date February 25, 1985

street & number 1124 West Shore Road

telephone 401-737-7493

city or town Warwick

state Rhode Island 02889

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Frank C. Williams

title

date 5-3-85

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

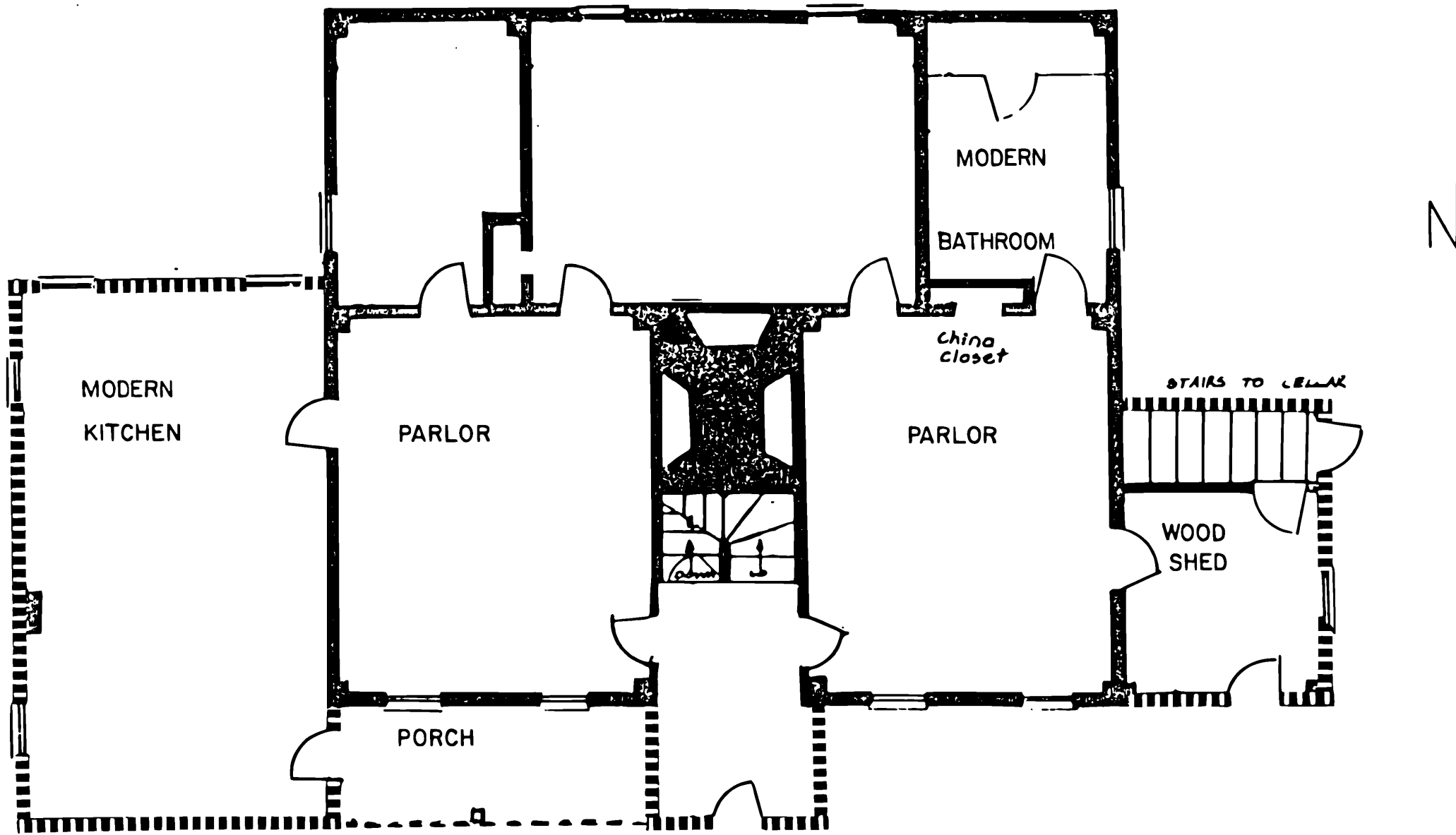
for Alton Byers
Keeper of the National Register

date 6-19-85

Attest:

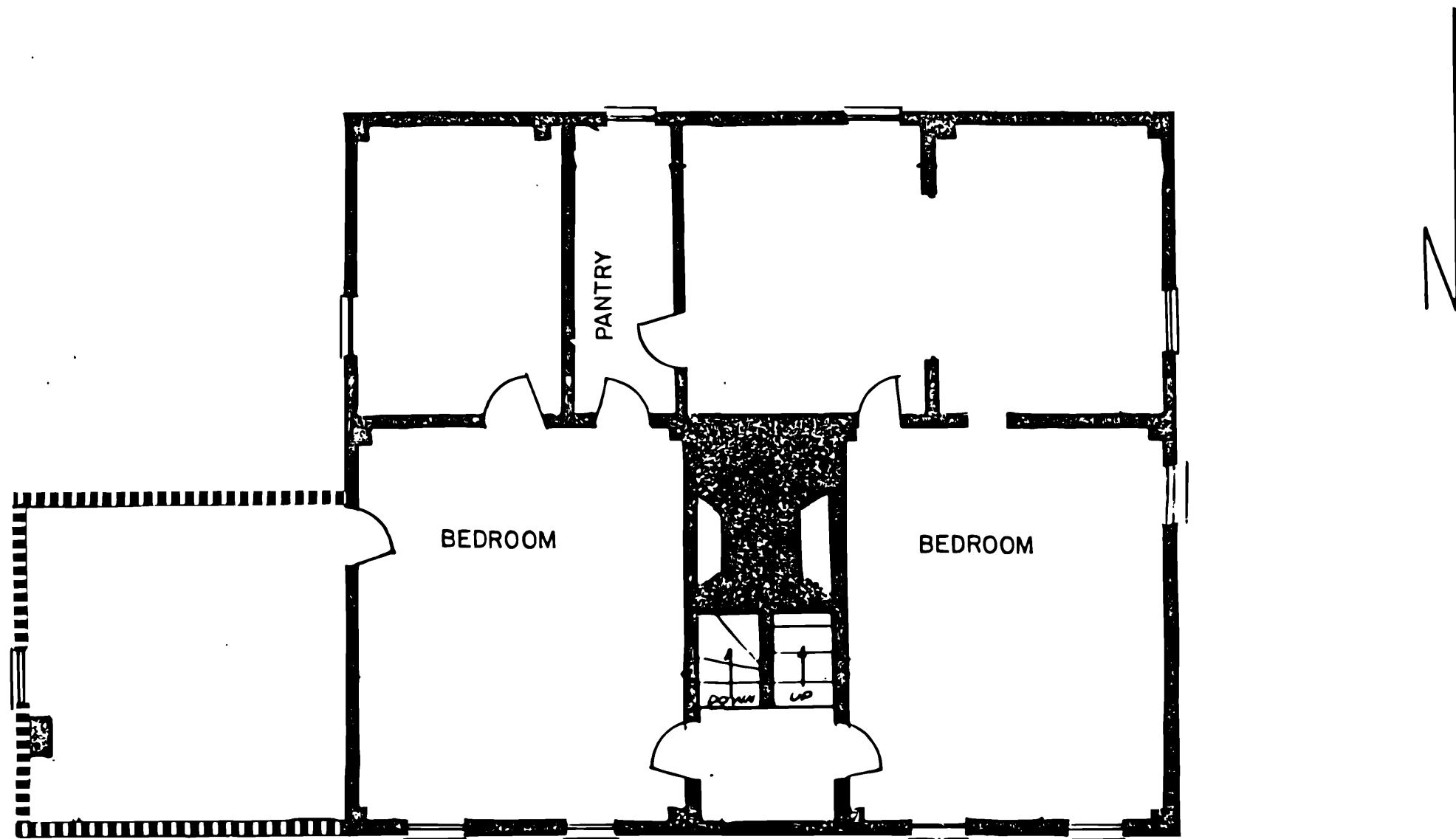
Chief of Registration

date



SCALE 1/8" = 1'
 LEGEND
 [Thick solid line] ORIGINAL
 [Thick dashed line] LATER ADDITION

FIRST FLOOR
 HARLEY LUTHER FARM
 ELMDALE ROAD, SCITUATE
 1985



SCALE 1/8"=1'

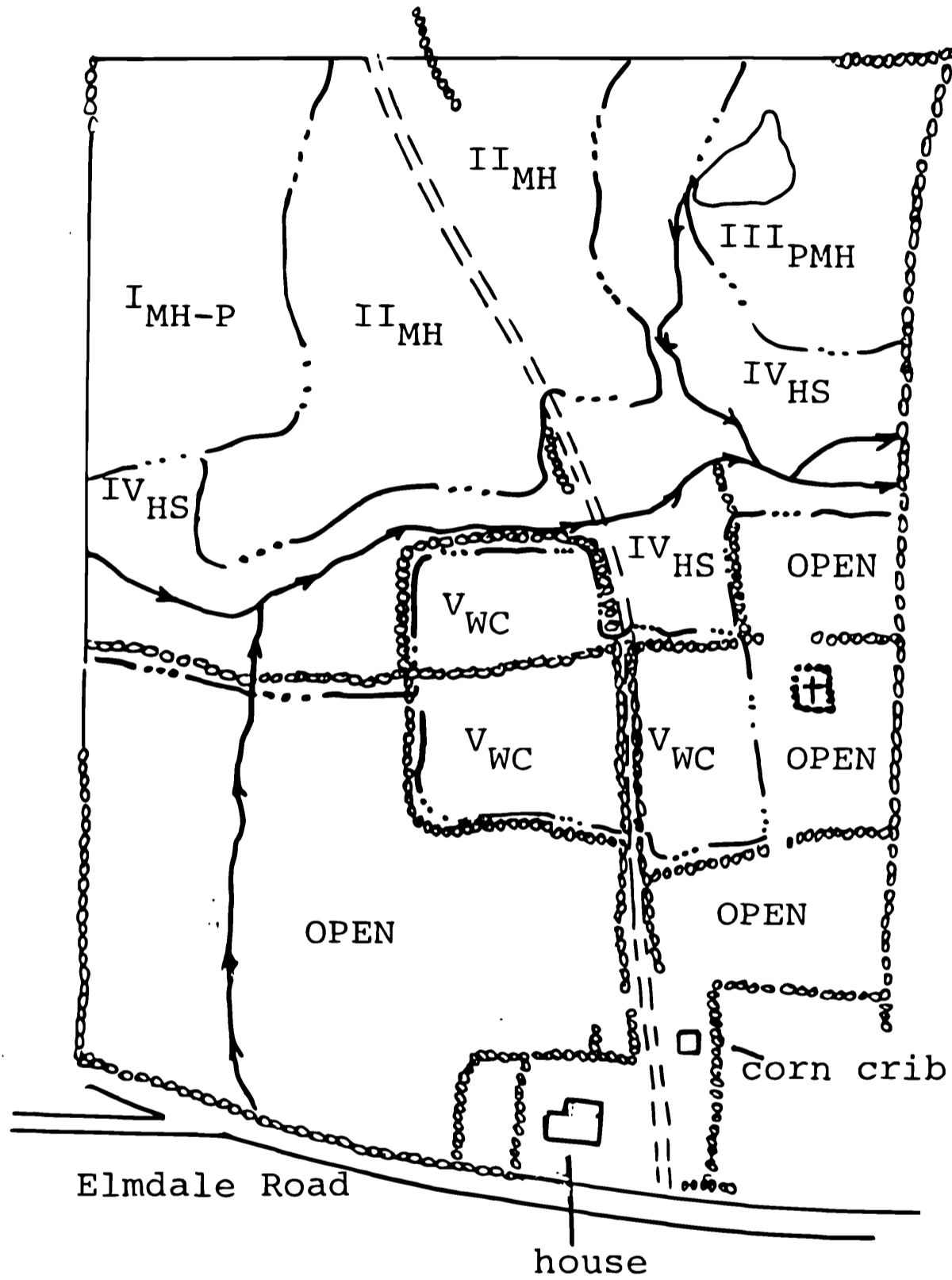
LEGEND

ORIGINAL
LATER ADDITION

SECOND FLOOR
HARLEY LUTHER FARM
ELMDALE ROAD, SCITUATE
1985

Harley Luther Farm
 Elmdale Road
 Scituate, Rhode Island

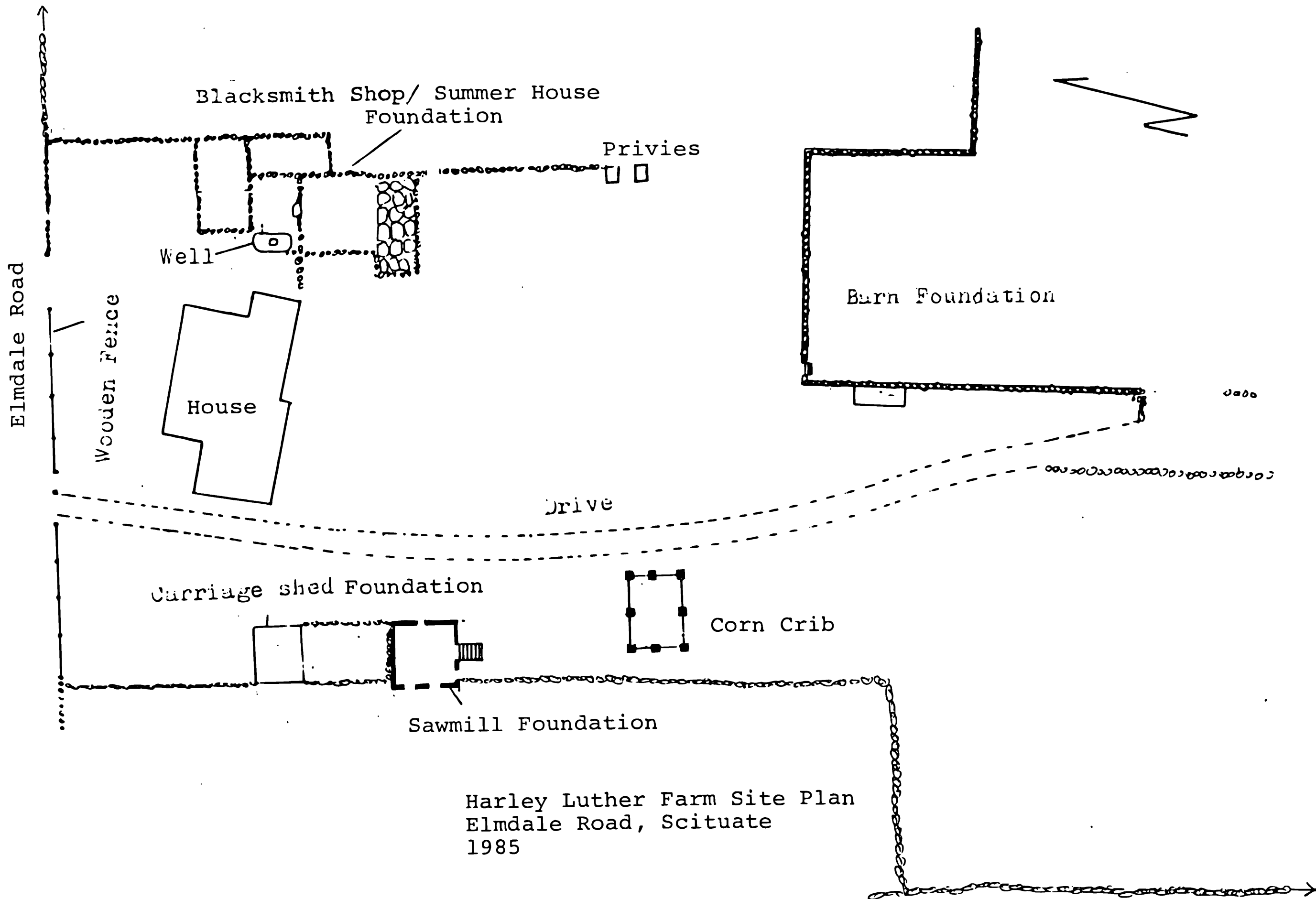
LAND TYPE MAP (1984)



Key

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Area I _{MH-P} | 5 Acres Mixed Hardwoods/Pine |
| Area II _{MH} | 8 Acres Mixed Hardwoods |
| Area III _{PMH} | 3 Acres Pine/Mixed Hardwoods |
| Area IV _{HS} | 8 Acres Hardwoods/Wetlands |
| Area V _{WC} | 4 Acres Cedar/Grown-in Field |
| Open | 17 Acres Fields and Homestead |

Scale: 1"=200'



Harley Luther Farm Site Plan
 Elmdale Road, Scituate
 1985

Scale: 1/32"=1'