

PH0010707

Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

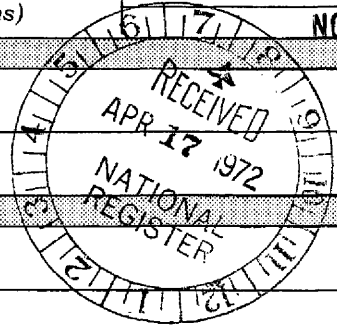
(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:
Connecticut

COUNTY:
New Haven

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER: _____ DATE: NOV 27 1972



1. NAME

COMMON: Henry Whitfield House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Old Whitfield Street

CITY OR TOWN: Guilford

STATE: Connecticut CODE: 09 COUNTY: New Haven CODE: 009

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	_____	_____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: State Of Connecticut

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Hartford STATE: Connecticut CODE: 09

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Town Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Guilford STATE: Connecticut CODE: 09

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Connecticut Historic Structures and Landmarks Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1966 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Connecticut Historical Commission

STREET AND NUMBER: 54 Pratt Street

CITY OR TOWN: Hartford STATE: Connecticut CODE: 09

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Connecticut

COUNTY: New Haven

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER: _____ DATE: NOV 27 1972

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
(Check One)			(Check One)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered			<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		
			<input type="checkbox"/> Moved		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

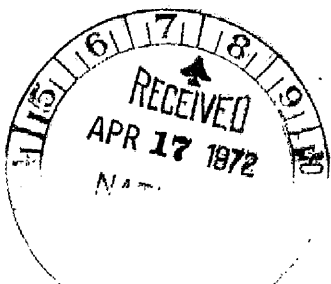
The Henry Whitfield House, with its steep roof and massive end chimneys is an extraordinary example of early New England masonry architecture. Resembling the architecture of northern England, it has two end chimneys on the exterior that are corbeled in the front like those of the Cotswold cottages. The stone comprising the house is not dressed, rather laid in coursed rubble pattern. At windows and entryways are large stone lintels. The roof is steeply pitched at 60 degrees, for it was originally thatched and had to shed the rain.

The house has five rooms--the Great Hall and kitchen on the first floor and three chambers on the second. The Great Hall is 33 feet long and 15 feet wide and has a fireplace at each end. The ell to the rear containing the kitchen is probably later by a very few years. The stairs leading to the second floor are in a separate stair tower, a common feature of English houses. The north fireplace in the Great Hall is the largest, stretching 10 feet 4 inches in width. It is all original material except for the oak lintel and some of the masonry directly above it. The smaller fireplace in the room directly above is also mostly original; the other four have been rebuilt, modeled on those extant.

J. Frederick Kelly, whose pioneer work, Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut, published in 1924 has not been supplanted, reconstructed the kitchen ell in 1930 and completed the restoration of the entire house in 1937. Exterior work was based largely upon the earliest known print of the house which appeared in the "Ladies Repository Magazine" in 1842. The major changes included the pitch of the roof, the replacement of the small casement windows and leaded "quarrels", the removal of the stucco added in 1868, and the building of the south end chimney. Added were dormers to allow light for the museum in the attic. The interior work primarily involved reconstruction of the fireplaces and the replacement of the second floor at the front, for during the early years as a museum the Great Hall was the full two stories high. The completion of the work was celebrated on October 20, 1937.

Until 1972 the house was operated by a board of trustees; in July of 1972 it will come under the auspices of the Connecticut Historical Commission.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



3. SIGNIFICANCE

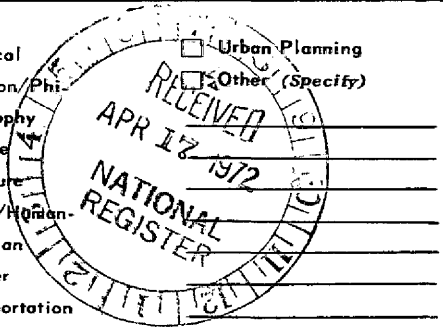
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1639

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Military		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Whitfield house is significant both because of its age and because of its association with the founders of the town of Guilford. It was the first dwelling built at the settlement and is said to be the oldest stone house still standing in New England.

Henry Whitfield was born in Greenwich, Kent, probably in June of 1592. The son of Thomas, a prominent London lawyer, and Mildred Manning of Greenwich, he attended Winchester College (School) and entered New College, Oxford, on June 8, 1610, intending to follow his father's profession. He changed to the ministry, however, and was ordained a minister of the Church of England in 1618. In the same year he married Dorothy Shaeffe of Kent, and became vicar of St. Margaret's Church of Ockley.

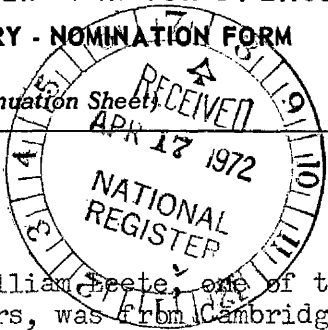
After 1625, with the reign of Charles I, religious tolerance was threatened for Separatists and Puritans, many of whom were censured and forced to leave England. The Reverend Whitfield was not among the Dissidents at first, but as the established church grew more rigid and more papist, his sympathies shifted to those who advocated reform. Eventually he was called before the High Commission and censured. In 1638, Whitfield resigned from the Ockley church and gathered together twenty-five young families and made plans to emigrate. Most of those whom he gathered were Puritan farmers from Surrey and Kent, but a few came from the north. The Reverend John Davenport, a friend of Whitfield, had emigrated and founded New Haven Colony, and a college friend, George Fenwick, had helped found Saybrook in 1635. It was natural then for Whitfield to aim for the shores of what is now Connecticut. It was there decided that Whitfield would found a settlement halfway between the two already existing on the shore, and in September, 1639, land was purchased from the Menuncatuck Indians at what is now Guilford.

Because of the lateness in the year, probably only half of the cellar and the Great Hall with the north fireplace were finished before winter. The south wall enclosing the house was probably made of timber to give shelter the first winter and was rebuilt the following year of stone found about a quarter of a mile away. Also built the next year were the second floor and the garret. The house very much resembles those of the Cotswolds, in the north of England, with the exterior end chimneys and

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(Continuation Sheet)



STATE	Connecticut	
COUNTY	New Haven	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	
	NOV 27 1972	

(Number all entries)

#8 Significance

steeply pitched roofs. William Steele, one of the apparnet leaders among that first group of settlers, was from Cambridgeshire, and may well have had charge of or influence over the building of the first house, hence its resemblance to those of the north. The house, as well as being the Whitfield's residence (Mrs. Whitfield and seven children accompanied the Reverend), served as headquarters for the twenty-five families, a meeting house, and a garrison. The Great Hall probably served as a dining room as well as a place for services.

In 1650, Henry Whitfield returned to England with some of his children. Most, however, remained in Guilford with Dame Dorothy and married local people. It is not clear why Whitfield returned to England without his wife, but he died there in 1657 and was buried on September 17 in Winchester Cathedral. Dorothy stayed in America until 1659 then returned to England and died there in 1669. When she left Guilford, she offered the house to the town, possibly as an educational facility, but it could not afford to purchase it at the time. Major Robert Thompson, a friend of Nathaniel, son of Henry, bought the house sometime after 1659, apparently as a favor to the family. He died in 1694, leaving the income from the estate to his wife, Francis, but the title with his male heirs, Joseph, William, and Robert, who rented the house and land. In 1772, the property was sold to Wyllys Eliot of Guilford for 3000 pounds, current lawful money of New England. About two weeks later, on November 6, 1772, the property was sold to Joseph Pynchon, the first owner to actually live in the house since the Whitfields. He was a prominent man, a representative to the General Assembly in 1768 and 1769, a justice for the county of New Haven from 1768 to 1770, and a selectman of Guilford. In 1776 Jasper Griffing became the owner when Pynchon moved to New Haven. Various branches of the Griffing family owned the property until 1900. In 1868 the house was altered considerably by Many Chittendon and Henry D. Cone. Chimneys and fireplaces were changed, the exterior was covered with stucco, and a new roof, less steep, was added.

By the end of the 19th century the deterioration of the house had become so apparent and the matter of ownership so involved that in the face of a threat to demolish it, a movement was begun to have it purchased by the State. In 1897 members of the Connecticut Society of Colonial Dames of America took the first steps toward pushing for State-ownership. Some money was allocated by the State Legislature, some by the Town of Guilford, some from the residents, and an amount from the Colonial Dames. In 1903 Governor Lounsbury appointed the first board of trustees and the Henry Whitfield House was formally opened as a museum.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

The Henry Whitfield House, Trustees of the Henry Whitfield House, 1970.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE				
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	41°	16'	40"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"	72°	40'	35"
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"			
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 7.5 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Susan Babbitt, Administrative Trainee

ORGANIZATION: Connecticut Historical Commission DATE: April 11, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:
51 Pratt Street

CITY OR TOWN: Hartford STATE: Connecticut CODE: 09

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: *Susan Babbitt*

Title: State Liaison Officer

Date: April 6, 1972

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

Robert K. Gentry
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 11/27/72

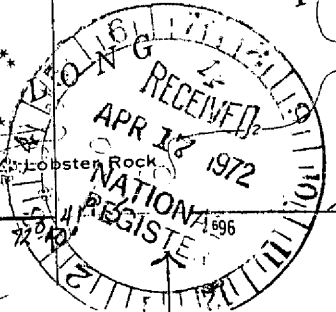
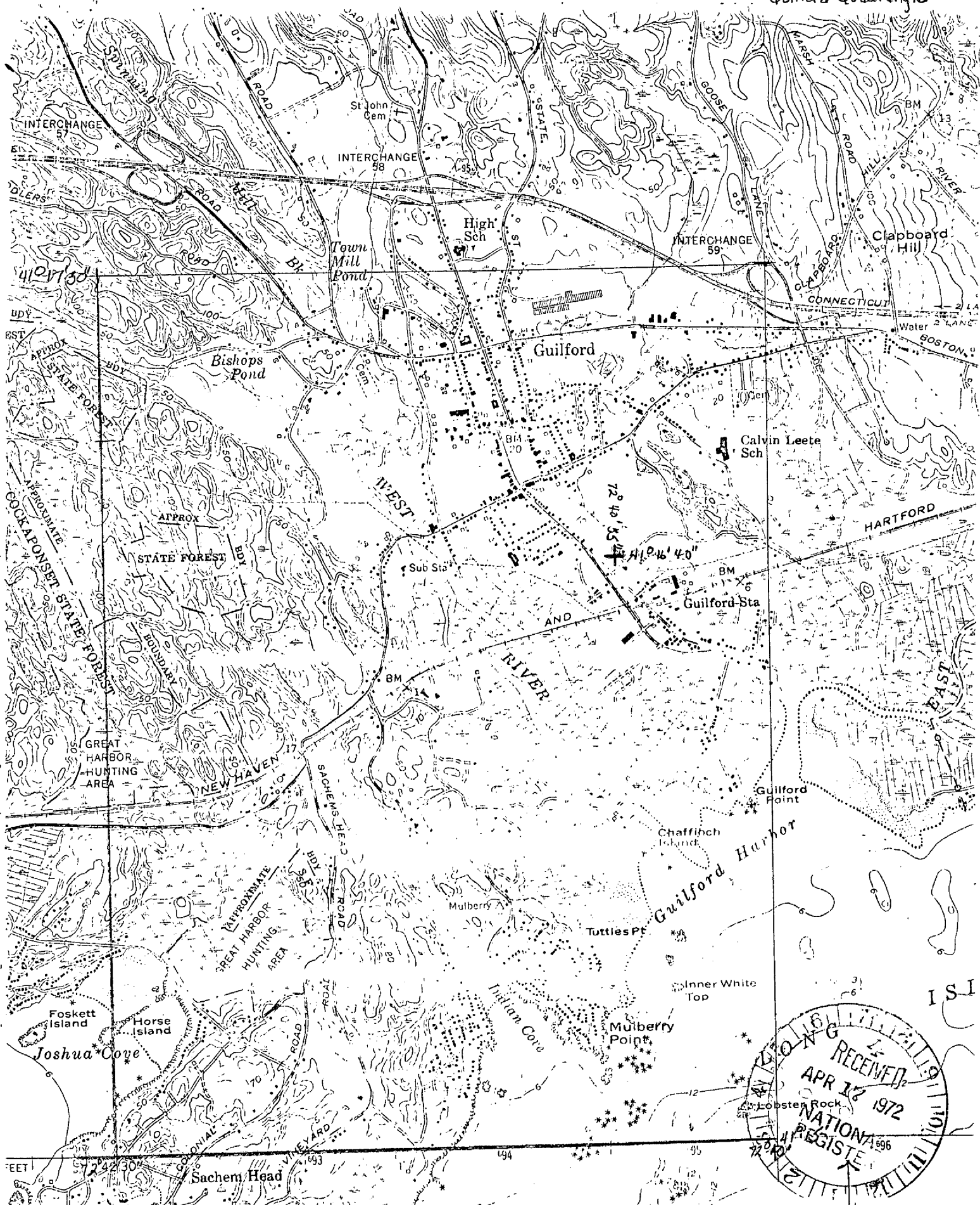
ATTEST:

William M. Stapp
Keeper of The National Register

Date: 11-22-72

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Guilford Quadrangle



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