

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



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

1. Name of Property

historic name Wheeler Family Farmstead
other names/site number Capt. Truman Wheeler House

2. Location

street & number 817 South Main Street not for publication
city or town Great Barrington vicinity
state Massachusetts code MA county Berkshire code 003 zip code 01230

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this x 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 x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide x local

Brona Simon July 8, 2011
Signature of certifying official Brona Simon, SHPO, MHC Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain:) _____
Patrick Andrus 9/6/2011
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

- Ownership options: private (checked), public - Local, public - State, public - Federal

- Category options: building(s), district (checked), site, structure, object

Table with 3 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing, and Resource Type. Rows include buildings, district, site, structure, object, and a Total row.

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

- Historic Functions: DOMESTIC, single dwelling; DOMESTIC, secondary structure; AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE, storage; outbuilding; animal facility

- Current Functions: RECREATION & CULTURE, museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

- Architectural Classification: COLONIAL, Dutch Colonial; COLONIAL, Postmedieval English

- Materials: foundation: STONE, Granite; walls: WOOD, Shingle; WOOD, Weatherboard; roof: METAL; other: N/A

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Wheeler Family Farmstead

Name of Property

Berkshire, MA

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Narrative Description

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

Summary Paragraph

The Wheeler Family Farmstead is located on the southern edge of the town of Great Barrington, in the Berkshires of western Massachusetts. The once-rural area, with East Mountain a prominent eastern backdrop, has developed into a busy commercial strip along U.S. Route 7, which follows the course of the Housatonic River through Connecticut and Massachusetts. With its headwaters in Berkshire County, the Housatonic is a major interstate watershed located midway between the Hudson and Connecticut rivers, supporting scores of agricultural and industrial centers along its route to Long Island Sound. At its peak, the Wheeler Family Farmstead contained 130 acres extending west from the nearby Housatonic River, and west across Rt. 7, then known as the Sheffield Road. Now, without its farm setting and separated from the river, the nominated property contains 1.5 acres, with the historic house and surviving farm buildings that have accumulated there since the mid 18th century.

Five generations of the Wheeler family occupied the farm, and each has left its imprint on it. The family's progenitor, Truman Wheeler (1741-1815), began assembling land for the farm in 1768, and in 1771 he purchased the house in which he apparently had already been living and operating a store since his arrival in Great Barrington from Woodbury, Connecticut. The two-story, wood-frame house with connected outbuildings evolved through a number of stages, and incorporates elements that appear to date from a ca. 1733 dwelling. The Wheeler House is distinctive for its combination of both Dutch and English framing methods, a regional feature resulting from the interplay of cultures along the New York-Massachusetts border, an area that was in dispute during most of the 18th century. The evolution of the house reflects the changing composition of households and local taste over the ensuing 200 years. The house is positioned near the highway, with its associated farm buildings arrayed behind it. Two 18th-century farm buildings survive—a wagon house attached to the house, and a workshop that may have originated as a barn. Other buildings illustrate the periodic improvement of farm practice, such as a late 19th-century hay barn and an early 20th-century cow house and silo. While the house has evolved to its present appearance over many years, it nevertheless reflects its Colonial-period roots both inside and out. Set well back from the road, it stands facing west on a relatively flat, grassy parcel with several mature trees. Two driveways on the south side of the house lead east to the outbuildings. The nominated property contains a total of seven contributing buildings and one contributing structure. There are no noncontributing elements.

Narrative Description

The Wheeler Family Farmstead contains the following components. Refer to the attached site plan (Fig. 1) for locations.

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1. Wheeler House (ca. 1733-ca. 1920)
2. Workshop (late 18th century)
3. Animal Shed (mid-19th century)
4. Hay Barn (ca. 1895)
5. Cow House (ca. 1910)
6. Heifer House (ca. 1910)
7. Silo (ca. 1910)
8. Carriage House & Stable (ca. 1820)

1. Wheeler House (ca. 1733-ca. 1920)

The exterior of the house has been restored to its early 20th-century appearance with the removal of vinyl clapboard siding installed in the 1970s, and the addition of a metal roofing system fabricated to look like wood shingles (IMAGES 1-3). The re-exposed wood shingle siding was applied over wood clapboard siding, which itself was installed sometime in the 19th century, at least on rear sections, where it is exposed with machine-cut nails (Figs.3&4). The wood-frame house is composed of a rectangular, gable roofed front section with a two-story front façade, and a large, square-plan, two-story rear ell with a cross-gable roof. A one-story wagon house was later connected to the rear of the ell, having originated in some other location (IMAGE 2). It is currently under restoration and its walls are largely disassembled, including a privy that had been attached to the north wall and is now moved back to a temporary location (IMAGE 4). The roof profile of the front section is skewed, because the front was raised from 1½ stories in height to two stories, while the rear wall was not.

The front façade has a center entrance that contains a pair of paneled doors, with a single window above it and pairs of windows flanking it on both stories. A simple Classical cornice with shallow soffits decorates the roof line, abutting the tops of the second-story windows in New England fashion (IMAGE 1). If any other frieze, corner, or window trim was present, it has been obscured by the shingle siding. A porch sheltered the entrance ca. 1915, but it is unknown what had been present—or not—in other stages (Figs.3 & 4). The brick center chimney has been reduced in size from its original dimensions. Mid 19th-century 6/6 wood sash fill the upper windows, with late 19th-century 2/2 sash in the taller, lower windows. A small, square window was added to the north end of the house (IMAGE 1). Like the front section, the ell is comprised of first and second stories, constructed at two different times. Fenestration is intact; sash types vary in ways similar to the front (IMAGES 2 & 3). A deep, late 19th-century porch on the south side of the ell fills the whole of the recess (IMAGE 2, Fig.4); a more recent porch once on the north side of the ell, has been removed. The many stages in the long construction history of the house are discernable on the exterior, distinguishing it as a meaningful architectural object. Descriptions of the more significant stages follow.

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STAGE I

The first stage is embodied in the wood bent frame of the north room on the first story of the house (Fig.5). It was erected before Truman Wheeler acquired the property in 1771, possibly as early as 1733, when Samuel Dewey is believed to have built a house there. (Even though Wheeler did not obtain title to the property until 1771, he probably had been operating his store there since his arrival in Great Barrington in 1764.) The structure, roughly measuring fifteen feet across the front, and seventeen feet in depth, is fashioned in an 18th-century Dutch-American manner, with five posts spaced about three feet apart on the front (west) and rear, connected by large beams spanning the entire depth of the interior. Much of this frame is concealed, particularly the beams, which are covered with a later plaster ceiling, but enough evidence is visible to associate the construction method with the Dutch building tradition, brought to western Massachusetts by settlers and craftsmen migrating east from the Hudson River Valley. The relatively slight dimensions of the beams and the absence of bracing “corbels” beneath the joints would, in the Hudson Valley context, date the frame to the 1740s or 1750s.

The inside faces of the posts on the front wall are presently exposed on the interior, either by original design or later “restoration.” They measure around six inches square in section, with approximately three inches of their sides exposed beyond plaster panels recessed between them (IMAGE 6). The posts are joined to a cross beam by a beveled mortise joint, with the base of the beam resting on a one-inch seat cut into the vertical member; two pegs secure the through-tenon to the post (Fig.7). There is no visible evidence of the walls having been nogged in the Dutch manner—that is, packed with a clay and straw mixture around horizontal slats wedged between the posts. Apparently, the exterior of the frame was sheathed with boards and covered with clapboards, which was typical of the locality.

The front façade probably contained an entrance and a window in the center two bays, although no residual features of them can be seen. The existing windows in these two locations represent Stage II additions, installed to balance the enlarged front façade of the house (IMAGE 6). There are two posts on the north wall that may indicate a fireplace location; otherwise, posts were not structurally necessary on end walls. Perhaps they supported the brick hood of a Dutch jambless fireplace, positioned above an opening in the ceiling and framed by the two end beams and side trimmers aligned with the posts. Aside from the posts, no particular evidence of this feature has been identified. There may have been a second entrance on the rear (east) wall; however, that is impossible to discern under the current conditions. The third and fourth posts from the north do not exist on this wall, and were avoided or removed to create an unexplained gap in the wall framing, possibly opening on an adjoining annex or outshot on the rear of the building. (The two ceiling beams above the opening are joined to a beam running between the second and fifth posts.) If it did exist, this feature was removed when the current kitchen ell was built, leaving only the anomalous framing condition as an artifact. With the exception of the corner posts, the south wall was removed when the house was enlarged and the existing chimney was added in that location (IMAGE 5).

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Some of the original first-story floorboards survive, but visible alterations occurred in later stages. This floor is supported by a combination of hewn beams and logs with flattened tops, the latter representing repairs. They are mortised into the tops of sills on four sides of the building, over a shallow crawl space. (Since there is no basement, the exterior walls are not visible, but based on repair actions that occurred in sections of the house, the exterior sills were probably replaced at the turn of the 20th century.) As in the floor above, the floor beams have large dimensions and span the space from front to back; yet their span is interrupted by a cross beam running about three feet in from the east wall. This corresponds with marks on the floor above for a partition in the rear of the main room, the purpose of which is not known. The position of this partition and the framing gap in the rear wall are likely related, but more than that has not been discerned. The narrow space at the back of the plan may have contained a ladder/stair leading to the garret. In a Dutch model, it could have also contained a recessed bed, but no evidence of such a feature has been documented, even in the Hudson River Valley.

The dwelling was 1½ stories in height, with the wall posts extending two to three feet above the beam joints. This was common practice in Dutch houses, and the posts carried plates on which rafter butts were nailed. The original rafters are not extant. They were replaced with heavy hewn rafters in Stage II, when the house was enlarged (these rafters were altered later, when the front wall of the house was raised to two stories). Stage I pine floorboards in the loft are intact, and they were planed smooth on the bottoms to present a finished ceiling to the room below, a fact now hidden under later plaster.

STAGE II

Truman Wheeler is said to have made an addition to his house in 1771, in anticipation of his marriage to Hulda Caldwell later that year. However, it is not clear if this account refers to Stage II or Stage III. In any event, Stage II can be effectively dated between 1764 and 1771. The addition comprises the second principal room on the south side of the house, and the chimney and entrance lobby in between it and the Stage I building (Fig.5). It lengthened the building by about 22 feet. The added sections were constructed in a manner consistent with New England plank-framing methods. Posts were erected in the corners of the principal room connecting to sills on the top of the stone basement, and plates at the top create a rudimentary box frame having approximately the same dimensions as the Stage I north room (15 by 17 feet). Wide, inch-thick planks were nailed to the sills and plates to complete the exterior wall structure; and a layer of wood clapboards was nailed to the exterior of the planks tying the laminated wall together horizontally. Like the Stage I section, the addition was 1½ stories in height; a gable roof was constructed over both sections with hewn rafters, which survive, although they were altered when the front of the house was later raised to two full stories.

The chimney occupies the center of the space between the rooms, with a fireplace opening on each side (Fig.5). The stone mass was built directly on grade, although a basement was dug under the new south room and walled with stone. Initially, this basement was accessible only from a hatch at the east side of the south wall. The area in front of the chimney was enclosed with a plank wall containing an entrance; the paneled double doors are distinctive to western Massachusetts in the mid 18th-century (IMAGE 1). Board walls with doors separate the lobby from the flanking rooms. The forward chimney placement

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precluded fitting a stair in front of the chimney in the lobby. Stairs were put behind the chimney, accessible through a door in the south room. This arrangement is unusual in the Massachusetts context, although it was a fairly common practice in England, where the center-chimney hall-parlor plan originated.¹

Two openings for windows were cut into the plank wall on the front of the house, and one in the center of the south end. The enlarged front façade was designed to be symmetrical with two windows on either side of a central entrance (IMAGE 1). The partial upper story had no windows. The 1½ story height, predetermined by the precedent of the Stage I house, was typical of Hudson River Valley houses, but less common in New England. Thus, even in its expanded form, the house still displayed characteristics identifiable with the Dutch. This condition was mitigated by the presence of a New England doorway and pronounced center chimney. Despite its mixed origins, the Stage II house, with its two-room center-chimney plan, exemplifies the middling farmhouse type that proliferated throughout New England in the 18th century.²

The walls and ceiling of the new south room were plastered, and it would have been at this time that the exposed beams in the ceiling of the north room were plastered over. The walls of the north room were also renovated at this time, and if there was a fireplace on the north wall, it would have been removed and the walls reconfigured with front and end windows, to match the south room. Original pine flooring has been preserved in the south room, although in the basement it is evident that some of the hewn beams and sills have been replaced.

The fireplaces constructed in each room are small for cooking, supporting speculation that there was a third room—a kitchen—attached to the rear by this stage. The chimney walls are nicely finished with wood paneling, installed in this period. The paneling in the north room is limited to the fireplace, with tall vertical panels on the sides and two long horizontal panels across the top (IMAGE 5). This feature is essentially intact, except for the much-later addition of a mantel shelf. The door to the entry lobby is set within a plain board wall and simply trimmed; a corresponding blank board wall fills the space behind the chimney in the ambiguous area at the rear of the room, which may have been partitioned off at this time. The paneling in the south room is more extensive, distinguishing it as the better of the two rooms (IMAGE 7). The paneling spanned the entire chimney wall, encompassing the fireplace as well as doors on either side of the room. The fireplace is framed by an elegant French-styled bolection molding, an elite design popular in the mid 18th century. A paneled wainscot covers the other three walls. At some later time, the existing door leading to the kitchen was added to the rear (east) wall, and the door leading to the stairs removed from the north wall. A closet was created under the stairs and a new door installed,

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¹ Abbott Lowell Cummings, *The Framed Houses of Massachusetts Bay, 1625-1725* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1979), 25-26.

² Michael Steinitz, "Rethinking Geographical Approaches to the Common House: The Evidence from Eighteenth-century Massachusetts," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture, III*, Thomas Carter and Bernard L. Herman, eds. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press for the Vernacular Architecture Forum, 1989), 16-26.

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with a portion of the paneling inexplicably discarded (Fig.5). A piece of wainscot salvaged from the door space on the east wall was moved to the north wall in the process. The paneling in the north room appears always to have been painted white; the south room paneling and wainscot acquired a layer of wood graining in a later period, probably when it was reconfigured in the northeast corner.

A room with board walls and ceiling was partitioned in the second story of the addition. The rest of the upper-story space probably functioned as unfinished storage space (although this changed once Truman and Hulda Wheeler began having children). This half-story space contained the existing window in the south gable end. The front windows and plaster walls and ceiling in the south room date to renovations made when the height of the front façade was raised. There is evidence to suggest that the lower story of the ell could have been built in Stage II. The fact that only the front wall was raised to two stories in Stage III implies that an ell of some sort was already in place; otherwise, the rear wall could have been raised to two stories as well. Yet, the divided basements and absence of any corresponding mid 18th-century finishes in the ell are contradictions. Based on the scant information available, the ell, in its existing plan dimensions, could have been constructed at just about any time during the first three stages.

STAGE III

The front wall of the house was raised to two stories as early as 1771, or at some later point after the end of the Revolutionary War. Raising the front wall provided the house with a more pretentious façade, reflecting Truman Wheeler's growing status in the town, and it created better second-story living space for his wife and family, with two sizeable chambers at either end and a third room in front of the chimney (Fig.6; IMAGE 1). All but the south room abutted the chimney and could have been easily heated by stoves. The end chambers each have two windows on the front, aligned with the first-story windows below, and the center room has a single window positioned over the entrance. The first-floor rooms remained essentially unchanged, with the north room still functioning as a store and the south room serving as the parlor (Fig.5). Typical of New England architecture, the tops of the simple window surrounds hug the roof line, with only a very thin frieze separating them from the shallow soffit and cornice. The attenuated Classical trim decorating the roof edge is consistent with the taste of the period (IMAGE 1).

If it had not been already enlarged prior to Stage III, the house was enlarged at this time with the addition of a large kitchen ell, measuring about 28 feet across the back of the house and about 30 feet deep (Fig.5). It was built over a full stone basement that was made to connect to the existing basement on the south end of the house. Its north wall was in line with the north end of the front section of the house; the south wall was recessed back from that end of the house. Based on evidence visible on the back slope of the roof, captured within the attic of the current ell, as well as on the back wall of the front section of the building, it can be concluded that the ell was initially only one story in height. The plan contained two large rooms, both about 14 feet deep: one in the front that was a kitchen, and a second in the rear that contained a huge masonry block nine feet wide and six feet deep, in which two large fireplaces were located, one opening into the front kitchen, and the other in the rear room, probably a summer kitchen. (This masonry structure was removed in the 20th century.)

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The kitchen itself was more than 18 feet wide, with a broad fireplace and bake oven occupying the east wall. The masonry has been removed, but the mantel shelf remains as evidence (IMAGE 9). A door and two windows were spaced along the south wall. Some form of porch sheltered the entrance; the existing porch is a Stage IV addition (IMAGE 2). An exterior entrance to the basement under the wing was created at the west end of the south wall, and the old entry in the south basement was closed up. The floor of the current porch contains a hatch over this entrance; whether this was a feature of the earlier porch is not known. The west wall, which was also the rear wall of the Stage II house, at first only contained the existing pass-through in the rear wall of the Stage I, or north, room of the house. Sometime in Stage III, perhaps not immediately when the ell was built, the staircase to the second story was altered so that it connected directly to the kitchen. This alteration voided the space behind the chimney connecting to the parlor, and it was divided into two closets: one opening into the kitchen, to the left of the new door leading to the stairs, and the other opening on the parlor. A new door was constructed to link the parlor to the kitchen, with the paneling in the best room altered to suit (Fig.5, IMAGE 8).

A narrow space, about eight feet wide, was partitioned on the north side of the kitchen; at that time it was probably used as pantry space. When the chimney was removed in a later stage, this partition was shifted about 2½ feet into the kitchen area to create a narrow dining room (Fig.5). The north exterior wall of the so-called pantry contained two windows, and it likely had a door in its east wall linking it to the back or summer kitchen. (The west wall of the pantry was shifted east in the renovation following the chimney's removal, so that the north room now contains an exterior doorway once contained in the back kitchen.) There also was a door linking the pantry with the front of the house—that is, Truman Wheeler's store. That being the case, it appears that this room functioned as a stockroom for store goods as well. This doorway opens into the odd passageway at the rear of the north room or store. According to local accounts, a stone step or paver in the ground just outside the northeast corner of the room marks the location of the public entrance into Wheeler's store (IMAGE 1). While the wall has not been opened to verify this story, this door and passage also would have been an effective way to conduct goods into the pantry/stockroom without interfering with family spaces of the house.

The original subdivisions within the back or summer kitchen have been removed, along with the masonry stack and fireplace once positioned on the west wall. The north side of the room was probably divided from the rest by a partition, much as in the main kitchen, although the precise function of the space is not known (IMAGE 10). The exterior doorway, presently entering the dining room north of the kitchen, was located originally in the northeast room, and there is a single window on the north wall as well (Fig.5, IMAGE 3). This room also communicated with the pantry. The south wall of the back kitchen also contains a single window. A doorway on the south side of the chimney space connects the front and rear areas, and an enclosure in the southwest corner of the back room contains stairs to the basement. The stairs themselves have been altered in their course and replaced at least once, but they have always occupied this corner. However, the enclosure, which also contains stairs to the second story, is a later feature, and probably dates to Stage IV when the second story was added to the ell. There would have been little headroom and little light in the attic level of the one-story kitchen wing; it is unlikely any domestic spaces were located there. The south end of the east wall of the summer kitchen contains a closely spaced door and window; the door leads to a wagon house abutting the rear wall of the ell.

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A timber-frame Wagon House is connected to the exterior rear (east) wall of the kitchen ell. Its joinery methods and hardware identify it as a late 18th-century building, and four wide bays suggest that it was designed to accommodate wagons and other vehicles (IMAGE 2). This function is further indicated by a deep overhang spanning the south façade and protecting the open bays from the natural elements. This pent has a separate frame that is spiked to the beams and rafters of the building, so that the roofing extends out across it in the curving bell-cast arc (Fig.8). By one unsubstantiated oral account, this adjunct functioned in association with Truman Wheeler's commercial enterprise as the place where his delivery wagons were parked and store goods were stockpiled. That it was a wagon house, perhaps with a stable, is very likely, and as such it could have served both Wheeler's personal and business needs. The building has been stripped of its walling and interiors as part of conservation measures, so there is little else to discern from it (IMAGE 2). It has been speculated that the bent framing and bell-cast overhang are lingering Dutch features, and while they have antecedents in New York, it is equally likely that they are features of more generalized farm building practice, which commonly used bent framing, and idiosyncratic solutions for novelties, such as a cantilevered overhang. By the late 18th century, particularly after the Revolutionary War, a direct Colonial Dutch influence is hard to distinguish with any clarity. Rather than a surviving artifact of a Colonial-Era building technology, the wagon house may have been a harbinger of the fashion of connected farm buildings that would soon after sweep through New England.

The Wagon House overlaps the clapboard siding on the rear wall of the kitchen ell indicating it was a pre-existing building moved to this location from another site, either on this farm or one nearby. It may have been disassembled, but if it was, the pent roof, which is spiked to the frame, shows no sign of having been tampered with. Alternatively, the frame could have been disassembled and re-erected, with the pent roof added at the new site. One theory has been that the structure originated as an ell attached to the rear of the front section of the house that is built in Stage I or II, and relocated once the kitchen ell was built in Stage III. This has not been verified by measurement or the discovery of physical evidence, yet the wing in question has no indication of ever containing domestic space, other than a hired-man's room later added in the loft. Historic photographs taken ca. 1915 show a chimney in the center of the gable roof (Figs.3&4). There is a narrow bay where the dependency joins the house, and it served as a buffer between the house and wagon house. It is possible that this space contained stairs leading to the loft, where a doorway was cut in the house wall to link the upper stories of the two sections. Another stair was located in the east end of the building but has been removed.

STAGE IV

This stage represents "improvements" made to the house at the end of the 19th century, during the time Merritt I. Wheeler, Truman Wheeler's grandson, held title to the farm. Few discernable changes had been made to the house in the century since the family patriarch had established his store in the house and expanded the building with a second story and rear additions. While his son Claudius seems to have had a significant impact on the development of the farm, little of the historic fabric in the house can be placed in the context of his tenure, 1815-1860. By 1875 (in fact, as early as 1815 when Truman Wheeler died), the old room containing the store had been returned to a domestic space and the passageway in the rear of the

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room partially removed, with the rest made into an elongated closet. The focus of the renovation was the kitchen, where the two fireplaces and chimney stack were removed down to the basement floor. A smaller brick chimney was constructed in its place, as cooking and heating was then done by wood-burning stoves (Fig.5).

The pantry on the north side of the kitchen—made somewhat obsolete by the closing of the store—was enlarged by shifting the dividing partition two feet south, and was converted into a dining room. The doorway to the store passage was walled over, and a china closet recessed into the adjoining space. The room was lengthened as well, capturing the exterior door in the north wall, once a part of the back kitchen (Fig.5). Aside from its reduction in dimension and the removal of the fireplace, the kitchen was unchanged. The old mantel was preserved as a backdrop for the modern cook stove (IMAGE 9). The back kitchen was significantly enlarged with the removal of the chimney stack; however, its configuration and use has been obscured by still later alterations, and it no longer reflects its original use, beyond being called a summer kitchen. A pair of windows at the north end of the back wall was added with the most recent kitchen renovation, which located the sink in that location. The stone chimney mass was removed, and the current chimney is concealed within a walled enclosure that also includes a broom closet (IMAGE 10).

Constructing a second story to the kitchen ell added a significant amount of floor space to the house (Fig.6). Unlike the front section, which reused existing rafters, the framing of the walls and roof used new materials that help date the work to the late 19th century. Rooms with closets were created in the corners, connecting to a large landing at the top of the stairs leading up from the back kitchen. A doorway was cut through the back wall of the front section of the house, from the front stair landing into the room in the southwest corner. Closets also were built along the back walls of the front bed chambers, where the roof was steepest. The passageway in the back of the north chamber's closet was cut through later.

The deep porch covering the entire south side of the kitchen ell was built in this period, eradicating whatever had preceded it (IMAGE 2). It was decorated with scrolled braces at the top of the posts. Simple board rails, pictured in historic photographs as spanning the spaces between the posts in old photographs may have been added still later (Fig.4). An open porch had been constructed over the center entrance on the front façade by 1915.

LATER STAGES

Merritt I. Wheeler's son, Frank J. Wheeler, took over a recently modernized house and successful farm when the senior Wheeler died in 1903. The one distinguishing change he made was to cover the house with unpainted wood shingles around 1920. As there are no other evident alterations to the fenestration, it is possible that it was applied after the existing clapboard siding was removed to repair the deteriorated wood sills and floor beams. Other motivations would have included the urge to bring the old house more into compliance with the summer cottage fashion that dominated the local architectural scene, or to avoid

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painting the house again. Frank's heir to the farm, his son F. Truman Wheeler, introduced the modern convenience of indoor plumbing into the house. He likely brought in electricity and central heating as well. The old kitchen had been made into a sitting room, with kitchen appliances arranged in the back kitchen. A lavatory was constructed in the northwest corner of the room, and a full bathroom was installed on the second floor of the ell. The final improvement to be made to the house was the application of vinyl siding to the exterior, but this material was recently removed, re-exposing the more historic wood shingles.

FARM BUILDINGS

2. Workshop (late-18th century)

The small timber-frame building, measuring roughly 19 feet by 21 feet, is the oldest surviving structure in the farmyard. Its location close to the house suggests an early association, and its side-gabled form and scale resembles that of an English barn, which would have been common on farms in the region during the mid-18th-century (IMAGE 11). However, it is constructed of re-used post and beams and more recent rafters, and contains work benches and a spring-pole lathe installed in the early 19th century. The building is sided with wide, weathered boards; the west (front) and north sides are stained red, and the east side has no finish. It has a tarpaper roof. The interior of the building is divided into two sections, with swing doors on the north side opening into the workshop. An open bay on the south side of the building contains stairs leading to the loft, and a narrow storage area is enclosed on the extreme south end.

3. Animal Shed (mid-19th century)

The rectangular, gable-roof shed, measuring 25 feet by 16 feet is attached to the south end of the Workshop (2). The exterior is covered with wood novelty siding and weathered red stain, and an asphalt shingle roof (IMAGE 11). Its sawn framing system is consistent with mid-19th-century sawmill technology and construction methods. The small size of the hanging track door at the north end of the west (front) side of the building suggests there were horse or mule stalls in the northern half of the building. A makeshift door cut out of the siding at the south end of the wall was for farmer access into the southern half, which would have housed small animals. A larger opening on the south end of the building connects with the barnyard. A loft door is centered in the south gable.

4. Hay Barn (ca. 1895)

The Hay Barn was constructed ca. 1895 as an addition to the east end of an existing barn erected ca. 1850; this earlier barn collapsed in the 1980s and has been removed (IMAGE 12). The surviving 40 feet by 30 feet building is a standard 19th-century type, constructed for hay storage and processing grains for animal feed. It has a sawn balloon frame and open rafter system with a mechanized hay track (IMAGE 13). The exterior is covered with red-stained novelty siding, except on the west end, which was sided with vertical planks after the older barn was removed; the roof has asphalt shingles. A central (in this case off-center) threshing floor traverses the building from north to south; the original wood floor has been replaced with a concrete slab. A wide transom is located over the hanging track doors on the north side. A voluminous

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mow occupies the larger section, west of the entrance. The east side is divided by a platform, under which animals were housed and above which hay was piled. Initially, a door on the south side of the building provided cross ventilation and drive-through capability for the central aisle. This door now leads to the Cow House (5), constructed against the south wall of the barn ca. 1910. About the same time a Heifer House (6) and Silo (7) were constructed against the east end of the barn.

5. Cow House (ca. 1910)

The long, low Cow House, measuring 57 feet long and 30 feet wide, was added to the east side of the Hay Barn (4) ca. 1910 (IMAGES 14 & 15). Its walls are sided with novelty siding and red-stained on the front (west), and the gable roof is covered with corrugated metal. The long east and west walls are punctuated with windows that greatly improved the levels of light and ventilation provided to the Wheelers' Guernsey dairy herd. Two hanging track doors on the west side provided access to the barnyard; a door to the feed loft is located on the east end. A smaller annex, containing three stalls for bulls, is attached to the east end of the building (IMAGE 15). The interior has a concrete floor, and plastered walls and ceiling for the improved sanitary conditions required in the period (IMAGE 16). Metal stanchions line both sides of a center aisle, behind which are channels for conveying manure from the stalls and out through a door on the east end of the building.

6. Heifer House (ca. 1910)

The Heifer House was added to the east end of the Hay Barn (4) in the same period in which the Cow House (5) was constructed (IMAGES 12 & 15). The square 35 feet by 35 feet building has wood novelty siding and is red-stained on the north side. Like the Cow House, the interior walls of the Heifer House are finished in plaster walls, and metal stanchions are embedded in a concrete floor. There is a board stall in one corner.

7. Silo (ca. 1910)

A wood-stave silo is positioned between the Hay Barn (4) and Heifer House (6). It is recessed within a notch on the north side of the Heifer House, with a grain room and passageway behind it in the southwest corner of the Heifer House (IMAGES 12 & 15). Access doors into the silo open on the passageway, allowing feed to be transported to the Cow and Heifer houses internally. The silo's metal roof has collapsed and fallen within the structure.

8. Carriage House & Stable (ca. 1820)

The Carriage House and Stable is a 1½-story gable-roof building with a wood frame composed of hewn principal and sawn secondary members, typical of early 19th-century construction (IMAGES 4, 17 & 18). Its exterior walls have red-stained novelty siding that was added at a later date, and it is sited on a concrete foundation, suggesting that it may have been moved to its present location. The west gable end contains a hanging track wagon door and a mow door, cut from the siding. A hanging track door on the south side of the building once led to the stable area. Stall and tack room partitions have been removed from the interior, although evidence of their locations remains. An open stair on the north wall leads to the loft.

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Archaeological Description

The presence of ancient Native American sites has been documented on the Wheeler Farmstead property, and potential exists that additional Native resources are also present. Twelve ancient sites are recorded in the general area (within one mile). One site, the Truman Wheeler Farm Site (19-BK-112), is located on the Wheeler Farm, based on information contained in the Charles J. Taylor Collection and the Great Barrington Historical Commission Collection. The site is reported in the field area, east of the house and above the river. A pestle with an animal head effigy was given to Charles J. Taylor in 1874, by then-owner of the farm Merritt I. Wheeler. The pestle was reportedly found years before, when the farm was occupied by Claudius Wheeler. Two arrowheads found in 1887 opposite Merritt I. Wheeler's house were also reported from the site. No diagnostic artifacts are reported from the site.

Environmental characteristics of the Wheeler Farm represent locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, proximity to wetlands) that are favorable for the presence of Native sites. The farm is located on an excessively drained, level to moderately sloping glacial outwash plain/stream terrace in close proximity to wetlands. The Housatonic River is located less than 1,000 feet east of the house.

Given the above information, the present size of the farmstead (approximately 1.5 acres), and related historic-period land use, the presence of ancient Native American resources is documented on the Wheeler Farm property and a moderate to high potential exists that additional Ancient resources will be found.

A high potential also exists for locating historic archaeological resources on the Wheeler Farm property. While the Wheeler House and Workshop both date to the 18th century, and the Carriage House and Stable to the early 19th century, most extant agricultural outbuildings date to the mid 19th century or later. Construction features and structural evidence from the initial construction, and of later renovations for each of the buildings noted above may exist. Structural evidence may also survive from 18th- and 19th-century barns and agricultural outbuildings that likely predate the existing structures on the farm today. Occupational-related features (trash pits, privies, wells) that accumulated there over time may survive around the Wheeler House and associated farmstead buildings.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE

EXPLORATION / SETTLEMENT

MILITARY

Period of Significance

ca. 1733-1961

Significant Dates

ca. 1733 (north section constructed)

1764 (house enlarged)

1771 (house enlarged)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

Truman Wheeler

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance extends from ca. 1733, the date of the oldest elements in the Wheeler House, to 1961, which is the standard 50-year cutoff for historical significance. The Wheeler family occupied the property from 1764, and operated a farm here throughout the rest of the period of significance.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

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

The Wheeler Family Farmstead possesses historic and architectural significance as a property representing the full range of the agricultural history of the town of Great Barrington, Massachusetts. It also tells the story of the family that established the farm in the mid 18th century, when this far-western Massachusetts town was first settled, and that worked the land for five generations, and more than 200 years. The Wheeler Family Farmstead meets National Register Criteria A, B, and C at a local level of significance. Under Criterion A, it is historically significant for its association with the settlement and commercial development of the town of Great Barrington, and for its broad representation of the agricultural heritage of the region. The important role Truman Wheeler played in the formative years of the town and as a leader during the Revolutionary War confers significance on him as an individual, fulfilling Criterion B. The house is architecturally significant as one of the town's oldest buildings, and for its components embodying the distinctive characteristics of both 18th-century Dutch and English building traditions, fulfilling Criterion C. In addition, the evolution that the house and complex of farm buildings underwent over two centuries—years of continued use and functional adaptation—contributes to an understanding of the long history of the resource. Even though its setting has been compromised by sprawling commercial development along U.S. Rt. 7, changes have occurred without undermining the historic integrity of the farmstead buildings. The entire scope of Great Barrington's local history is exemplified in the buildings and residents of the Wheeler Family Farmstead.

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

Settlement & Exploration. The General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony began creating new townships in the western hinterlands in the early 18th century to alleviate overcrowding in Boston. Because of their remoteness from Boston, these towns were slow to develop, a fact compounded by conflicting claims on the land made by the Province of New York, which disputed the boundary. Truman Wheeler was one of about 500 persons who had settled in the town of Great Barrington, which had split off from the larger town of Sheffield in 1761. Like Wheeler, many of the settlers were young transplants from Connecticut, where established towns also were overpopulated. Truman Wheeler (1741-1815) began purchasing the land comprising the farm in 1768, although he probably had occupied the earliest portion of the house ever since 1764, when he arrived in Great Barrington from Woodbury, Connecticut. At that time he was already known as a merchant, and he operated a store from his house until his death in 1815. His role in the settlement and commercial development of the town was considered significant by historians who wrote about the early history of the town..

Military. Wheeler was actively engaged in local efforts in support of the Revolutionary War, first as a member of the town's Committee of Correspondence, Inspection, and Safety, and then as Muster Master,

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recruiting hundreds of men to the American cause. He saw action at the Battle of Bennington, and joined other campaigns in the Continental Army's Northern Department. During the war, he also served as the town treasurer, and by the end of the War of Independence had achieved the rank of captain in the militia. Wheeler was justice of the peace and presided over cases during Shays' Rebellion, a rural uprising over high postwar taxes, economic hardship, and farm foreclosures occurring in western Massachusetts in 1786. In 1796, he was elected a representative to the Great and General Court of the Commonwealth.

Architecture. The farm's house was constructed in a number of stages, nearly all of them prior to Truman Wheeler's death in 1815. The oldest section incorporates a bent-framing system associated with Hudson River Valley Dutch architecture, which reflects Great Barrington's earliest jurisdiction under the Westenhook Patent, granted by the Province of New York in 1705. The proximity of this region to New York and the longstanding boundary dispute between the two colonies resulted in the intermingling of two distinctive building traditions. Dated 1733-1750, the structure predates Wheeler's presence on the property. Wheeler added another room and a center chimney, transforming the Dutch dwelling/store to a classic 1½-story Massachusetts hall-parlor house. As his family and local prestige grew, so did the house; Wheeler raised the front façade to a full two stories, and added a kitchen ell and wagon house to the rear.

Agriculture. Truman and Hulda Caldwell Wheeler's youngest son, Claudius (1790-1863), obtained title to the farm after Truman's death in 1815, and Claudius proceeded to develop it into one of the most productive agricultural properties in the town. By 1850, the farm contained 130 acres; the oldest farm buildings on the property appeared in this period. Merritt Ives Wheeler (1826-1907) was the next generation to assume proprietorship; he was the only son born to Claudius and Mary Ives Wheeler. A graduate of Amherst Agricultural College (now part of the University of Massachusetts), and later to be a trustee, he was the first to introduce Guernsey dairy cows into western Massachusetts. New farm buildings were constructed, and others upgraded, in response to the progressive farming methods he implemented. Merritt I. Wheeler served in a number of town offices, and was a founding trustee of the Great Barrington Savings Bank. Although he enlarged and modernized the kitchen ell, Wheeler highly valued the history of the family homestead and endeavored to preserve it. Frank J. Wheeler (1864-ca.1925), son of Merritt I. and Sarah Cooper, took over the farm next, and although Frank introduced some new, up-to-date farm buildings, he and his wife, Almira Smith, experienced the continued, slow decline of agriculture in the region. By 1930, their son, F. Truman Wheeler (1906-2000), became the last of five generations to manage the farm, during a period of diminishing returns. Both F. Truman Wheeler and his wife, Esther Robinson, were employed off the farm. Both were active in the Great Barrington Grange until it abandoned its charter in 1988. Edith Wheeler died in 2004. With the exception of the old house and surviving farm buildings, the Wheeler farm was sold for commercial development; the historic buildings were conveyed to the Great Barrington Historical Society in 2007 which is the current owner of the nominated property.

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Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

Truman Wheeler (1741-1815) was born in Woodbury, Connecticut, on November 26, 1741. He was descended from Thomas Wheeler, of Cranefield, Bedfordshire, England, who brought his family to Concord, Massachusetts, where he was recorded as a freeman in 1636. He is believed to have sailed to America with the Rev. John Jones's company, on the ship *Defiance*, which landed in New England in 1635. The Rev. Jones's company resettled in Fairfield, Connecticut by 1644, where Thomas Wheeler purchased land in 1649. Truman's great-grandfather, John Wheeler, established the family in Woodbury, and his father, Obadiah Wheeler (1718-1806), was born there. He married Agnes Tuttle in 1740, and they produced ten children of whom Truman was the eldest.¹ He reputedly attended Yale University in nearby New Haven before settling in Great Barrington in 1764, where he is remembered as one of the town's first merchants.² His first place of business was south of the village and probably on the nominated property, which he acquired in at least three recorded transactions between 1768 and 1778. Wheeler married Hulda Caldwell of Southbury, Connecticut, in 1771, and they began the long line of generations that developed the Wheeler Family Farmstead.

Western Massachusetts was late in developing. New towns did not organize there until the second half of the 18th century. In particular, Great Barrington was not recognized as an independent town by the General Court until 1761, just three years before Truman Wheeler appeared there. And like many new towns in the region, it attracted many young settlers from Connecticut, which was, like eastern Massachusetts, overcrowded. Although patents for new towns along the West Brook or Housatonic River had been granted by the General Court by 1732, settlement was impeded by competing claims on the land by Massachusetts and New York. In 1705, Peter Schuyler and Derrick Wessells obtained a patent from the Province of New York for land "on a creek called Westenhook" that covered most of present-day southern Berkshire County and extended into Connecticut.³ As English settlers began to move into the region, disputes arose with New York over the legitimacy of titles, and slowed population considerably. By the time the town of Great Barrington was established in 1761, inhabitants of the town numbered about 500. Its location on the Sheffield Road leading east to the Hudson River, at a point where it bridged the Housatonic River, made it a focus of commercial and industrial activity.

Four years following his arrival in Great Barrington, Truman Wheeler made his first land purchase. In 1768, Warham Lee sold him 20 acres of land south of the town center between the highway and the Housatonic.⁴ Known as Lee's Meadow, it was in an area prone to flooding. Lee had obtained the land

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¹ *History of the Wheeler Family in America* (Boston: American College of Genealogy, 1914), 200 & 222.

² Charles J. Taylor, *History of Great Barrington, Massachusetts* (1882), 213. Taylor claimed Truman Wheeler came to Great Barrington from Southbury, Connecticut. Three account books from Wheeler's store are in the collections of the library at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana, and they document the extent of his merchant activities from 1764 to 1815. These books were not consulted in the preparation of this nomination.

³ *History of Berkshire County, Massachusetts, Vol. 2* (1885), 3.

⁴ Berkshire County Registry of Deeds, Middle District, deed book 5, page 8, deed dated 15 May 1768.

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from his father, Samuel, in 1765, along with his homestead on the west side of the road.⁵ (It was bounded on the south by land belonging to the heirs of Joseph Noble, who came from Westfield, Massachusetts, around 1726 with his father, Matthew Noble, the town's "first settler."⁶) North of the Lees' homestead, were the house lots of Samuel and Asahel Dewey, who were also natives of Westfield.⁷ They were joint proprietors of the Sheffield township, which until 1761 included Great Barrington, and together were allotted 466 acres by grant. By 1750 they had claimed lands amounting to 104.5 acres; the balance was still held in common by the proprietors.⁸ When they obtained the 13-acre home lot north of the Lees' is unclear, but Samuel Dewey is said to have had a house standing there in 1733; a year later, Asahel built a dwelling fifteen rods north of it.⁹

Asahel Dewey sold his house and the northern part of the lot to David Stowe in 1769.¹⁰ After receiving it in the distribution of his estate, Asahel Dewey's daughter, Johannah, and her husband, Lucius King, sold Truman Wheeler the southern part of the home lot containing Samuel Dewey's dwelling in 1771. The deed does not mention the house, but its presence was cited in other sources. However, the deed also reserves for the grantor the use of "one half of the Barn which was formerly Asahel Dewey's & one half of the Linter or Cow House by s'd barn & one half of the Yard belonging to said Barn with a convenient Road to pass & repass to and from said Barn Yard & Linter with carriages, etc."¹¹

The Dutch bent-frame section of the current Wheeler house very likely could be Samuel Dewey's dwelling, and it represents the intersection of Dutch and English culture in the contested region straddling the western boundary of Massachusetts. Two notable local examples are Isaac Van Deusen's stone house, built in 1771 in the northern part of Great Barrington, and John Tuller's brick house, built in 1761 in the adjoining town of Egremont. The design of the 1½ story, gable-roof stone house duplicates that of hundreds of 18th-century stone houses in the Hudson River Valley. Likewise, the Tuller house, its construction date delineated with glazed headers in one end, reflects another popular mode of Dutch architecture in New York. Ironically, the gambrel roof had been introduced into Dutch house design following precedents in New England.¹² Examples of wood-frame houses with Dutch bent framing have been slower to emerge, since as in the case of the Wheeler house, their distinguishing characteristics have been concealed within larger and later buildings, if not lost altogether. A bent frame was discovered in a recent restoration of a late 18th-century story-and-a-half, wood-frame house in the Great Barrington area, associated historically with the Hollenbeck family. More careful and systematic inspections of Berkshire County's early farmhouses will no doubt identify additional examples. In all three instances, the owners had names of Dutch origin, and were from families that had migrated east from New York. Having come from Westfield, Massachusetts, the Deweys are an exception in this case, which suggests that builders skilled in Dutch construction methods erected houses for English settlers.

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⁵ Ibid., deed book 2 page 592, deed dated 2 April 1765.

⁶ Taylor, *History of Great Barrington, Massachusetts*, 112.

⁷ It has not been established if Samuel Dewey was Asahel Dewey's father or his brother.

⁸ Berkshire County Registry of Deeds, Middle District, Colonial Records, vol. 2, 228.

⁹ Taylor, *History of Great Barrington, Massachusetts*, 110.

¹⁰ Ibid., 111.

¹¹ Berkshire County Registry of Deeds, Middle District, deed book 5 page 25, deed dated 8 November 1771.

¹² Walter R. Wheeler, "The Introduction of the Gambrel Roof to the Upper Hudson Valley," *The Hudson River Valley Review* 21:1 (Fall 2004), 1-11.

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It is not known for sure where Truman Wheeler resided between 1764, when he arrived in Great Barrington, and 1771, when he bought Samuel Dewey's house. Perhaps he lived in the building where his store was located; perhaps he inhabited Dewey's house before he purchased it. (It is not entirely clear if these two places, in fact, were not one and the same.) What is obvious, however, is that Wheeler purchased the Dewey house in anticipation of his marriage to Hulda Caldwell (1751-1799) of Southbury later that year. One historian, who has been echoed by others ever since, noted that Truman Wheeler "built in 1771 the present Wheeler house—the frame of which was raised on the first of August of that year—and afterwards had his store in the north front room of that house."¹³ Apparently, what Truman Wheeler built that year was a new room south of the Dewey house, with a chimney and entry in between them. The 1½-story addition has a box frame in the New England tradition, and with the center chimney and symmetrical front façade, the house would have resembled the common Massachusetts hall-parlor house of the period.¹⁴ A bed chamber was created in the half-story above the parlor. By this time, Dutch influence on local construction evidently was on the wane.

As a merchant and early settler, Truman Wheeler likely was involved in the governance of the town of Great Barrington, but his actions during the Revolutionary War are well documented. On July 6, 1774, he and two other Great Barrington men attended a convention in Stockbridge of "sixty gentlemen, deputies of several towns in the county of Berkshire, appointed to consult and advise what was necessary and prudent to be done by the inhabitants of this county, in the present alarming situation of our public affairs."¹⁵ Wheeler later was a member of the town's Committee of Correspondence, Inspection & Safety.¹⁶ He also was one of 22 local men who volunteered in 1775 to be post riders in a network dedicated to getting intelligence about the rebellion from Boston to the western hinterlands of the colony.¹⁷ In 1776, the Massachusetts House of Representatives appointed Truman Wheeler Muster Master for the county. He apparently fulfilled his official duties with gusto, as he is credited with enlisting nearly 1,000 men into the service of the Continental Army over the next three or four years.¹⁸ Wheeler also served with the Berkshire County militia, under the command of Continental Army General John Stark, in the Battle of Bennington on August 16, 1777. He also spent 31 days in the service of General Horatio Gates in the Northern Division, presumably in the battles at Saratoga on September 19 and October 7, 1777. In 1781, as a member of Capt. John Ingersoll's company of the First Berkshire County Militia Regiment, he served twelve days under Brig. Gen. John Fellows on alarm in Stillwater, New York (where the Battle of Saratoga had taken place).¹⁹ Following Burgoyne's defeat at Saratoga,

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¹³ Taylor, *History of Great Barrington, Massachusetts*, 213.

¹⁴ Michael Steinitz, "Rethinking Geographical Approaches to the Common House: The Evidence from Eighteenth-century Massachusetts," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture, III*, Thomas Carter and Bernard L. Herman, eds. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press for the Vernacular Architecture Forum, 1989), 16-26.

¹⁵ *The Journals of Each Provincial Congress of Massachusetts in 1774 and 1775 and of the Committee of Safety* (1838), 652. Taylor, *History of Great Barrington, Massachusetts*, 199.

¹⁶ Taylor, *History of Great Barrington, Massachusetts*, 201.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 171.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 264.

¹⁹ *Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors in the War of the Revolution* (1907), 995 & 1026.

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British prisoners of war were marched to Cambridge, Massachusetts, on a route that went through Great Barrington. Local historians cite that they were Hessian German mercenaries who had fought for the British. Truman Wheeler is remembered as successfully treating a number of prisoners having "camp fever" with an herbal remedy.²⁰

During this time, Truman Wheeler also acted as town treasurer and justice of the peace in Great Barrington. During Shays' Rebellion (1786-1787), he reputedly provided protection in his home for Deputy Sheriff Ezra Kellog, who was fleeing an angry mob. Shays' Rebellion was an armed uprising of impoverished farmers that originated in Springfield under the leadership of Daniel Shays, and spread into Berkshire County. Plagued by debt and taxes, and often imprisoned for failure to pay the same, the rebels organized to prevent the seizure of their property by the courts. They staged peaceable demonstrations modeled after the crowd activities of the 1760s and 1770s, using "liberty poles" and "liberty trees" to symbolize their cause.²¹ But crowds sometimes lost control, and sheriffs were frequently targets of the rebels' wrath as they were the individuals who served foreclosure notices and carried out arrest warrants issued against debtors. By the end of 1786 more than 1,000 Shaysites had been arrested. A desperate raid was made on the armory in Springfield on February 3, 1787. This action was defeated by a hastily assembled militia consisting of local war veterans, leaving the Shaysites confounded by the severity of the response by their neighbors. Rebels fled to the west; many were captured in Petersham, in northwest Worcester County, the following day and imprisoned. After this, there would be no more armed resistance. Most of the rebels were pardoned, but two were hanged for their roles in the raid. Shays was captured but was freed in 1788; afterwards he moved to Conesus, New York.

Truman Wheeler's final act of public service was as an elected representative of the Great and General Court of Massachusetts in 1796. By then he and Hulda had produced all of their twelve children, and would have enlarged the house to its existing two-story height, with a large one-story kitchen ell and attached wagon house. His farm was probably functioning at no more than subsistence level at this point. Bartering in the store provided him with a boon of local commodities. Hulda Wheeler died in 1799, leaving seven children under 25 years of age in the household, enumerated with Truman in the 1800 U.S. census. Truman Wheeler died in 1815, and apparently the store enterprise died with him.

The 1820 census for Great Barrington lists the households of four of Truman's sons: Peter [Peyton] R., Gideon, Obadiah, and Claudius Wheeler. A fifth son, Truman's namesake, had returned to Woodbury, Connecticut, to live with his grandfather on the family homestead there, which he later inherited. Claudius, the youngest of Truman and Hulda Wheeler's sons, succeeded them on the Great Barrington farm by a presently unknown process of conveyance. Claudius Wheeler made no distinguishable alterations to the house, although he may have been the one, rather than his father, to move and attach the wagon house to the rear of the kitchen ell. Where he had the greatest impact on the property was in the improvement of the farm into a model agricultural facility. The value of his farm (\$8,000), recorded in

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²⁰ Taylor, *History of Great Barrington, Massachusetts*.

²¹ Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty! An American History*. (New York: W.W Norton & Company, 2006). 218-219

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the agricultural schedule of the 1860 U.S. census, was ranked in the top seven percent of farm values in the town. Only 10 out of the 160 farms recorded in the town ranked higher; the highest-valued farm was assessed at \$16,000. An account of the town written in the *Berkshire Courier* in December 1886 included this comment about Claudius Wheeler's place: "Here you find a place for everything and everything in its place—a model farm."²² His brother Gideon's farm was located next to the north. The only comment made was that Gideon had a large family.

In 1778, Truman Wheeler paid David Stowe 230 pounds for a lot of land "containing between sixty and seventy acres" on the west side of the highway opposite his house.²³ This evidently was part of the land Stowe had purchased earlier from the Deweys. Five years later, Truman bought a 15-acre wood lot from Warham Lee. The wood lot was "four rods West of the Roaring Brook" and remote from the homestead.²⁴ These parcels were part of the 50 improved and 80 unimproved acres Claudius Wheeler was farming in 1850, with three horses and a brace of oxen, to feed fourteen cattle, five milk cows, 63 sheep and eleven swine, in a mixed-husbandry farm typical of the period. Cattle raising was a longstanding standard of New England farms, as was sheep tending; both were well-suited to graze in the unimproved forests and rocky hillsides of the region. Lee's Meadow along the river was wet, but produced valuable hay for winter feeding (50 tons in 1850), and better-drained ground, perhaps in the large lot west of the highway, was tilled to produce wheat (30 bushels in 1850), rye (70 bu.), Indian corn (200 bu.), and oats (300 bu.), most of which was grown for animal feed, as well as Irish potatoes (100 bu.). The cows produced milk sufficient to make 500 pounds of butter and 200 pounds of cheese. The sheep generated 100 pounds of wool. Beef and pork slaughtered and butchered on the farm was valued at 200 dollars. No orchard products were reported as having value, but it would have been very unusual for there not to have been some fruit trees. This range and scope of production describes a "model" Berkshire County farm of the period, and it characterizes the distinction of Claudius Wheeler's farm in the local context.

When Truman Wheeler purchased Samuel Dewey's house lot in 1764, it included half of a barn and linter or attached cow house. This farm building no longer exists, and while it may have been preserved by Claudius Wheeler, by 1850 he had built a much larger and improved barn, which survived for more than a century until it finally collapsed in the 1980s. It was a model mid-19th-century barn, voluminous enough to accommodate the increasing amounts of hay storage needed to support a large animal population, with a central threshing floor to process grains. The rectangular, timber-frame building had a gable roof, and doors centered on the long sides in the traditional New England manner, but it was much larger than its 18th-century antecedents. Progressive barns of the period often were built on high masonry basements that contained animal stalls, but in this case it seems that neither the topography nor the water table allowed it. The old barn and linter, or another cow house no longer extant, would have been needed to

(continued)

²² Bernard N. Drew, *Great Barrington, Great Town Great History* (Great Barrington MA: Great Barrington Historical Society, 1999), 210.

²³ Berkshire County Registry of Deeds, Middle District, deed book 5 page 572, deed dated 2 February 1778.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, book 5 page 450, deed dated 18 March 1873.

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National Park Service

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Section number 8 Page 8

Wheeler Family Farmstead

Name of Property

Berkshire, MA

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contain the milk cows and work animals. Beef cattle would roam outside, as would sheep and swine, although small sheds would have been built as shelters for them. A wagon house, with stables for the horses, still exists from the time of Claudius Wheeler, as does a workshop on the west side of the barnyard.

Claudius Wheeler was 60 years of age in 1850, and nearing the end of his working life. His second wife, Mary Ives, daughter of Capt. James Ives and Mary Brocket Ives of North Haven, Connecticut, was the same age. (Miranda Griswold was his first wife and the mother of the first two of his five children; she died in 1820.) The three children of Claudius and Mary lived in their household in 1850: Mary E., age 21, Georgianna, age 18, and Merritt Ives Wheeler, age 23. The latter worked with his father on the farm and would inherit it. A young Englishman, Samuel Hard, boarded with the Wheelers, as did a 25-year-old black laborer named Henry Burghardt. Burghardt was the name of some of Great Barrington's early Dutch settlers, and an African American family in the town was descended from Burghardt-owned slaves. The civil rights figure W.E.B. (William Edward Burghardt) DuBois (1868-1963), a Great Barrington native, was a member of that family.

Merritt I. Wheeler (1827-1907) had assumed proprietorship of the family farm by 1856, when he married Sarah E. Cooper (1829-1901), daughter of John L. Cooper and Mary Fellows Cooper of Sheffield. The 1860 census denotes him as head of household, with real estate valued at \$10,000. By then he and Sarah had two young children, Henry L. and Elizabeth, born in 1856 and 1858, respectively. His parents were still living—Claudius was entered in the census as a gentleman—and his aunt, Lucinda, a spinster, also boarded in the household. A teenage servant girl and three young male laborers, two born in Ireland, were enumerated with the family. Claudius Wheeler died in 1863. The next census (1870) records Merritt I. and Sarah E. Wheeler in a household with five children. Their daughter Elizabeth died that year, and John C., Mary E., Frank T., and Howard were added. Mary Cooper Wheeler, aged 79 years, was enumerated with her son; she died later that year. The list rounds out with a female domestic, a farm laborer, and Mary A. Cross, a school teacher.

The agricultural schedule for 1870 indicates the declining production and value of the Wheeler Family Farm, as well as the region in general. The agricultural economies of eastern New York and New England were declining by this time, as good soils had become exhausted, and railroads brought cheaper farm products from farther west to the urban markets that had been the mainstay of the regional rural economy. Year by year farms in the fertile Hudson River Valley lost pieces of their market shares. The mountainous towns in western Massachusetts, which were not particularly hospitable to agriculture in the first place, were hard hit even sooner. The Berkshire Railroad opened in 1842, connecting the region with Bridgeport, Connecticut, and New York via the Housatonic Railroad. While it facilitated the shipment of farm goods to city markets, the railroad also became the conduit of summer tourists into the Berkshires, which had a tremendous transformative effect on the local economy.

(continued)

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The value of Merritt I. Wheeler's farm declined, from \$10,000 to \$7,000, between 1860 and 1870. Whereas the value of his father's farm had ranked eleventh out of 160 farms in 1850, the value of Merritt's registered around 50th out of 144 farms. (With more than one farm valued at \$7,000, a more precise ranking is not possible.) The farm still contained 130 acres in 1870, although the area of improved acres had increased by 80 percent over 20 years, from 50 acres in 1850 to 90 acres in 1870. Implements and machinery were valued, and \$1,000 in wages were recorded. The oxen had been replaced by mules, likely an innovation. The number of livestock had dramatically decreased, but their value had doubled. This population decline may be less steep than reported. That no sheep were counted may have been an error, as 120 pounds of wool are entered as a product. The spike in value may represent Merritt I. Wheeler's investment in Guernsey milk cows, which he is credited as introducing to the county around this time. The selection of crops remained essentially the same, except that wheat was no longer grown. The farm churned out 700 pounds of butter in 1870, substantially more than the 500 pounds made in 1850; this was achieved with only one more cow, suggesting the superior production was the result of the Guernseys and improved farming methods. No cheese was made, but 250 gallons of milk were shipped to local creameries, or sent raw by train to the city.

The 1880 U.S. census records only family in Merritt I. Wheeler's household. He was 53 years of age; two of his five sons, John C. and Frank J., worked with him on the farm. No employees were boarded in the house, and this is reflected in the accounting of \$50 spent on farm labor in the 1880 agricultural schedule. By then, the overall cash value of the farm had diminished to \$4,000, yet the number of milk cows had more than doubled to fifteen. From these cows, 2,285 pounds of butter was produced in 1879, an extreme amount when compared to the hundreds of pounds recorded for other farms. What also is remarkable is that butter had already been eclipsed by fluid milk as the desired end product of the dairy farm process, and the Wheeler Family Farm, which for decades represented progressive agriculture in the region, evidently had not made the transition. Alternatively, the high butter-fat content of Guernsey milk made it more valuable for butter production. (Perhaps butter was sold at a premium to local hotels, guest houses, and summer cottages.) Only four farms exceeded the Wheelers' butter output, indicating, perhaps, that they had Guernsey herds as well. Of them, George M. Hollenbeck (2,450 lbs.) and Jacob Van Deusen (2,975 lbs.) represented families whose histories went back to the 18th century, like the Wheelers (but were of Dutch lineage). The highest butter production (7,500 lbs.) came from Henry D. Cone's 50 cows. Cone had an enormous, 1,200-acre model farm north of the Wheeler property in VanDeusenville, where he owned a paper mill.

The 1880 census counted six other cattle on the farm, and recorded nine calves dropped in the previous year. There were a number of sheep with six lambs born and two animals killed by dogs; 15 fleeces and 60 pounds of wool were assessed to the farm. A new addition to the barnyard was chickens, valued at \$50, from which 450 dozen eggs, another desirable resort product, had been sold. A large chicken house and coop had been built on the north side of the property. Twenty acres of land were maintained as meadow or pasture, and 45 acres were tilled. Less than half of this was further classified as follows: four

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
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Section number 8 Page 10

Wheeler Family Farmstead

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acres planted in rye, three acres planted in corn, three acres in buckwheat, two in potatoes, two in oats, and none in wheat. A two-acre orchard contained 80 apple trees that produced 275 bushels of fruit at 70 dollars in value. The Wheelers made \$100 from vegetables grown in their garden, probably sold locally.

Even though the farm declined in value during his lifetime, Merritt I. Wheeler can be considered a successful farmer, businessman, and civic leader in Great Barrington. He was eulogized in the 1922 edition of the *History of Great Barrington* as follows:

Merritt I. Wheeler was a grandson of one of the first settlers. He was born in 1826 in the homestead, 817 Main Street, where he lived all his life. He was educated in the public schools. He was the first to introduce Guernsey cattle into the region. He was a trustee of Amherst Agricultural College and was identified with other agricultural interests. He had seven children. Mr. Wheeler rendered many services to the town. He was assessor, a member of the school committee and moderator of town meetings for several years, and was a trustee of the Great Barrington Savings Bank from the time it started. He was especially attached to the home of his ancestors and preserved in its original condition one room in the portion of the house built by Truman Wheeler in 1771. One of the panels in this room, cut from a single board, measures three feet in width. Mr. Wheeler died in 1907. A grandson represents the fifth generation born in the house.²⁵

The existing hay barn on the property was erected by Merritt I. Wheeler in the 1890s to increase hay storage yet again; it was attached to a barn of similar proportions (now gone), built by his father. But in 1899, Wheeler sold a piece of the farm to the Wyantenuck Country Club, an indication that cash was in short supply for expenses or taxes.²⁶

In 1898, Merritt and Sarah Wheeler's son, Frank J., had married Almira B. Smith, and the two were groomed to take over the farm from his aging parents. By 1910, Frank J. Wheeler was enumerated as head of a household containing his wife, three-year-old son Frank Truman, unmarried brother Albert G. Wheeler, mother-in-law Sarah A. Smith, and a recently immigrated Italian farm laborer. Frank had just erected, or soon would erect, a modern sanitary cow house perpendicular to the new hay barn his father had built. Fully plastered, with fixed iron stanchions and a mechanized manure removal system, the building is another example of the family's responsiveness to improved agricultural methods and commitment to farm modernization. Another innovation, a wood-slat silo, was constructed at this time for corn silage, which had recently been deemed essential to the diet of dairy cows in order to increase the butter-fat content in their milk. The silo was attached to the east end of the hay barn with a shed for calves and heifers erected on the other side. Bull pens added in a wing attached to the south end of the cow house show the Wheelers were actively breeding their Guernseys.

(continued)

²⁵ Taylor, et al., *History of Great Barrington, 1676-1927*, 547

²⁶ Drew, *Great Barrington, Great Town Great History*, 554.

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Wheeler Family Farmstead

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A second son, Kenneth M., was added to Frank J. and Almira Wheeler's family in 1911. In 1920 the household was augmented by only one farm laborer, Russian-born John Olesky. A Pole, Martin Oslasky, had taken the position by 1930. Frank J. Wheeler had died by this time, leaving his widow and sons on the farm to weather out the Great Depression. The eldest, F. Truman Wheeler (1906-2000), became the fifth and last generation of the family to own and operate the farm. He married Edith Robinson (1917-2004), daughter of Norval Robinson and Jesse Hill of Pittsfield, in 1939. Over the next 60 years, they gradually scaled the farm back and, in response to the economic hardships of supporting an agricultural property, took on other jobs to make ends meet. F. Truman Wheeler worked for the Great Barrington Milk Exchange and Fairdale Farms, a large farm and dairy in Bennington, Vermont. Edith Wheeler was employed as a telephone operator in Housatonic, Massachusetts early in her life; later she worked as a caregiver in private homes.²⁷ Both were active in the Great Barrington Grange No. 265 (Patrons of Husbandry), for more than 50 years, up to the time when it relinquished its charter in 1988. F. Truman Wheeler served as the organization's treasurer for 21 years, and Edith was a member of various committees and participated in charitable activities.²⁸

Like his grandfather and namesake, F. Truman Wheeler sold parts of the farm to raise cash. In 1966, he conveyed land to the Great Barrington Housing Authority for an elderly housing project.²⁹ Three years later, he sold a lot to the local utility, Mass Electric, for a 16,000 square-foot operations center.³⁰ The Wheelers finally abandoned the farm in 1988, and moved into the home of one of their two children. The farm remained vacant for nearly 20 years until the Wheelers died, and their heirs placed the property, already surrounded by intense commercial development, on the real estate market. The vacant land was sold for commercial development, while the house and farm buildings situated on a 1.5-acre lot, were conveyed to the Great Barrington Historical Society in 2008. The organization intends to restore the house, stabilize the farm buildings, and present it to the public as a rare relic of Great Barrington's agricultural history. They will use the house as their headquarters and interpretive center, as well as for the storage of archival and object collections.

Archaeological Significance

Since patterns of ancient Native American settlement in Great Barrington are poorly understood, any surviving sites could be significant. Ancient sites in this area may contribute information related to Native American subsistence and settlement patterns in the uplands of western Massachusetts. Ancient sites in this area may improve our knowledge of Native people along the Housatonic River drainage, and their relationships with other Native socio/political groups to the south in the Connecticut area, to the west towards the Hudson River drainage in New York, or eastward to the Connecticut River locale. Ancient sites in this area may also contribute important information related to the study of Native American exchange systems and the role they played in the spread of technologies, ideas, and material goods between the areas noted above, as well as eastern and southern coastal locales.

(continued)

²⁷ Thumbnails of F. Truman and Edith R. Wheeler, *Great Barrington Historical Society's Newsletter*, No. 47 (Summer 2007), 4.

²⁸ Drew, *Great Barrington, Great Town Great History*, 21.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 283.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 159.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Section number 8 Page 12

Wheeler Family Farmstead

Name of Property

Berkshire, MA

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Historic archaeological resources described above may contribute important information related to the early settlement of the western Massachusetts Berkshire County region, and the agricultural history of the town of Great Barrington. Additional historical research, combined with archaeological survey and testing, may contribute important information related to the early settlement and orientation of structures associated with the farmstead and start of agriculture in Great Barrington. Archaeological evidence of structures no longer extant, existing buildings, and the contents of occupational-related features, may contribute further evidence of building components and spatial patterning that embody distinctive characteristics of both Dutch and English building traditions recognized in the Wheeler Farmhouse. Similar sources of evidence from over 200 years of Wheeler family occupation may also contribute important information related to the agricultural history of the farmstead and town of Great Barrington, as the Wheeler family adapted to changes in agricultural technology and market versus subsistence stimuli. Detailed study of the contents of occupational-related features associated with over 200 years of Wheeler family occupation may contribute important social, cultural, and economic information related to the Wheeler family, and life on the farmstead and in the town of Great Barrington from the 18th to 20th centuries.

(end)

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Wheeler Family Farmstead
Name of Property
Berkshire, MA
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 9/10 Page 1

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Ancestry.com. U.S. Census Schedules, 1790-1930.
 Drew, Bernard A. *Great Barrington, Great Town Great History*. Great Barrington MA: Great Barrington Historical Society, 1999.
 Great Barrington MA. Berkshire County Registry of Deeds, Middle District. Deeds and early patent records.
 Great Barrington MA. Great Barrington Historical Society. "Draft National Register Nomination Form." Prepared by James Parrish. 2008.
History of Berkshire County, Massachusetts. 1885.
History of the Wheeler Family in America. Boston: American College of Genealogy, 1914.
Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors in the War of the Revolution, Vol. XVI. 1907.
 Pittsfield MA. National Archives, Silvio O. Conte Records Center. U.S. Census Agricultural Schedules, 1850-1880.
 Taylor, Charles J. *History of Great Barrington, Massachusetts*. 1882
 Taylor, Charles J., annotated by Ralph Wainwright Pope & George Edwin McLean. *History of Great Barrington, Massachusetts, 1676-1927*. Great Barrington MA: Town of Great Barrington, 1927.

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 # N/A
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # N/A

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: Great Barrington Historical Society

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): GBR.62 (house), GBR.276 (barn)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.548 acres
 (Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number photos Page 1

Wheeler Family Farmstead

Name of Property

Berkshire, MA

County and State

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Photographs:

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

Name of Property: Wheeler Family Farmstead
City or Vicinity: Great Barrington
County: Berkshire **State:** Massachusetts
Photographer: Neil Larson
Date Photographed: 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 18: View of House from NW. First stage of house is contained in the first story of the NW corner in foreground; the dwelling was extended south (right) in Stage II, with the second story of the front façade and ground floor of kitchen ell (left) added in Stage III. The second story was added to the ell in Stage IV.
- 2 of 18: View of House from SE. Wagon House (right) was moved and attached to the ell in Stage III.
- 3 of 18: View of House from NE. Part of Wagon House on left.
- 4 of 18: View of Wagon House from N. Privy (left), once attached to E end of N side, temporarily moved.
- 5 of 18: View of S wall of Stage I room (store). Paneling added in Stage II.
- 6 of 18: View of W side of Stage I room, showing exposed posts from Dutch frame.
- 7 of 18: View of N wall Stage II room (parlor). Door and paneling on right once like that on left, altered in Stage III.

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National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

Wheeler Family Farmstead
Name of Property
Berkshire, MA
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number photos Page 2

- 8 of 18: View of W wall of kitchen. Door to store on far right, door to parlor (added) on left, doors to stairs and closet (old door to parlor) in center.
- 9 of 18: View of kitchen from SW, showing mantel shelf remaining from kitchen fireplace and patch in floor where hearth once existed. Door to back kitchen on right; Stage III partition and door to dining room on left.
- 10 of 18: View of back kitchen from SW. Added lavatory on left.
- 11 of 18: View of Workshop (2) and Shed (3), left to right, from SW.
- 12 of 18: View of Hay Barn (4), Silo (7) & Heifer House (6), right to left, from NW; Cow House (5) is behind Hay Barn and Carriage House & Stables (8) is detached in background on right.
- 13 of 18: View of interior of Hay Barn (4).
- 14 of 18: View of W side of Cow House (5) and barnyard; Hay Barn (4) on left, Carriage House & Stables (8) in background.
- 15 of 18: View of Cow House (5), Silo (7), and Heifer House (6), left to right, from S; remains of concrete pig sty in foreground.
- 16 of 18: View of interior of Cow House (5).
- 17 of 18: View of Carriage House & Stables (8) from SW.
- 18 of 18: Interior view of Carriage House & Stables (8).

Property Owner:
(complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Great Barrington Historical Society
street & number P.O. Box 1106 telephone _____
city or town Great Barrington state MA zip code 01230

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Wheeler Family Farmstead
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Berkshire

DATE RECEIVED: 7/22/11 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/15/11
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/30/11 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/06/11
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 11000614

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 9/6/2011 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A, B & C
REVIEWER Vatrick Andrus DISCIPLINE Historian
TELEPHONE _____ DATE 9/6/2011

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.



MA-GREATBARRINGTON (BERKSHIRE COUNTY) - WHEELER 01.tif

Wheeler Family Farmstead
Great Barrington, Berkshire Co., MA
Photo by Neil Larson, 2010

PHOTO 1: View of house from SW



MA-GREATBARRINGTON(BERKSHIRECOUNTY)-WHEELERO2.tif

Wheeler Family Farmstead
Great Barrington, Berkshire Co., MA
Photo by Neil Larson, 2010

PHOTO 2: View of house from SE



MA - GREAT BARRINGTON (BERKSHIRE COUNTY) - WHEELER03.tif

Wheeler Family Farmstead
Great Barrington, Berkshire Co., MA
Photo by Neil Larson, 2010

PHOTO 3: View of house from NE



MA_GREATBARRINGTON (BERKSHIRE COUNTY) - WHEELER OT. tif

Wheeler Family Farmstead
Great Barrington, Berkshire Co., MA
Photo by Neil Lanson, 2010

PHOTO 4: View of Wagon House & Privy (detached) from N



MA_GREATBARRINGTON (BERKSHIRE COUNTY) - WHEELERS. tif

Wheeler Family Farmstead

Great Barrington, Berkshire Co., MA

Photo by Neil Lanson, 2010

PHOTO 5: View of north room looking south



MA - GREAT BARRINGTON (BERKSHIRE COUNTY) - WHEELER OG..tif

Wheeler Family Farmstead
Great Barrington, Berkshire Co., MA
Photo by Neil Lanson, 2010

PHOTO 6: View of north room looking west



MA - GREAT BARRINGTON (BERKSHIRE COUNTY) - WHEELER 07. tif

Wheeler Family Farmstead

Great Barrington, Berkshire Co., MA

Photo by Neil Larson, 2010

PHOTO 7: View of south room looking north



MA - GREAT BARRINGTON (BERKSHIRE COUNTY) - WHEELER 08.tif

Wheeler Family Farmstead
Great Barrington, Berkshire Co., MA
Photo by Neil Larson, 2010

PHOTOS: View of kitchen looking west



MA GREAT BARRINGTON (BERKSHIRE COUNTY) - WHEELER 09. tif

Wheeler Family Farmstead
Great Barrington, Berkshire Co., MA
Photo by Neil Larson, 2010

PHOTO 9: View of kitchen looking NE



MA_GREATBARRINGTON(BERKSHIRECOUNTY)_WHEELER10.tif

Wheeler Family Farmstead

Great Barrington, Berkshire Co., MA

Photo by Neil Larson, 2010

PHOTO 10: View of back kitchen looking north



MA_GREATBARRINGTON(BERKSHIRECOUNTY)_WHEELER11.tif

Wheeler Family Farmstead
Great Barrington, Berkshire Co., MA
Photo by Neil Larson, 2010

PHOTO 11: View of Workshop⁽²⁾ & Shed⁽³⁾ (l. to r.) from SW



MA - GREAT BARRINGTON (BERKSHIRE COUNTY) - WHEELER 12.tif

Wheeler Family Farmstead
Great Barrington, Berkshire Co., MA
Photo by Neil Larson, 2010

PHOTO 12: View of Hay Barn (4), Silo (7) & Heifer House (6), r. to l., from NW; Cow House (5) is behind Hay Barn and Carriage House & Stables (8) is detached in background



MA - GREAT BARRINGTON (BERKSHIRE COUNTY) - WHEELER 13. fig

Wheeler Family Farmstead
Great Barrington, Berkshire Co., MA
Photo by Neil Larson, 2010

PHOTO 13: View of interior of Hay Barn (4)



MA - GREATBARRINGTON (BERKSHIRE COUNTY) - WHEELER 14.tif

Wheeler Family Farmstead
Great Barrington, Berkshire Co, MA
Photo by Neil Larsen, 2010

PHOTO 14: View of Cow House (5) on left, Carriage House & Stables (8) in background, and barnyard



MA - GREAT BARRINGTON (BERKSHIRE COUNTY) - WHEELER IS. tif

Wheeler Family Farmstead
Great Barrington, Berkshire Co., MA
Photo by Neil Larson, 2010

PHOTO 15: View of Cow House (5), Silo (7) and Heifer House (6), left to right, from south; remains of concrete pig sty in foreground.



MA - GREAT BARRINGTON (BERKSHIRE COUNTY) - WHEELER 16.tif

Wheeler Family Farmstead

Great Barrington, Berkshire Co., MA

Photo by Neil Larson, 2010

PHOTO 16: View of interior of Cow House (5)



MA-GREATBARRINGTON(BERKSHIRECOUNTY)-WHEELER 17. f

Wheeler Family Farmstead
Great Barrington, Berkshire Co., MA
Photo by Neil Larson, 2010

PHOTO 17: View of Carriage House & Stables (8) from SW



MA - GREAT BARRINGTON (BERKSHIRE COUNTY) - WHEELER 18.tif

Wheeler Family Farmstead
Great Barrington, Berkshire Co., MA
Photo by Neil Lanson, 2010

PHOTO 18: Interior view of Carriage House & Stables (8)

USGS
Science for a Changing World

Great Barrington MASS.-N. Y.

1:25 000-scale metric
topographic map
WHEELER FAMILY FARMSTEAD

GREAT BARRINGTON (BERKSHIRE) MA
GREAT BARRINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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
1997

Produced by the United States Geological Survey
Derived from imagery taken 1980 and other sources. Photostereoscopic
imagery taken 1997; no major culture or drainage changes
observed. Survey control current as of 1981
Boundaries revised 1999
Supersedes Egremont and Great Barrington 1:25,000-scale
maps dated 1973

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
and Connecticut coordinate system

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 3 METERS
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

CONTROL ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER
OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.5 METER

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

Meters	Feet
1	3.2808
2	6.5617
3	9.8425
4	13.1234
5	16.4042
6	19.6850
7	22.9659
8	26.2467
9	29.5275
10	32.8084

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

DECLINATION DIAGRAM	ADJOINING MAPS									
	<table border="1"> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> </table>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	2	3								
4	5	6								
7	8	9								

UTM grid convergence
(GN) and 300 magnetic
at center of map
Diagram is approximate

1 Chatham (7.5')
2 Stockbridge
3 East Lee
4 Hildesheim (7.5')
5 Otis
6 Coleraine (7.5')
7 Ashley Falls
8 Tolland Center

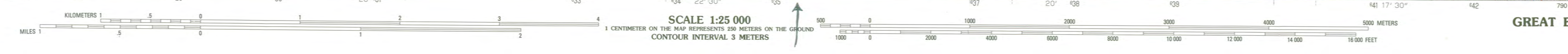
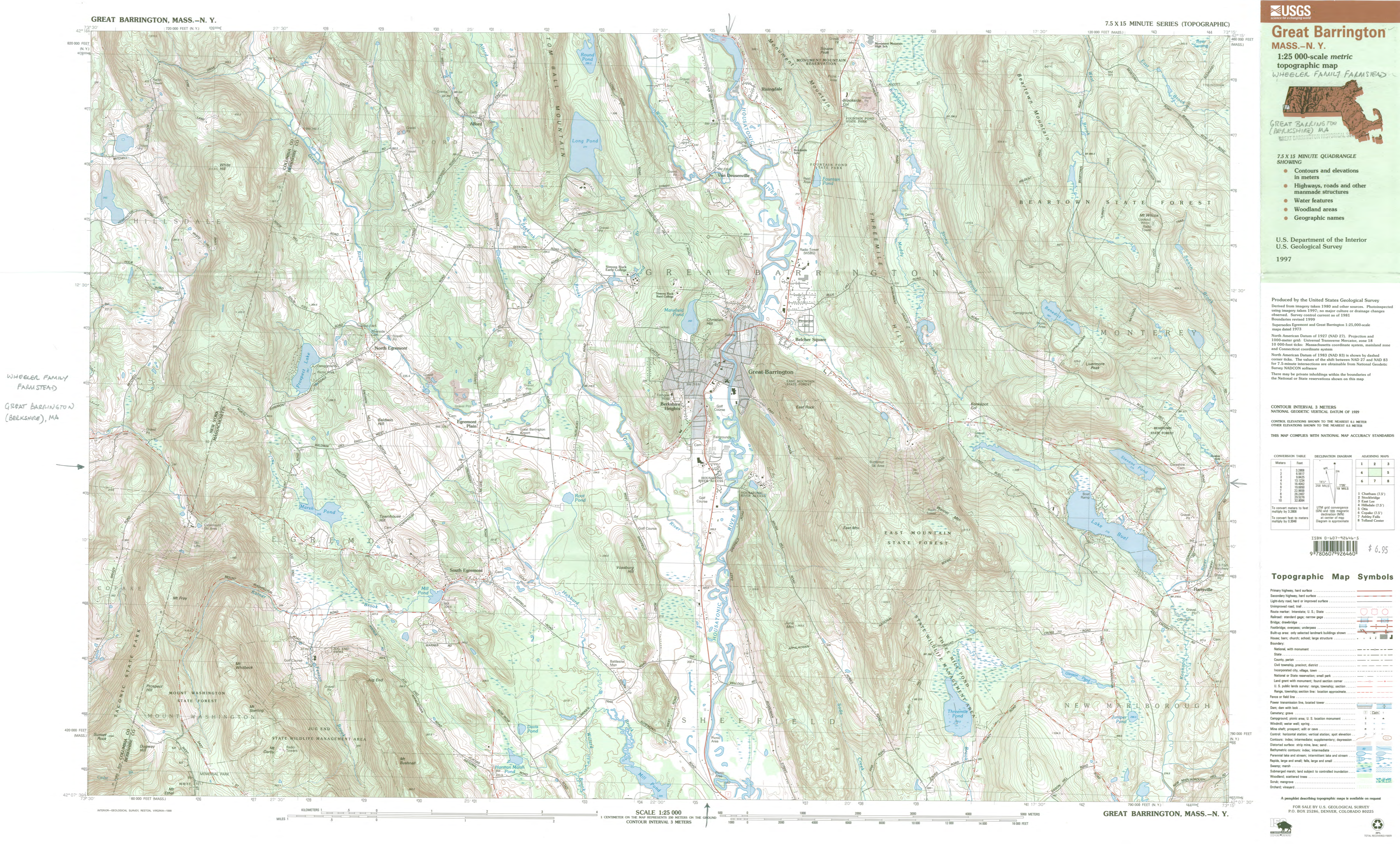
ISBN 0-607-92446-5
9 780607 924460 \$ 6.95

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
Footbridge; overpass; underpass
Build-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
Cemetery; grave
Carnegie; picnic area; U. S. location monument
Wellhead; water well; spring
Mine shaft; prospect; adit or cave
Control: horizontal station; vertical station; spot elevation
Dashed surface: strip mine, lava, sand
Bathymetric contours: index; intermediate
Perennial lake and stream; intermittent lake and stream
Rapids, large and small; falls, large and small
Swamp; marsh
Submerged marsh: land subject to controlled inundation
Woodland; scattered trees
Orchard; mangrove
Drainage; voynage

A pamphlet describing topographic maps is available on request
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225

WHEELER FAMILY
FARMSTEAD
GREAT BARRINGTON
(BERKSHIRE), MA



ALL PARCELS ARE SUBJECT TO AND WITH THE BENEFIT OF ALL RIGHTS, RESTRICTIONS, CONDITIONS, EASEMENTS, LEASES, ENCUMBRANCES AND APPURTENANCES OF RECORD.

UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED HEREON, THIS SURVEY PLAN SHALL NOT BE CONSTRUED AS DEPICTING THE PRESENCE, ABSENCE, OR LIMITS OF ANY OR ALL REGULATED WETLANDS OR FLOODPLAINS. ANY SURFACE WATER FEATURES SHOWN, SUCH AS STREAMS OR PONDS, ARE NOT REPRESENTED AS INDICATING LIMITS OF WETLAND RESOURCE AREAS.

PLANNING BOARD ENDORSEMENT DOES NOT IMPLY COMPLIANCE WITH THE MASS. WETLANDS PROTECTION ACT.

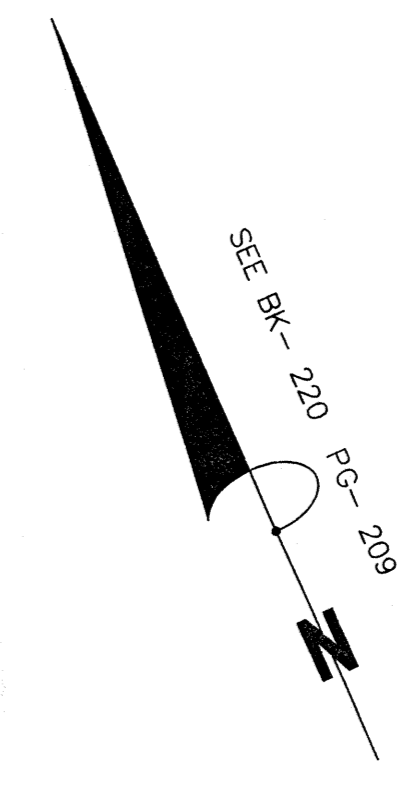
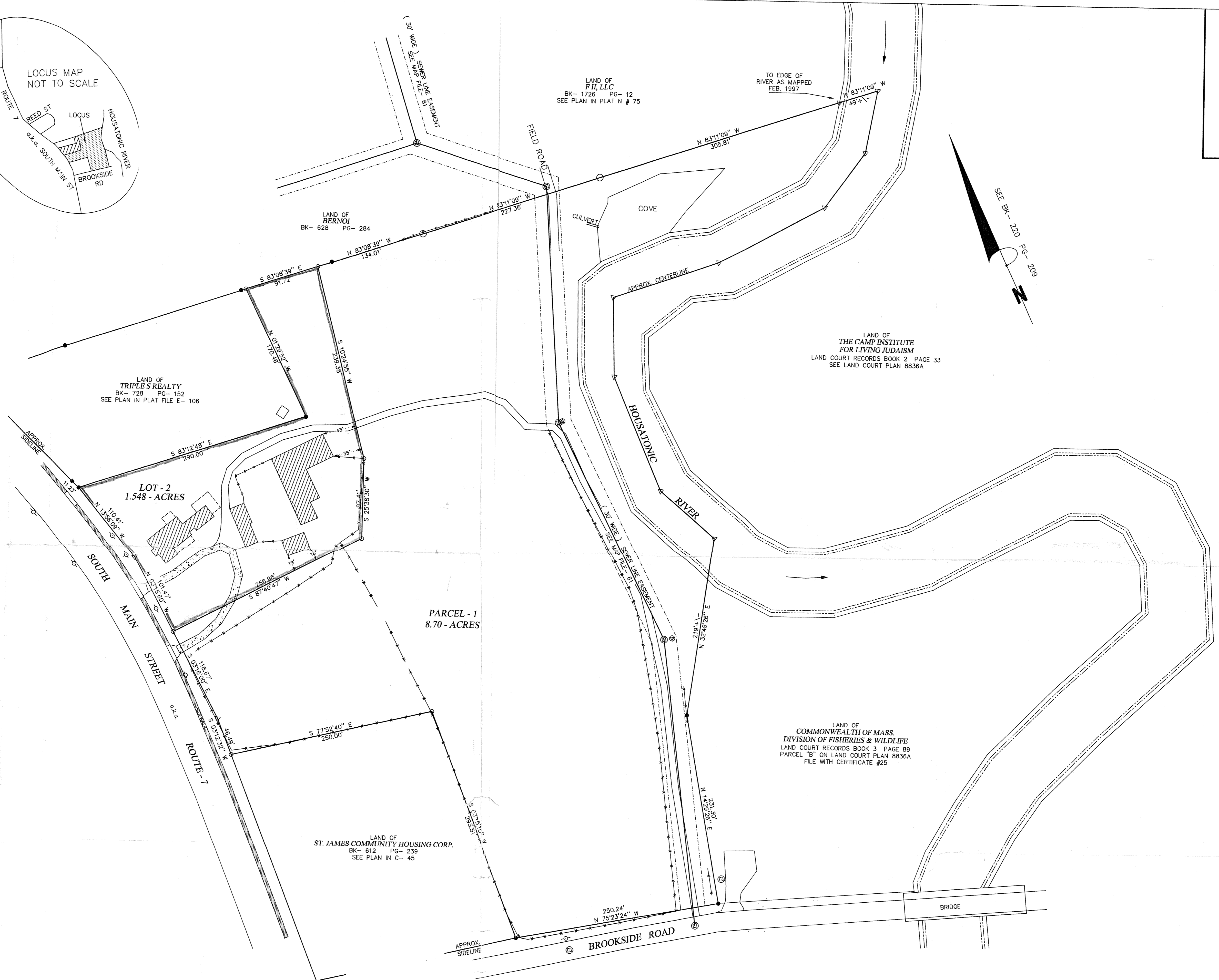
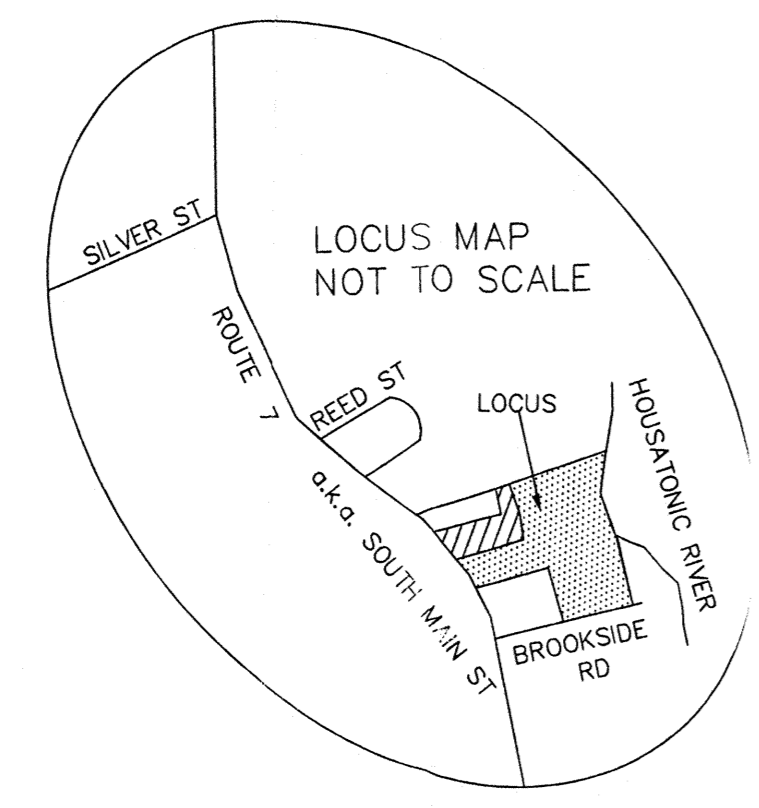
LOCUS DEED: BK- 768 PG- 47
PROPERTY OWNER - JOHN D. & LINDA W. MULLANY

THIS SURVEY WAS PREPARED WITHOUT THE BENEFIT OF AN ATTORNEY'S ABSTRACT OF TITLE AND/OR TITLE REPORT AND IS SUBJECT TO ANY STATEMENT OF FACTS SUCH AS ABSTRACT OR REPORT WOULD HAVE REVEALED. THIS PROPERTY WAS SURVEYED BY THE POSSESSION LINES FOUND AT THE TIME THE SURVEY WAS MADE.

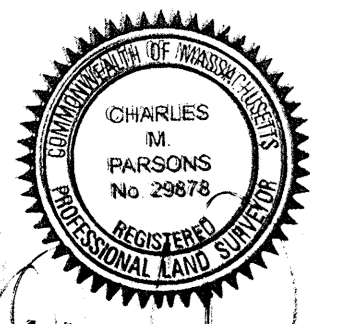
ZONING REQUIREMENTS
ZONING DISTRICT - B-2
AREA - 43,560 SQ. FT. (DWELLING)
LOT WIDTH - 150'
FRONT SETBACK - 50'
SIDE YARD - 20'
REAR YARD - 30'
PERMITTED USES - 5000 SQ. FT.

LEGEND

- △ POINT COMPUTED
- IRON PIPE FOUND
- IRON ROD TO BE SET
- BOUND FOUND
- UTILITY POLE
- ⊕ SEWER MANHOLE
- ⊕ FIRE HYDRANT
- FENCE LINE
- WOOD FENCE



FOR REGISTRY USE ONLY

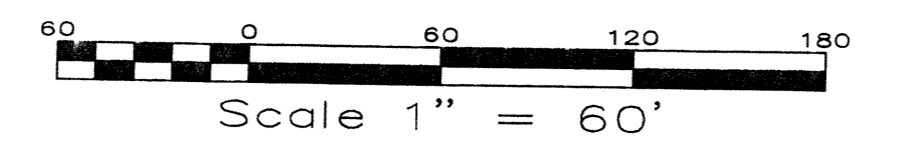


APPROVAL NOT REQUIRED UNDER THE SUBDIVISION CONTROL LAW
GREAT BARRINGTON PLANNING BOARD
Charles M. Parsons
PLANNING BOARD MEMBER

I HEREBY REPORT THAT THIS PLAN HAS BEEN PREPARED IN CONFORMITY WITH THE RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE REGISTERS OF DEEDS OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

SIGNED: *Charles M. Parsons*
PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYOR

June 14, 2007



PLAN OF LAND SURVEYED FOR
JOHN D. & LINDA W. MULLANY
GREAT BARRINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS
MAY - 2007 SCALE 1" = 60'
KELLY, GRANGER, PARSONS & ASSOCIATES, INC.
ENGINEERS AND SURVEYORS
312 MAIN STREET P.O. BOX 88
GREAT BARRINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01230
FAX (413) 528-1912 PHONE (413) 528-3281
File name: C:\EP14\SURVEY\MULLANY

WHEELER FAMILY FARMSTEAD
GREAT BARRINGTON
(BERKSHIRE) MA



GREAT BARRINGTON
SCALE
1" = 400'
SHEET NO.
38
GORDON E. AINSWORTH ASSOCIATES

NOTE
These Maps Are Not Intended
For Use in Conveyancing

S H E E F F I E L D



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

July 8, 2011

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:

Wheeler Family Farmstead, 817 South Main St., Great Barrington (Berkshire), 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: Sean Stanton, Chair, Great Barrington Board of Selectmen
Paul Ivory, Great Barrington Historical Commission
Neil Larson, Kathryn Grover, Consultants
Gary Leveille, Great Barrington Historical Society
Donald Goranson, Great Barrington Planning Board