

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 88001127

Date Listed: 08/03/88

Whalley, William, Homestead  
Property Name

Bristol  
County

RI  
State

Multiple Name

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

*for Beth R. Savage*  
Signature of the Keeper

8/3/88  
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Period of significance: Late 18th-century indicated for the barn is a typographical error and should read late 19th-century to correlate with the text in section #7.

This information was confirmed with Ann Angelone of the RISHPO on August 3, 1988.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name William Whalley Homestead other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 33 Burchard Avenue n/a not for publication city, town Little Compton n/a vicinity state Rhode Island code RI county Bristol code 001 zip code 02837

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: [x] private, [ ] public-local, [ ] public-State, [ ] public-Federal. Category of Property: [x] building(s), [ ] district, [ ] site, [ ] structure, [ ] object. Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 3, Noncontributing buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total 3. Name of related multiple property listing: N/A. Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0.

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. [ ] See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official: [Signature] Date: 6/15/88. Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission. State or Federal agency and bureau.

In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. [ ] See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official: Date: State or Federal agency and bureau.

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is: [x] entered in the National Register. [ ] See continuation sheet. [ ] determined eligible for the National Register. [ ] See continuation sheet. [ ] determined not eligible for the National Register. [ ] removed from the National Register. [ ] other, (explain:). Signature of the Keeper: [Signature] Date of Action: 8/3/88.

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural  
field/animal facility

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Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural  
field/animal facility

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)EARLY REPUBLIC/federal

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE  
walls WOOD/shingle  
STONE  
roof ASPHALT/shingle  
other \_\_\_\_\_

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The William Whalley Homestead is a well preserved, early 19th-century farm complex in the town of Little Compton. It consists of a five-bay wide, one-and-one-half story wood shingle farmhouse probably dating from c. 1815-1830, a late 19th-century gable-roofed barn, and a small wood and stone outbuilding and well, all bounded by stone walls and surrounded by fields and woodland. The house faces south and is set with its east end close to Burchard Avenue, a narrow rural lane. The barn stands to the south of the house across a stone walled front yard while the other outbuilding and well are set in a small stone walled yard behind the house. On the west, the land falls away, opening up a picturesque view of walled fields, woodlands, and man-made Watson Reservoir in the distance. A stone retaining wall adjacent to the house on the west helps define a rectangular space which appears to have been treated as a rather large formal garden. The property is distinguished by plantings of some horticultural interest, including a number of large holly trees and several other specimen trees.

The farmhouse, built in a traditional five-room, center-chimney plan, is five bays wide with a central entrance and gable roof. An early one room gable-roofed ell, lower in height than the main house, is attached to the rear at the northwest corner, and to this ell is attached a relatively modern, single car garage. The house is covered in natural wood shingles, except for the garage, which is sided in vertically beaded tongue and groove boarding. The gabled roofs are wood shingles with their ridges capped with painted boards. The brick chimney has been parged with a cement coating. Most of the trim of the house is flat wood boarding, including the narrow corner boards, door and window casings, and the rake boards at the ends of the roof. It appears that an original cornice trim below the overhanging eaves at the front and rear of the house may have been replaced with the square edge molding in place today; only a piece of molded trim above the main entrance remains. These moldings "break out" from the wall surface at the projecting window and door casings. The stone foundation is constructed of fieldstone below grade with larger, roughly finished fieldstone and granite exposed

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above grade. Stone steps protected by a bulkhead with slanting wood doors provides access to this basement at the west end of the south facade.

The windows of the Whalley house are primarily six-over-six, double hung wood sash with pegged, plank frames. There is one narrow, four-over-four window in the rear ell, and a single-plate glass "picture" window which has been installed on the west end of the house, probably to replace an earlier double hung window. The six-panel front entrance door is framed with simple shallowly-fluted pilasters supporting a flat lintel and molded cornice above. Below are natural stone steps. Like the other exterior doors of the house, the raised panels of the main entrance are treated with square edges. The house is constructed of heavy timber, mortise-and-tenon framing with plank walls typical of Rhode Island houses built from the early 17th through the early 19th centuries. In the basement, roughly hewn logs which serve as floor joists remain exposed, as do hand hewn rafters in the attic with inscribed Roman numerals, which served as an aid to erection of the frame during construction of the house.

The interior of the house is organized around a massive central chimney. A narrow entry hall provides access to an enclosed attic stair with a stairway to the basement built into the stone chimney foundation below. At either side of the entry hall is a parlor. The parlor to the east retains much of its early trim and is one of the most historically intact rooms in the house. A large fireplace here is treated with a fairly simple mantel. Flat pilasters with square edge caps support a tall lintel panel and mantel shelf. A low backboard above this shelf rises to a slight central peak, characteristic of vernacular mantels of the late-Federal/Greek Revival period. The doors to this room are six-panel with shallow recessed flat panels, typical in Federal-period interiors. The flat door casings are trimmed with a backband moulding. A segment of chair rail remains in place between the pair of windows on the east wall of this parlor; evidence in the plaster suggests that the chair rail was originally carried around the entire room. Baseboards and corner post casings are simply treated with a single beaded edge.

The parlor to the west of the entry and the keeping room on the north side of the house have received some alterations. The

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fireplace walls in both rooms have been covered with later wood paneling, and the original mantels have been removed. Ceiling plaster in both rooms has been removed to expose the wood floor joists above, and the opening between the rooms has been enlarged. The west parlor retains a pair of early four-panel doors on the north wall, one opening into a small corner room now used as a bathroom, and the other enclosing an early cupboard with shelves. The small, low ceiling room of the rear ell is simply trimmed with a beaded baseboard and beaded casings on its projecting corner posts and roof plates.

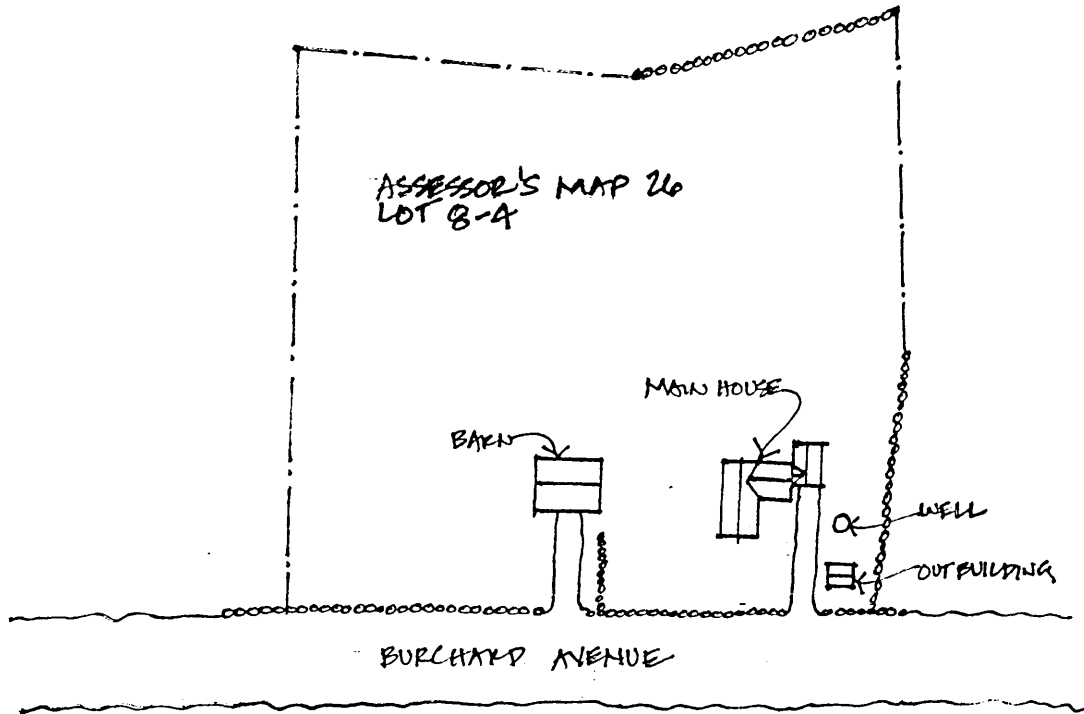
Plank partitions in the attic divide that space into two end rooms with a central hallway. Although some later wall finishes have been installed, the attic remains largely unfinished and retains much of its original character with its exposed brick chimney and wide, unfinished pine floor boards. A plank partition with plank door and handsome wooden latch encloses an early and probably original closet with shelves set behind the chimney mass, and a single wood peg remains from a row of pegs originally installed in an adjacent collar tie to provide hanging storage.

The outbuildings of the Whalley Homestead appear to be later in date than the main house. The wood shingle, gable-roofed barn appears to date from the late 19th century and is a typical form for barns in the area. Wide sliding doors open on the center of the long facade to allow wagons to be driven into the structure. On the interior a hay loft surrounds the space on three sides with stalls for animals and storage below. The small, one-story outbuilding with tall stone foundation to the rear of the main house is of uncertain date. Although the board and batten siding and gable roof are new, the stone foundation appears to be much earlier.

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SITE PLAN @ 1" = 100'

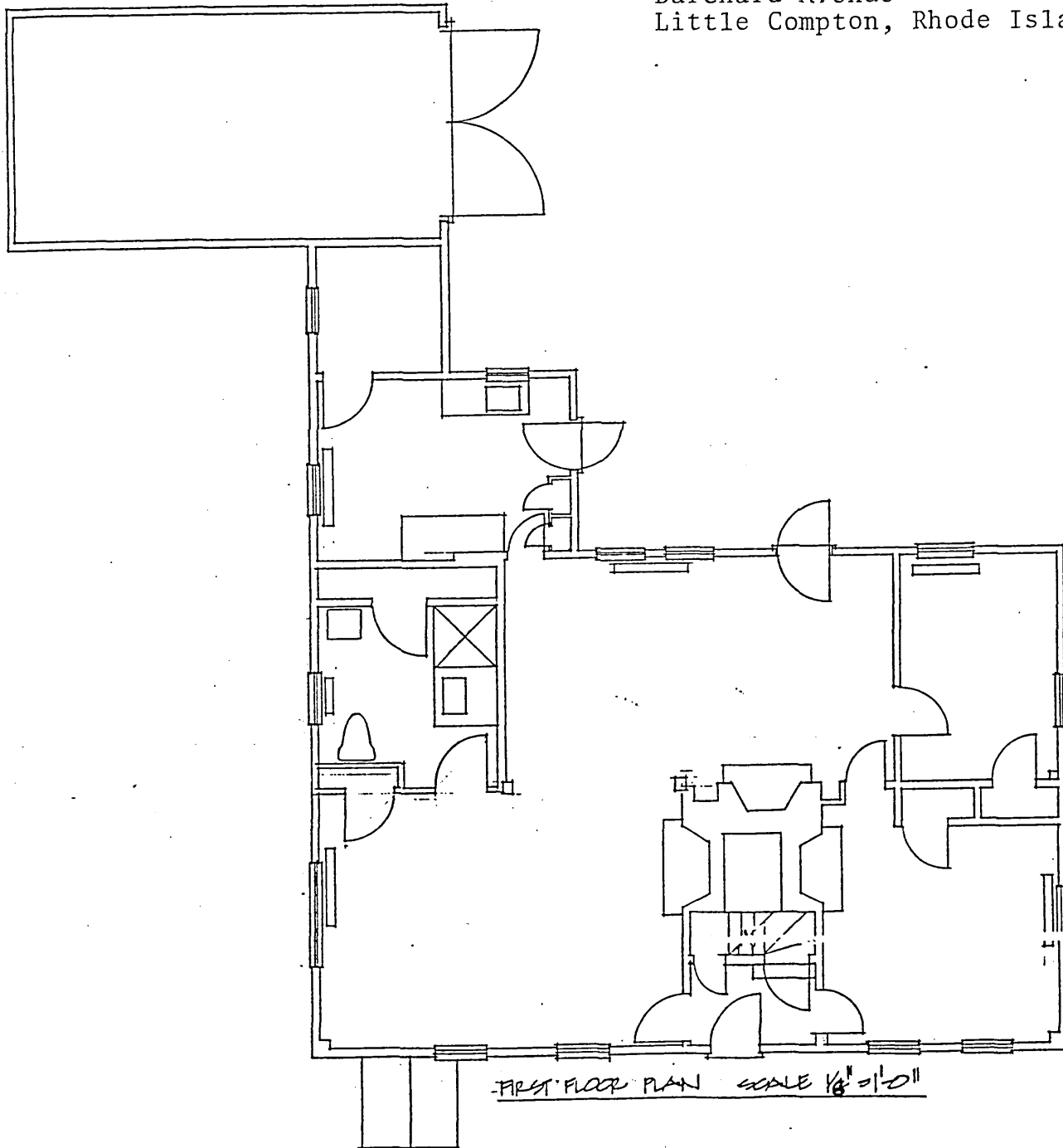
WILLIAM WHALLEY HOMESTEAD  
LITTLE COMPTON, RI

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William Whalley Homestead  
Burchard Avenue  
Little Compton, Rhode Island



FIRST FLOOR PLAN SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  
AGRICULTURE  
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance Significant Dates  
c. 1815-1830 (house)  
late 18th century (barn)

Cultural Affiliation  
N/A

Significant Person  
N/A

Architect/Builder  
Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Built c. 1815-1830, the William Whalley Homestead is a well-preserved farm complex of a type once characteristic of southeastern Rhode Island. With its house, barn, and outbuilding bounded by stone walls and set within a bucolic landscape of fields and woodlands, the property is a remarkably intact physical remnant of the agricultural economy which supported this area from the 17th century into the early-20th century. In addition, the Whalley farmhouse is a surviving example of a vernacular house type common in Rhode Island from the 18th and early 19th centuries. The one-and-one-half-story, center-chimney, gable-roof house type is one of several common house types in Little Compton. The other two are the one-and-one-half-story gambrel roof houses and the full two-story gable roof houses. The Whalley house remains one of several extant examples. Although it probably dates from the late-19th century, the barn of the complex is also a characteristic type for the area with its rectangular plan, two-story gable roof form and large sliding door opening at the center of the long side.

Settled in the 17th century, the town of Little Compton and adjoining communities in Rhode Island and Massachusetts long depended primarily on agriculture as a mainstay of their economy. With its fertile rolling fields and little industrial development, the area changed little until well into the 20th century. The farm-based economy was responsible for the development of a particularly beautiful and cohesive landscape of stone-walled, rolling fields and farm complexes of traditional wood-shingled structures of which the Whalley Homestead is a characteristic and significantly intact example.

Although the early history of the Homestead is unclear, by 1897 the property was referred to in local deeds as ". . .the homestead farm of William Whalley and his wife Ann Whalley."

See continuation sheet



**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Nelson, Lee H. "Nail Chronology," technical leaflet published by Association for State and Local History.

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, Statewide Historical Preservation Report, Town of Little Compton, Dec. 1987 (Draft).

Wilbur, Benjamin F. Little Compton Families. Providence, 1974.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 2.10 acres

UTM References

A 19 319060 4601160  
 Zone Easting Northing

C         

B           
 Zone Easting Northing

D         

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property occupies Lot 8-4, Assessor's Map 26, in the Town of Little Compton.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of this property encompass all of the significant elements of the farm complex including the main house, barn, outbuilding and well, as well as adjacent fields to the south and west. The boundaries follow existing stone walls on the north and west.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Clifford M. Renshaw, A.I.A.  
 organization Consultant date March 1988  
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 city or town Wickford state Rhode Island zip code 02852

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Public records record that Whalley and his wife were both born in England and were living in the area by 1878. Although the basic form of the farmhouse is characteristic of the late-18th century, the house has been dated to c. 1815-1830 because of interior detailing which seems to suggest the Federal or early-Greek Revival types and because early machine-headed cut nails produced from c. 1815 into the 1830's were used in its construction.