

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

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

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

DEC 20 1985

**1. Name**

historic Fry's Hamlet Historic District

and/or common Fry's Hamlet Historic District

**2. Location**

street & number 2068, 2153, 2196, 2233 South County Trail — not for publication  
city, town East Greenwich — vicinity of Cong. District #2--Hon. Claudine Schneider

state Rhode Island code \_\_\_\_\_ county Kent code \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Heirs of Francis Bailey Dorothy and Marion Fry  
street & number 2068 South County Trail 2153 South County Trail  
city, town East Greenwich — vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state Rhode Island 02818

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. East Greenwich Town House  
street & number 111 Pierce Street  
city, town East Greenwich state Rhode Island

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title East Greenwich Statewide Preservation Report has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no  
date August 1974  federal  state  county  local  
depository for survey records Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission  
city, town Providence state Rhode Island

## 7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved date 1968; summer kitchen (ca. 1950)
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		(Beehive House)

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Fry's Hamlet Historic District, located near the center of town of East Greenwich, contains three adjoining farmsteads with four houses, four barns, twelve outbuildings, several ruins and building sites, a cemetery and two hundred and seventy-two acres of associated lands, all significant features in the area's development as an agricultural community from the late seventeenth to the early twentieth century. Located on either side of South County Trail (U.S. Route 2), south of its intersection with Middle Road, which are both roads established in the colonial era, Fry's Hamlet is characterized by rolling terrain kept as pasture, cropland, woodland and swamp, divided by networks of dry-laid fieldstone walls. Fry's Brook flows through the district, fed by several small branch streams in its southeasterly course to Hunt's River. The houses and associated farm buildings are built close to South County Trail. The Joseph Fry House and the Spencer-Fry House front on the road, while the Spencer-Bailey House is set back on a dirt lane and is screened from the road by trees and underbrush.

The Joseph Fry House is a two-and-a-half-story, frame Federal house with a U-shaped complex of barns, sheds and other outbuildings built over the past two hundred years behind it. One hundred and twenty yards south of the house is the one-and-a-story, mansard-roof, Beehive House, built in 1872 on its original site near Allen's Gristmill Pond and moved here in 1968. On the east side of the road, between the two houses on the Fry farm, is the Spencer-Fry House, a two-and-a-half-story, center-chimney, eighteenth-century house with a two-story, five-bay, Federal front addition with two internal gable-end chimneys. Two frame sheds and a large complex of stone foundations are the surviving remnants of its farmyard. The Spencer-Bailey House, also on the east side of the road, four hundred yards north of the Spencer-Fry House, is a one-and-a-half-story house with an off-center chimney, built in two sections in the mid-eighteenth century. The many outbuildings there include several nineteenth-century farm buildings and a barn that may have been built in the eighteenth century, as well as three barns built within the past fifty-years. These barns are the nucleus of the Bailey family's dairy farm, though the Baileys also use land and buildings on the adjacent Fry and Spencer-Fry farms.

Noteworthy intrusions in the district include the enlarged South County Trail, which was expanded from a narrow country road to a four-lane highway in 1930. U.S. Route 4, a four-lane divided highway constructed in 1967, bisected the lands of the Spencer-Bailey and Spencer-Fry farms and effectively separated the easternmost parts of the farms from the major portions of the farms on the west side of Route 4.

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The Joseph Fry Homestead is the largest of the three farms, occupying a one-hundred-and-eighty-nine-acre tract on the west side of South County Trail. The Joseph Fry House, completed ca. 1795, was built, probably by Browning Nichols of East Greenwich, to replace an earlier house, perhaps dating from the late seventeenth century, that burned in 1793. In front of the house there is a yard, planted with shade trees and ornamental shrubs, enclosed by a picket fence with granite posts. A dirt lane running north of the house leads to the cluster of farm buildings behind the house. The largest of the outbuildings are the two barns, one-and-a-half-story shingled frame buildings which stand with ends adjoining, the hay and cow barn to the south and the horse barn to the north. Between the house and the hay and cow barn there is a row of smaller outbuildings, all of them single-story, gable-roof, frame buildings with rubblestone foundations and most of them built in the nineteenth century. Proceeding from east to west they are: the summer house, built c. 1950 on the site of the old milk house; the former ice house, now used as a tool shed; the privy; the carriage shed; the site of the smokehouse; and the new milk room, built ca. 1940 and recently enlarged by a small greenhouse addition. On the north side of the lane, just north of the house there are, from east to west: the former summer kitchen and wash house, a one-story, clapboarded building now used as a residence; the site of the swill house and the adjoining hog pen; and the corn crib, a single-story, building with vertical plank siding, standing on stone piers.

On the south side of the house there is a rose garden and a vegetable garden that occupy the traditional site of the kitchen garden. Beyond the gardens and a small pond dug ca. 1950 is the Beehive House, a separate residence which occupies a small house lot. The 1716 survey map of the town shows a lot set off for a school in this vicinity. No surface evidence of a school building has been found.

The family cemetery, a simple stone-walled plot northwest of the house, contains graves that date back to 1795.

In addition to the houses and farm buildings, the lands of the Fry farm are rich in associations with farming activities by the Fry family. Several of the fields are still in use, either as cropland or pasture, but even where the land has been left uncultivated, the customary names of the various areas and the stone walls that bound them have survived. The Barn Meadow, the Ten Acre Lot and the Five Acre Lot are in use. The orchard is not actively tended but is largely intact; however the cider mill is now in ruins after a destructive fire several years ago. Other fields such as the Goose Pasture, the Night Pasture and the North Meadow are gradually becoming overgrown, though some distinctive features remain, such as the opening in the wall enclosing the Night Pasture that is wide

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enough to allow the passage of sheep, but not cows. Four stone slab bridges that carry cartways over the branches of Fry's Brook survive on the farm as well.

On the east side of South County Trail are the abutting Spencer-Bailey and Spencer Fry Farms on the north and south respectively.

The heart of the Spencer-Fry farm is the Spencer-Fry House, which was built in several stages, perhaps beginning in the late seventeenth century. The oldest part of the house, which dates from the mid-eighteenth century, is contained in what is now the rear ell, while the front of the house was added ca. 1815. A side wing on the south and another addition on the north flank of the ell were added subsequently, in the mid-nineteenth century and early twentieth century respectively.

The former farmyard behind the Spencer-Fry House is marked by a dirt lane, two nineteenth-century frame sheds and the extensive dry-laid stone foundations of the barn and connected outbuildings. The large frame barn, which was built into a bank, facing south, was destroyed in the 1938 hurricane. Outbuildings included a privy, an ice house and a milk house, all of which were taken down in the twentieth century. The orchard, which is no longer tended, and the adjoining fields, which are kept as pasture and cropland, lie principally to the east of the house. The house yard is enclosed on the west and north by a white picket fence with granite posts. These and other stone posts on the Fry farms came from the Tarbox Ledge on the East Greenwich-West Greenwich border.

The Spencer-Bailey House is a relatively plain eighteen-century clapboarded cottage, built in two sections. The northern end of the house, built ca. 1735, was probably three bays wide originally, with the chimney in the center. The southern half, which is two bays wide, was added in 1759 according to a datestone in the foundations. The datestone also bears the initials, "SJM", for John and Mercy Spencer, who presumably built the addition.

The Spencer-Bailey farmyard is located a short distance south of the house, though there are several outbuildings located nearer the house, which includes some of the older buildings on the property. The former horse barn, located on the north side of the farm lane across from the house, is a timber-framed structure that may date from the eighteenth century. To the west of the barn is a small privy and another shed. Directly south of the house is a frame building now used as a storage shed. This building or an earlier building on the site was used as a shop,

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perhaps for woodworking, in the nineteenth century. A trench, now dry, runs to this building from Fry's Brook, indicating that the shop's operations were water-powered. Older buildings in the farmyard include a late-nineteenth-century corn crib and a early-twentieth-century milk house. The milk house is no longer in use, while the corn crib is used to store white flint corn. The more recent buildings, which dominate the farmyard, include a one-and-a-half-story frame barn, built in 1951, and a three-part cow barn across the yard. The northern section of the cow barn is a one-and-a-half-story board and batten structure, built in 1978 on the site of a similarly-sized barn that was moved to this site from elsewhere on the farm ca. 1835. The middle section of the barn is a one-and-a-half-story frame section that was built as an extension to the earlier barn in 1916. The southern section is a larger, one-and-a-half-story, gambrel-roof, concrete block barn with a single-story concrete milkroom on the east side, built in 1957. On the east side of the cow barn there is a deteriorated and vacant wooden silo that was moved to the farm early in the twentieth century. Southeast of the cow barn there is a one-and-a-half-story frame heifer barn, built in 1946. The fields which run between the farmyard and Route 4 are used for cornfield and pasture. North of the farmyard there are a few surviving trees from the farm's orchard, which covered almost five acres before it was destroyed by the 1938 hurricane.

South County Trail, which runs through the district in a north-south direction, was one of the highways laid out in the initial division of lands in East Greenwich. Up until the mid-twentieth century, it remained a dirt lane, without a formal name, so narrow in places that two wagons could not pass. The road was bordered by an orchard and stone hitching posts where it passed by the Joseph Fry House; in other places, Fry's Brook ran alongside the road, and in wet weather would flood it. The character of the road changed dramatically in 1930-1931, when it was rebuilt by the State Department of Roads as four-lane highway. Most of the land taken when the road was widened came from the west side. South County Trail still serves as a major north-south transportation route through East Greenwich, though it carries a far greater volume of traffic than it did prior to 1930.

#### INVENTORY

Contributing structures include buildings, enclosures, walls and bridges erected on the Fry, Spencer-Fry and Spencer-Bailey farms during the period of settlement and development from the late seventeenth century to the early twentieth century. The majority of the buildings are from the nineteenth century, with a fair number from the eighteenth

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century and early twentieth century. Taken as a group, they illustrate the nature of vernacular design in an agricultural setting over one hundred and fifty years. Although alterations have been made to many of the buildings, for the most part they have been the result of changing social and economic conditions and as such they illuminate the history of the farmstead. The enclosures consist of fields, meadows, orchards, gardens and a woodlot laid out and used by the successive generations of farmers in Fry's Hamlet. Perhaps because of the size of the Joseph Fry Farm, many of its lots and meadows were given individual names. Though the names remained the same, the fields were put to a variety of uses as the farmers rotated crops, planted new orchards and increased or reduced the size of their livestock herds. On the two smaller farms the naming of fields was less common or the names once used have not survived. The enclosures on the farms are made by dry-laid fieldstone walls of the type common to Rhode Island and the rest of New England. Probably some of these walls are among the oldest structures in the district, though the absence of information from the seventeenth and early eighteenth century makes it very hard to determine where the earliest fields were laid out and the walls were built. The non-contributing buildings exemplify the character of farming the Fry's Hamlet since 1935 and after a suitable passage of time may be considered contributing buildings as well.

CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES

SOUTH COUNTY TRAIL

2068 SPENCER-BAILEY FARM

1. Spencer-Bailey House (ca. 1735, 1759) The Spencer-Bailey House is a one-and-a-half-story, flank-gable, roof, clapboarded house with a timber frame and rubblestone foundations. It is five bays wide and two bays deep. The oldest part of the house is the northern end built ca. 1735, which was probably three bays wide originally, with the chimney in the center. The southern end was added in 1759 according to a datestone in the foundations. Probably in the mid-nineteenth century the exterior was slightly remodeled in a vernacular Greek Revival mode with the present box cornice with a broad frieze band and corner boards. The front doorway has a paneled door with etched glass panels in a plain frame while the rear doorway has a four-pane transom and a broad vernacular surround with vertical and horizontal members loosely patterned on fluted pilasters and entablature. The back door with its three raised panels and

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handrought hardware appears to be of eighteenth century origin. The windows have architrave molding and two-over-one-double-hung sash windows. Three gable-roof dormers on the front slope of the roof and long shed-roof dormer on the rear slope were added in the mid-twentieth century. In the north end of the house two fireplaces remain and one has been blocked up. The former kitchen fireplace in the northeast room has a plain mantel and a beehive oven with a single-paneled door; the fireplace in the east central room is set at an angle, with a plain surround like that on the kitchen fireplace. Other original features include several doors with two vertical panels and original hardware in molded doorframes, beaded horizontal board wainscoting and a boxed stairway with a very steep single run. The southern half of the house, which is basically an extension of the northern half, is very simply finished with plain doorways and baseboards. The house is built on a bank and its cellar has a ground-level entrance on the south end. There is a rectangular rubblestone foundation near the center of the west foundation wall which now serves no apparent purpose but may have been the support of an earlier structure, perhaps a stone-end chimney.

2. Former Horse Barn (late eighteenth or early nineteenth century): This one-and-a-half-story, flank-gable-roof, shingled frame building has a timber frame and rubblestone foundations. There are single six-pane windows in the gable peaks and a small louvered ventilator with a weathervane in the center of the roof. The south wall of the barn has been removed and the building is presently used as a garage and for storage.

3. Privy (late nineteenth century): This is a small, end-gable-roof, frame outhouse with vertical plank siding. It is no longer in use.

4. Shed (late nineteenth century): This is a small, end-gable-roof, frame building with board siding, used for storage.

5. Shed (mid to late nineteenth century): This is a small single-story, end-gable-roof, building with a shed-roof wing, covered with novelty board siding on a rubblestone foundation. Built into the side of a bank, the building has a cellar under the western end. This building or earlier

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building on the site was used as a workshop in the nineteenth century. A dry trench or raceway runs to the shed from Fry's Brook.

6. Corn Crib (late nineteenth or early twentieth century): This is a small, end-gable-roof, building with vertical plank siding and a corrugated sheet metal roof. It exhibits the traditional elements of corn crib construction: stone pier foundations, narrow spaces between the siding boards to allow for ventilation and a central work space between the storage areas on either side. On one corner of the crib, which is no longer in use, the siding has been damaged and the door is missing.

7. Former Milk House (early twentieth century): This is a small, end-gable-roof, shingled frame building with a central doorway and single double-hung sash windows on either flank. Formerly located on the present site of the milk room, it was moved in 1957 when the new milk room was built. It is not presently in use.

8. Cow Barn (1916): This is a one-and-a-half-story, end-gable-roof, shingled frame structure, three bays wide and two deep. It was built on the south flank of an earlier barn that was replaced by the present north end of the barn in 1978. The south end of the building was added onto it in 1957. The structure, which contains cow stalls and a hay loft, is part of the larger hay and cow barn.

9. Silo (early twentieth century): This is a two-story, vertical-plank silo with a conical roof, moved to the farm in the early twentieth century. No longer in use, it is listing and in only fair condition.

2153 JOSEPH FRY HOMESTEAD

10. Joseph Fry House (1794-5): The Fry House is a two-and-a-half-story, flank-gable-roof, clapboarded Federal house with a five-bay facade and a two-story rear ell with an internal chimney and an attached one-story vertical-plank woodhouse. Original exterior decorative features include caps like splayed lintels over the second

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story windows and the first story windows in the end walls and a box cornice with bed molding and partial returns. The central entrance has a Greek Revival frontispiece added ca. 1840 with simple Doric pilasters and an entablature with a projecting cornice framing the front door and its flanking four-pane sidelights. In 1914, a number of major alterations were made to the Joseph Fry house. The timber frame and vertical plank sheathing of the first story had deteriorated and were replaced with studded frame walls; the original center chimney was replaced by a smaller brick chimney slightly south of the original location: two-over-one double-hung window sashes were installed in place of most of the original twelve-over twelve sashes; and a two-tiered Colonial Revival porch with Roman Doric columns was built on the front. Inside the house, a through hallway with a single-run stairway was built in the space formerly occupied by the center chimney and the shallow three-run front stairway. The fireplaces on both floors were eliminated except for one rebuilt in the first-floor sitting room and another it in the southeast bedroom. Both original mantels with their chimney breast paneling were reused. The original four-panel interior doors were retained. The woodwork was originally finished with imitation wood graining, representing mahogany, walnut and cedar rose, which has since been painted over. Ca. 1950 the front porch was removed and the two-over-one window sashes were replaced by reproductions of the original twelve-over-twelve sashes. Cornice moldings reproduced from surviving pieces of the original woodwork have been installed in the three main rooms on the first floor. Except for the creation of the central hallway, the original five-room plan has been little altered. One change, made ca. 1840, was the creation of an enclosed rear hallway on the second story, leading from the back stairway to the garret stairs, that provided farm hands access to sleeping quarters in the garret without disturbing the privacy of the rest of the household. The rear ell, which contained the summer kitchen, has an internal brick chimney and presently serves as a kitchen on the first floor. One half of the woodhouse has been insulated and is now used as a laundry. The summer kitchen, which was added in the mid-nineteenth century, originally had a flat roof. In 1914, the present gable roof replaced the flat one.

11. Hay and Cow Barn (late eighteenth or early nineteenth

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century, late nineteenth century): The hay barn is a one-and-a-half-story, flank gable roof, timber-framed English barn, built in the eighteenth or early nineteenth century, with a later nineteenth century addition, containing the cow barn, built in the same styles on the south end. The entire barn is wood-shingled and has rubblestone foundations. In the center of the roof there is a louvered cupola with a weather vane that was added in 1882. The present wooden weather vane replaces the original copper one which was stolen recently. The hay barn has a pair of large swinging doors in the center of the east flank. There are two doorways in the south end of the barn with three six-over-six double-hung sash windows between them and three more windows of the same type in either flank. The hay barn and the loft over the cow barn are still used for storing hay.

12. The horse barn (mid-nineteenth century): The horse barn is one-and-a-half-story, timber-framed, flank-gable-roof building with a banked entrance on the south flank. It is covered with cedar shingles and has rubblestone foundations. The building is now used in part as a garage and the original barn door on the east flank was replaced in 1968 with three sliding overhead garage doors. There is a single-story, shed-roof, addition on the south end of the horse barn, with a doorway in one end and two six-over-six double hung sash windows in the south flank. This shed, now used as a shop, was built in the mid-twentieth century on the site of an old milk house.

13. Carriage Shed (mid-to late nineteenth century): This is a single-story, flank-gable-roof, wood-shingled frame building with a loft, rubblestone foundations and three pairs of swinging doors. It is presently used for storage.

14. Privy (late nineteenth century): A very small, end-gable-roof, wood-shingled, frame outhouse, built on the east end of the carriage shed.

15. Ice House (late nineteenth century): This is a single-story, end-gable-roof, wood-shingled, frame building with rubblestone foundations. It has a single door on the north end with a small door above it, formerly used for loading the house with ice. Now used for a tool shed, the ice house formerly had its floor recessed well below ground level.

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The floor level has since been raised, a single six-over-six casement window has been installed in the west flank and a pair of large double doors have been added on the south end.

16. Corn Crib (early nineteenth century): This is a small single-story, end-gable-roof, building with vertical plank siding and an asphalt-shingled roof. The crib which has a hardwood frame, perhaps of chestnut, is set on stone piers and has narrow spaces between the siding boards to enhance ventilation. The walls were covered with wire mesh in the twentieth century to keep out vermin, except for a small hole near the ground large enough to admit a cat. The crib has two storage bins on either side of central workspace. There is a single door in the south end and a door on the north end that was used for loading the corn into the crib.

17. Wash House (mid-nineteenth century): This is a single-story, flank-gable-roof, clapboarded building with an external gable-end chimney. Three bays wide and two deep it has an off-center doorway flanked by two twelve-over-twelve double-hung sash windows all in plain frames. There are similar windows on the either sides. The building has an asphalt-shingled roof and rubblestone foundations. It was originally located in the rear of the Spencer-Fry House, where it served a variety of purposes, being used at various times as a wash house, summer kitchen and bunkhouse for the farm hands. It was moved to the site c. 1950 and enlarged in the rear for use as a residence. It is still used as such today.

17A. Swill House and Hog Pen Site (mid-nineteenth century): The wash house was relocated on the site of the Fry hog pen and the swill house. The swill house was a small frame building with rubblestone foundations where the hog swill was prepared. The building and pen were removed in the early twentieth century. One of the large iron swill kettles remains on the farm.

18. Cider Mill Foundations (ca. 1850): These rubblestone foundations are the surviving remnants of a one-and-a-half-story, gable-roof, wood-shingled cider mill, located in the Fry orchard by the road, which was burned by arsonists in 1978.

19. Cemetery (late eighteenth century): This is a simple rectangular, family burial ground enclosed by dry-laid-

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rubblestone walls. The oldest interment in the cemetery was made in 1795.

Goose Pasture (eighteenth and nineteenth century): The Goose Pasture is a several-acre tract on a branch of Fry's Brook in the northeast corner of the farm, where, as the name implies, the Frys kept their geese flock. Geese, which were more self-sufficient than most other farm birds, were among the earliest animals raised by East Greenwich farmers and they were a feature of the Fry farm probably until the late nineteenth century. The Goose Pasture is now largely overgrown.

Gravel Hole (early twentieth century): This natural gravel deposit was excavated by the Frys for a variety of uses around the farm.

Sheep Wash Brook (eighteenth and nineteenth century): Every spring this branch of Fry's Brook was dammed near the roadside to create a pool in which the Frys washed their sheep, prior to shearing their fleeces.

North Meadow (eighteenth and nineteenth century): The North Meadow was used alternately as cropland and pasture. Crops raised here included corn, hay and probably potatoes, among others. The North Meadow is becoming overgrown.

Maple Swamp Woodlot (eighteenth century): Thomas Fry Jr. purchased this forty-six-and-a-half-acre parcel from Joseph Tillinghast in 1743. Containing equal parts of swamp and rocky upland, it was valuable not as tillable land but as a woodlot that provided the farm families with essentials such as firewood and the lumber used in buildings, furniture and a wide range of containers, tools and implements. The woodlot is essentially unchanged except that has not been used in recent years.

Orchard (early twentieth century): This was the last in a series of orchards planted on the Fry Farm. New orchards were planted by successive generations as the fruit trees reached the end of their productive lives. This orchard, which is largely intact though not actively tended, was planted with apple trees and the fruit was sold as a cash

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crop.

Old Orchard (mid-nineteenth century): Also known as the Cemetery Orchard, this apple orchard preceded the larger orchard to the east. Like the later orchard, much of its fruit was intended for market, either as fresh apples, apple cider or apple vinegar, though some was undoubtedly consumed on the farm. Family records indicate that the farm hands were entitled to a gallon of cider a day in the nineteenth century. Many of the original trees remain, though the orchard has become overgrown.

Little Orchard (nineteenth century): The Little Orchard, located to the north of the Fry House, was planted with a variety of fruit trees with the fruit intended primarily for domestic consumption. Most of these trees are gone; some of them were taken down during the widening of South County Trail in 1930.

Sheep Pasture (eighteenth and nineteenth century): Also known as the Night Pasture, this large field near the southwest corner of the farm, was traditionally used for the Fry sheep herd. A low covered passageway in the north wall of the pasture allowed sheep into the field but kept the larger cattle out. Sheep farming came to end on the Fry farm in the late nineteenth century, though the pasture continued to be used for cattle. In recent years it has become overgrown.

Barn Meadow (eighteenth and nineteenth century): Also known as the Stable Meadow, this field on the south and west sides of the cow and hay barn provided a place for the cows to gather and graze before being herded to pasture or put in the barn. As a well-manured field, parts of the meadow were occasionally planted with crops. The meadow today is still used for pasturing cattle. Two well-preserved board gates with stone posts enclose the meadow on the north and south sides of the barn.

Well lot (late nineteenth century): The Well Lot received its name when a well was dug there in the late nineteenth century. The well water flowed by gravity to the second

(See Continuation Sheet #12)

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floor of the Fry House where it supplied the domestic needs. The water became tainted by effluvia from a dump created by the Bostitch Company in the mid-twentieth century and the well has since been closed.

Garden (eighteenth and nineteenth century): The land immediately south of the Fry House has been the traditional site of the family's kitchen garden. Both a vegetable garden and a flower garden occupy the garden area presently.

Ten Acre Lot (eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth century): The fertile soil and relatively level terrain of the Ten Acre Lot has made it one of the most intensively used fields on the Fry Farm. It was undoubtedly used as cropland most of the time, with corn and potatoes as the major crops. In the early twentieth century, Louis Fry largely cleared the field of rocks to facilitate cultivating with a tractor. The Ten Acre Lot is presently used as a cornfield.

Five Acre Lot (eighteenth and nineteenth century): The Five Acre Lot, though not as level as the Ten Acre Lot, has also been an important piece of tillable land. It is watered by a small brook and has been used as cropland and pasture. It is now used as a hayfield.

Stone Bridges (eighteenth century): The four stone bridges on the Fry Farm are simple structures, each formed by three rectangular granite slabs laid side by side over a small brook.

2196 SPENCER-FRY FARM

20. Spencer-Fry House (ca. 1750, ca. 1815, ca. 1870, ca. 1900): This is a two-story, flank-gable-roof, clapboarded house with a two-and-a-half-story, flank-gable-roof, clapboarded rear ell, a two-story, flat-roof, clapboarded side wing and two-story clapboarded side addition, originally built with a flat roof that was changed to a shed roof ca. 1965. The front of the house is a well-preserved example of Federal architecture, built ca. 1815, two stories high, five bays wide and one room deep with an internal brick chimney at either end. The front doorway has a

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classical frontispiece with fluted Roman Doric pilasters and an entablature that forms a pediment with its base interrupted by a round-arched fanlight over the eight-panel door. There is a box cornice with bed molding and partial returns. The cornice molding is broken out over the second story windows and the other windows have caps like splayed lintels as in the Joseph Fry House. The front addition contains a central stair hall and two rooms on each floor. The high-ceilinged rooms are finished with wainscotting, molded baseboards, cornice moldings and six-panel doors. The southwest parlor has wooden wainscotting; the wainscotting in the other rooms is plaster. There are also chair rails in the southwest parlor and the front hall. The projecting fireplaces in the four rooms are similar, each mantel with a molded surrounds, a delicate raised molding with quadrants taken out at the corners in the frieze and a cornice-like shelf. The mantel in the north parlor on the first story is further embellished with applied rosettes. The single-flight staircase has slender turned newels, square balusters and scroll-like decorations on the riser ends. A singular feature of the addition is the change in floor levels between the higher floor of the front and the lower floor in the rear ell, a change for which there is no obvious cause.

The two-and-a-half-story rear ell, which probably dates from the second half of the eighteenth century, has the floor plan of three-fifths of a traditional eighteenth century center-chimney house, with evidence indicating that the front addition was built on the site of the western end of a five-bay house. Additions on the north and south have further obscured the original exterior appearance, except for a portion of the box cornice on the south flank and a number of windows with the heavy frames, narrow proportions and molded caps of eighteenth century windows. These windows contain nine-over-six, nine-over-nine and twelve-over-twelve double-hung sashes with some variations in the frames. The interior of the rear ell is distinguished by low ceilings, four-panel doors in plainly-finished door frames, plain pine wainscotting with a molded cap rail and boxed corner posts. The former keeping room has a large stone fireplace with one brick sidewall and a stone hearth, a wrought iron crane and brick beehive oven on the south side. There is a small fireplace with a plain surround in the north central chamber on both floors.

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The second story fireplace over the keeping room has a mantel with simple pilasters, a molded panel in the frieze and a cornice-like shelf. The mantel is slightly off-center, probably to avoid blocking the doors on the built-in-cupboard on the north side of the fireplace, suggesting that the mantel was originally in another location, perhaps the first-floor parlor. The stairway which formerly ran up the south side of the chimney was removed ca. 1940. The eastern end of the ell, which has been altered by the installation of a modern kitchen and bathrooms, exhibits slight differences in fenestration and construction from the rest of the ell and may be part of an earlier house on the site. The flat-roof wing, housing a staircase and two small rooms, was built over what was the front doorway on the southern flank of the ell ca. 1870. The two-story shed-roof addition was built on the north flank of the ell, enlarging the existing rooms on that side of the house early in the twentieth century. At the same time, a small gable-roof second-story porch was built off of the north flank of the ell.

21. Shed(ca. 1825): This is a small one-and-a-half-story, end-gable-roof, wood-shingled, timber-framed building with rubblestone foundations that stands abutting the northeast corner of the house's rear ell. There are two pairs of swinging doors on the south end and a shed-roof eyebrow dormer on the east slope of the roof. Now used for storage, the shed formerly housed the farm's woodworking shop.

22. Shed (ca. 1870): This is a small one-story, flank-gable-roof, wood-shingled building, three bays wide and one deep. Now open on the south flank, it was originally a carriage shed and now serves as a garage.

23. Barn Foundations (ca. 1860): These are the dry-laid rubblestone foundations of the large Fry-Vaughn Barn, a two-and-a-half-story, gable-roof, clapboarded barn that blew down in the 1938 hurricane.

Garden (eighteenth and nineteenth century): The area immediately south of the Spencer-Fry House has been the traditional site of the kitchen garden. The site is now largely overgrown with brush.

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Orchard (nineteenth century): The last of the orchards planted on the Spencer-Fry farm, this apple orchard is largely intact though untended. It is presently used to graze the Bailey cattle.

The Plains (eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth century): The Plains is the general term used for the broad level expanse of land that spreads across the eastern end of the Spencer-Fry and Spencer-Bailey farms. Originally much larger, before the construction of Route 4, the Plains constituted the heart of the farm's cropland. Corn and potatoes were the principal crops raised here. Today the Plains are used for hayfields, cornfields and pasture.

- 2233 24. Beehive House (1872, ca.1915): This is a one-and-a-half-story, L-shaped, clapboarded house with a mansard roof. Plainly finished with gable-roof dormers and two-over-two double-hung sash windows, the house has one internal and one external brick chimney. The house, when it was in its original location on the south side of Frenchtown Road by Allen's Gristmill Pond, was a simple rectangular building with a mansard roof, and its appearance earned it the popular name, the Beehive House. Ca. 1915, it was moved to the north side of Frenchtown Road and the present ell, built in the same style as the original building, was added. In order to preserve the house from demolition during the construction of Route 4, the building was moved to its present location in 1968.

NON-CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES

SOUTH COUNTY TRAIL

2068 SPENCER-BAILEY FARM

25. Barn (1951): This is a one-and-a-half-story, flank-gable-roof, wood-shingled English barn with an oak frame. Three bays wide and two deep it has concrete foundations and a sliding door in the center bay of the south flank.

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26. Hay and Cow Barn (1957, 1978): This is a three part barn with only the center section contributing to the significance of the historic district. The north end of the barn is a one-and-a-half-story, end-gable-roof, board-and-batten structure with concrete foundations. Three bays wide and two bays deep, it has single doors on both the ground story and the loft in the center of the north end. It was built in 1978 on the site of an earlier flank-gable-roof English barn, which had nearly the same dimensions. The south end of the barn is a taller one-and-a-half-story, end-gambrel-roof, concrete block cown barn with an attached single-story, end-gable-roof, milk room on the west side. Built in 1957, this end of the barn houses the cow stalls for the Bailey dairy herd.

27. Heifer Barn (1946): This is a one-and-a-half-story, end-gable-roof, shingled frame barn with concrete foundations. It houses the heifers in the Bailey dairy herd.

2153 JOSEPH FRY HOMESTEAD

28. Milk House (Ca. 1940): This is a single-story, end-gable-roof, wood shingled frame building with rubblestone and concrete foundations. Built to house the refrigerated milk box, where the milk from the Fry dairy herd was collected, it closely resembles the milk houses of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, like the old milk house on the Spencer-Bailey Farm. In 1978, a small, shed-roof, greenhouse was added to the east flank of the milk house, which now serves as a potting shed.

29. Summer House (ca. 1950): This is a single-story, end-gable-roof, frame structure that incorporates part of a chicken coop, built on the site of an earlier milk house. The summer house has sliding glass doors on the east and south sides, an external brick chimney on the west flank and the gable roof projects over a porch on the south end. The building incorporates several elements from the Fry house, including the mantel from the second-story back room fireplace, which had been removed in 1914, a two-board door with handwrought hardware, and Roman Doric columns in the porch, that were originally in the porch added to the house in 1914 and removed in 1950.

# 8. Significance

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

**Specific dates** 1677; c. 1735;  
1794-5; c. 1815 **Builder/Architect** Blder:see inventory; architect:Unknown

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Fry's Hamlet Historic District is an important collection of three historic farmsteads with both buildings and lands possessing considerable significance in the history of East Greenwich's settlement and agricultural development from the late seventeenth century to the mid-twentieth century. The colonial and Federal farmhouses and the associated barns, corn cribs and other farm buildings constitute valuable examples of rural architecture in both high-style and vernacular modes. The three houses provide a valuable example of the changes in architectural style that occurred in the East Greenwich countryside between the early eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries. The Spencer-Bailey House, built c. 1735, is small in scale and plainly designed in comparison with the larger and more ornate Joseph Fry House of 1794-5, and Spencer-Fry House, built in two stages in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, both of which display the symmetry and classical finish that prevailed during the Georgian and Federal eras. The front addition of the Spencer-Fry House, built c. 1815, is a particularly well-preserved example of the sophisticated and delicate design of the late Federal period. In addition to the houses, which mirror the trends in high-style architecture, the other buildings on the farms are significant as examples of individual vernacular building types, such as hay barns, corn cribs, workshops and milk houses, which were important elements of the agricultural landscape in the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The buildings, fields, orchards, woods, paths and stone walls on the three farms are particularly significant when considered in relationship with each other, as they represent the patterns of land use that have characterized farming in East Greenwich and Rhode Island for over two hundred years. Fry's Hamlet is an important cultural resource that preserves a wealth of information about the nature of agrarian life and its importance is increased by the loss of similar elements of the agricultural landscape due to suburban development.

The history of the Fry's Hamlet farms begins with the initial settlement of East Greenwich in 1677 when the town's forty-eight proprietors began to divide the five-thousand-acre tract which had been granted them for their services in King Philip's War. The proprietors, most of whom were from Aquidneck Island, first laid out large farm lots of approximately one hundred acres on the gently-rolling fertile lands in the central part of the town. Most of the lands in the eastern half of Fry's Hamlet fell within the seventeenth farm which was allotted to John Spencer, while the eighteenth farm, drawn by Thomas Fry, included most of the western part of the Hamlet. Spencer and Fry were both residents of Newport in 1677 and both continued to own houses there. John Spencer (?-1684) took up residence in East Greenwich, though not on the seventeenth farm, and became one of the town's leading citizens,

(See Continuation Sheet #17)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Austin, John O., The Geneological Dictionary of Rhode Island (revised edition, Baltimore: 1969) pp. 9, 186, 187, 298-300.

(See Continuation Sheet # 22)

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 272 acres

Quadrangle name East Greenwich; Crompton

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A 

1	9	2	9	2	7	8	0	4	6	1	2	7	0	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

B 

1	9	2	9	2	7	9	0	4	6	1	2	1	0	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

C 

1	9	2	9	1	0	0	0	4	6	1	2	0	5	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

D 

1	9	2	9	1	0	0	0	4	6	1	2	7	8	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

E 

1	9	2	9	1	5	2	0	4	6	1	3	1	2	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

F 

1	9	2	9	2	1	3	0	4	6	1	3	2	0	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

G 

1	9	2	9	2	1	5	0	4	6	1	2	7	2	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

H 

Zone	Easting			Northing										

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary of the Fry's Hamlet Historic District nomination is shown as the dotted line in the accompanying map entitled "Fry's Hamlet Historic District" (See Continuation Sheet #23)

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

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard E. Greenwood / Historic Preservation Consultant

organization \_\_\_\_\_

date \_\_\_\_\_

street & number 215 Indiana Avenue

telephone 461-7193

city or town Providence

state Rhode Island

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Frank C. Williams

title \_\_\_\_\_

date 10-17-85 (date of letter)

### For NPS use only

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

Carol D. Skell

date 12-20-85

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Betsy L. Searge

date 12-20-85

~~Chief of Registration~~

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serving as town clerk for six years. He turned the seventeenth farm over to his sons Michael and John, who in turn sold portions to their brothers Robert and Benjamin; the two sixty-five acre parcels wned by Robert and Benjamin became the basis of the present Spencer-Bailey and Spencer-Fry farms. Thomas Fry (1632-1704) lived only temporarily, if at all, in East Greenwich, though he represented the town as a Deputy to the General Assembly from 1684 to 1690. In 1689 he deeded all his lands in East Greenwich to his son, Thomas (1666-1748), who was a glazier like his father.

Little is known about the early appearance of the Fry and Spencer lands. They were located in the area where the earliest settlements were made and it is probable that Thomas Fry, Jr. and Robert and Benjamin Spencer, all of whom were married and raising families in the 1690s, had established some kind of pioneer homesteads on their lands. Most likely their houses would have been small one-and-a-half-story, one-room dwellings with stone end chimneys. The farmers probably raised corn, rye, beans, and squash and apple orchards were also introduced quite early. The proprietors of East Greenwich also seem to have transplanted the stock farming practices that had been successfully developed on Aquidneck and the other Bay islands and cattle and shēep as well as pigs, horses and poultry became mainstays of the East Greenwich farms. Cattle, pigs and sometimes geese were often turned loose to roam in the spring and then rounded up in the fall, a practice that survived into the early nineteenth century. A book of the various earmarks used by the farmers to identify their livestock still exists in the East Greenwich Town House. Horses and oxen were the farmer's principal sources of power for plowing, hauling and other chores.

Relatively little appears in the historical record about the Spencer brothers, but Thomas Fry, Jr. became a man of considerable stature in the town. Between 1696 and 1732 he served twenty-six terms as a Deputy in the General Assembly with eleven years as Speaker of the House of Deputies and five as Clerk of the Assembly. From 1727 to 1729 he was Deputy Governor of the colony.

In 1700 the proprietors of East Greenwich laid out fifty quarter-acre house lots on the hill rising from Greenwich Cove which was the beginning of the town's urban center. This center developed in the first half of the eighteenth century, spurred by an interest in commerce that accompanied the growth of maritime trade in Narragansett Bay. Thomas Fry, Jr., was one of the town's early merchants; by 1730 he had erected a wharf and warehouse on the Cove and his will of 1748 refers to the goods in his shop, apothecary wares, a stillyard and a ship "abuilding", in addition to farm-lands, slaves and a cider mill. Fry himself seems to have occupied a house in the town center and turned the homestead farm, which had been

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enlarged on the south and west, over to his oldest son Thomas. The rise of commercial enterprise represented by Fry's activities had a major effect on the whole community, including the farmers, throughout the eighteenth century as traders provided a ready market for various kinds of commodities from the farmer's fields, herds and woodlands. The prosperity of the East Greenwich farmers was reflected in the new farmhouses they built, like the two-and-a-half-story, center-chimney, house that was erected by Benjamin Spencer's son, Walter, on what is now the Spencer-Fry Farm, in the second half of the eighteenth century. Not all of the eighteenth-century houses were as large; the one-and-a-half-story cottage built in two sections by Walter's cousins William and John Spencer was a smaller dwelling that may have reflected a more modest prosperity.

Thomas Fry III (1691-1782) continued to farm the homestead farm and filled a number of public offices. In addition to serving three terms as a Deputy and two terms as a Chief Justice of the Inferior Court of Kent County, he served as an officer in the French and Indian Wars. Thomas's son, Joseph (1736-1823), inherited his father's farm and it was he who built the present Joseph Fry House after the existing farmhouse burned in 1793. Like the Walter Spencer House, Joseph Fry's new house was considerably larger than the dwellings of the early settlers. Joseph was content to devote his energies to farming and also held public office as a justice of the peace after the war. He seems to have been the one to put an end to slaveholding by the Fry family; by 1782 there were no longer any slaves in the Fry household. The need for additional labor on the farm was met thereafter by hired labor.

In 1798-9, Joseph's son, Thomas IV (1765-1831), expanded the family's holdings by purchasing the former Walter Spencer farm across the road from his father's farm. Thomas IV was an energetic and industrious farmer who did much to keep the Fry farms prosperous. His account book, kept between 1795 and c. 1833 and still in the possession of the Fry family, provides a valuable record of activities and farming practices. Detailed in the book are the transactions between the Frys and Stephen Arnold, a merchant in East Greenwich village, in which butter, cheese, wood staves for hogsheads and other produce were exchanged for molasses and other imported goods. A similar kind of bartering was made with the Davises, proprietors of the textile factory in nearby Davisville, with farm produce being exchanged for broadcloth and custom work on homespun cloth. The book also records dealings with hired workers, such as the man and woman who came to spin and weave Fry wool and flax into cloth. Other accounts, which refer to firewood sent to Newport and other woods, probably black walnut, sold to furniture makers, indicate the importance of the farm's woodlot. This account book provides an invaluable documentary source for interpreting life on the Fry farms in the early nineteenth century.

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One of the large trends affecting the agricultural economy which it chronicles was the growth of local urban markets, both major ones like Providence and Newport, and smaller ones like the factory village at Davisville. The urban industrial society that developed in Rhode Island in the nineteenth century came to provide new markets after the decline of maritime commerce.

In addition to keeping careful records of his accounts, Thomas IV was also concerned with improving farming practices. By the early nineteenth century, the limits of agricultural expansion in East Greenwich had been met. The farmers in Fry's Hamlet were fortunate in having naturally fertile and well-watered lands but future prosperity depended on the careful husbanding of resources and the use of new techniques of fertilizing and soil improvement. Thomas was one of the early members of the Rhode Island Society for the Encouragement of Domestic Industry, founded in 1820, as its name indicates, to encourage both agricultural and mechanical production. The Society awarded Thomas and his wife Hannah a silver cup, probably for butter or cheese produced on their farm, at one of the first of the Society's fairs. The success that attended Thomas's various efforts is evident in the rather elegant Federal addition which he built on his house c. 1815. Thomas IV also followed the family tradition of public service, serving in the state legislature and as judge in the court of common pleas and a justice of the peace. Upon his death, he deeded his homestead to his son, Thomas G. Fry (1810-92), and his father's farm to another son, Joseph II (1805-90). A third son, Nicholas, received a third farm located nearby. The prevalence of Frys in the area led to the common name of Fry's Corner or Fry's Four Corners for the intersection of Middle Road and South County Trail.

Thomas G. and Joseph Fry seem to have devoted their lives to following the same round of agricultural pursuits that had characterized life on their father's farm. Certain innovations appeared in their lifetimes, such as the Providence and Stonington railroad, built in 1837, which was to make it possible to send milk directly to market in Providence. The railroad was also a stimulus to the growth of the town center, but the countryside to the west did not experience any great changes beyond a slight decline in the amount of land under cultivation. Both men left their farms to their children; Lydia Fry, who married William A. Vaughn (1848-1927), inherited the Spencer-Fry farm, and William G. Fry (1848--94) inherited his father Joseph's farm. William Vaughn was considered one of the town's progressive farmers and he was among the first to adopt new tools and techniques, such as the threshing machine.

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The third farm in Fry's Hamlet remained in the Spencer family until after the Civil War. In the late eighteenth century it had become a part of the large Ebenezer Spencer farm to the east. Ebenezer eventually turned the smaller property over to his son Charles, who farmed here until his death in 1870. In addition to farming, Charles, who was a deacon in the Baptist Church, maintained a small water-powered shop next to his house. The exact nature of the shop is unknown; oral tradition refers to as a spinning wheel shop, which would have been a rarity in the mid-nineteenth century. Charles's heirs sold the farm to Jarvis Himes in 1876, who in turn sold it to Stukeley Brown in 1879. Brown turned it over to his son Ebenezer in 1886. Four years later, William D. Bailey, a descendant of Hugh Bailey who was an East Greenwich resident by 1702, purchased the farm for his homestead. William Bailey was related to the Spencers through his mother and his sister was married to William Fry.

By the late nineteenth century, the farming in Fry's Hamlet was increasingly focused on dairy farming and apple orchards. William Fry, who took over the farm in 1890, was the last to raise sheep here. When his son Louis (1892-1967) began to run the farm in the twentieth century, the bulk of the cultivated land on the three neighboring farms was devoted to raising hay and corn to feed the dairy herds. The orchards produced apples as well as cider and vinegar. There were a number of smaller crops, including potatoes, oats and wheat, as well as the native flint of corn used to make the traditional Rhode Island johnnycakes. The farm wives raised chickens and had weekly egg routes through the mill towns in the Pawtuxet Valley. Whenever there were surpluses of vegetables, fruits and berries, including cranberries, they were sold in Newport or other urban areas, or exchanged for goods with the local merchants. For the most part, however, farming in Fry's Hamlet in the twentieth century had become more specialized than before, with a smaller number of activities engrossing the farmers' energies. As generations of farmers had before them, the residents of Fry's Hamlet shared labor and resources, working cooperatively on annual chores such as cutting ice and filling their ice houses and harvesting crops. The corn harvest traditionally began on the Bailey farm and then continued to the other farms, because the low-lying Bailey fields were particularly prone to early frosts.

Mechanized farming was largely introduced by Louis Fry, who purchased a pair of cleat-track tractors c. 1930. Thereafter, the Baileys, who farmed with horses up until 1948, could rely on Louis Fry for the use of his tractor for the few tasks they couldn't manage by animal power. Farming by tractor did make some new demands on the farmers; rocks and boulders that could be avoided relatively easily while plowing with horses had to be removed to facilitate plowing with a tractor.

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The Hurricane of 1938 had a devastating effect on Fry's Hamlet, destroying the large barn on the Spencer-Fry farm and blowing down trees, including most of the orchard on the Spencer-Bailey farm. Although the barn and the orchard were not replaced, farming continued uninterrupted with Louis Fry and William Bailey's son, Francis, the principal farmers. Louis Fry acquired the Spencer-Fry farm, and leased it to tenant farmers for a time. With the outbreak of World War II, he adapted the house for use as apartments for officers at the Navy base in North Kingstown, though the farmlands remained in use, with potatoes, wheat and corn as the principal crops.

Fry's Hamlet is still agricultural in nature today, with pastures and fields on the three farms supporting the Baileys' seventy to eighty head of dairy cattle. The farmlands on the east side of the road are used the most intensively; some of the outlying land on the north and west sides of the Fry farm have become overgrown. With the exception of the hay barn on the Fry farm, the farm buildings in active use are all on the Spencer-Bailey farm. However the buildings on the Fry farm in particular still preserve the character of a nineteenth century farmyard. In addition to the three houses, each of which represents a different type of farmhouse, the associated farmlands, transected by stone walls and paths developed over a two-hundred-and-fifty-year period, constitute an important survival of the agricultural landscape of East Greenwich. The historic character of Fry's Hamlet is emphasized by the adjacent suburban development, which includes industrial plants to the north and south, a superhighway on the east and modern housing throughout the surrounding area.

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PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS, July and August, 1985

Rodney Bailey, East Greenwich  
Gladys Bailey, East Greenwich  
Dorothy Fry, East Greenwich  
Marion Fry, East Greenwich

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District", drawn at the scale of two hundred feet to one inch.

The boundary of the Fry's Hamlet Historic District is drawn to include all of the following adjoining lots as recorded by the Tax Assessor of the Town of East Greenwich: 11H-2; 11H-40; 11G-4; 16F-1; 16F-52; and 16B-12. These lots encompass the historic buildings and lands associated with the farms of Fry's Hamlet. The boundary also includes a portion of South County Trail, which has been a historic feature of Fry's Hamlet for over two hundred years.

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Fry's Hamlet Historic District Kent Co., RI

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Date/Signature  
Keeper Patrick Andrews 5/8/87  
Attest \_\_\_\_\_

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enough to allow the passage of sheep, but not cows. Four stone slab bridges that carry cartways over the branches of Fry's Brook survive on the farm as well.

On the east side of South County Trail are the abutting Spencer-Bailey and Spencer Fry Farms on the north and south respectively.

The heart of the Spencer-Fry farm is the Spencer-Fry House, which was built in several stages, perhaps beginning in the mid-eighteenth century. The oldest part of the house, which dates from the mid-eighteenth century, is contained in what is now the rear ell, while the front of the house was added ca. 1815. A side wing on the south and another addition on the north flank of the ell were added subsequently, in the mid-nineteenth century and early twentieth century respectively.

The former farmyard behind the Spencer-Fry House is marked by a dirt lane, two nineteenth-century frame sheds and the extensive dry-laid stone foundations of the barn and connected outbuildings. The large frame barn, which was built into a bank, facing south, was destroyed in the 1938 hurricane. Outbuildings included a privy, an ice house and a milk house, all of which were taken down in the twentieth century. The orchard, which is no longer tended, and the adjoining fields, which are kept as pasture and cropland, lie principally to the east of the house. The house yard, is enclosed on the west and north by a white picket fence with granite posts. These and other stone posts on the Fry farms came from the Tarbox Ledge on the East Greenwich-West Greenwich border.

The Spencer-Bailey House is a relatively plain eighteen-century clapboarded cottage, built in two sections. The northern end of the house, built ca. 1735, was probably three bays wide originally, with the chimney in the center. The southern half, which is two bays wide, was added in 1759 according to a datestone in the foundations. The datestone also bears the initials, "SJM", for John and Mercy Spencer, who presumably built the addition.

The Spencer-Bailey farmyard is located a short distance south of the house, though there are several outbuildings located nearer the house, which includes some of the older buildings on the property. The former horse barn, located on the north side of the farm lane across from the house, is a timber-framed structure that may date from the eighteenth century. To the west of the barn is a small privy and another shed. Directly south of the house is a frame building now used as a storage shed. This building or an earlier building on the site was used as a shop,

(See Continuation Sheet #3)