

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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JUN 21 1977

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

** Old Bedford Center Historic District

AND/OR COMMON

Bedford Center Historic District

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

ing pattern along Great Rd from Beacon to Concord
North Rds.
Multiple- See Key to Sketch Map & Property Owners

CITY, TOWN

Bedford

-- NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

5th

VICINITY OF

STATE

Massachusetts

CODE

01730

COUNTY

Middlesex

CODE

017

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" 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

Multiple- See Key to Sketch Map & Property Owners

STREET & NUMBER

Multiple

CITY, TOWN

Bedford

VICINITY OF

STATE

Massachusetts

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Middlesex County Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

40 Thorndike Street

CITY, TOWN

Cambridge

STATE

Massachusetts 02141

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Inventory of the Historic Assets of the Commonwealth
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE

19 63

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDSMassachusetts Historical Commission
National Archives

CITY, TOWN

Boston

STATE

Massachusetts 02108

Washington, D.C.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Bedford Center Historic District, located in the town of Bedford, includes 56¼ acres. The district is situated in the geographic and traditional community center of town. It is comprised of 100 commercial, religious, cultural and civic structures dating from 1710. There are 19 modern intrusions, most of which blend well with the earlier architecture.

Bedford was incorporated in 1729, and a meetinghouse was added to the three original buildings contained within the present district. Most of the existing buildings were constructed during the 18th or early 19th century. The architectural centerpiece is the First Parish Church; it was modeled after a design by Asher Benjamin. The town's war memorials are located here and place special emphasis on Bedford's Revolutionary heritage.

Nine buildings face south toward The Great Road in the block bounded by North and Fletcher Roads. Until 1770, only one of the existing buildings stood in this area: the Fitch Tavern (#7). One of the nine buildings is an intrusion - Leader Federal Savings (B) - but it was designed to blend with the existing structures.

The Squire Stearns House (#5) was built in 1810 by Elijah Stearns on the site of the first store in town. The Federal style house is a two story, brick end, hip roof structure sheathed in white clapboards. There are four tall inside end chimneys. Fenestration is 12/12 with plain architraves framed by louvered shutters. The five bay wide facade is dominated by an elegant center entrance. Three brick steps lead to a balustraded landing. The eight panel door is framed by sidelights and headed by a delicate, elliptical fanlight. This is surmounted by a wide molded entablature with a dentiled cornice supported by fluted pilasters with scrolled capitals. The capitals are ornamented by a central medallion in the Adam manner. The west elevation has a porch with Greek key motif trim supported by plain columns. There is a gambrel roofed ell on the north elevation and a red barn with cupola to the rear. The house is fronted by a wood railed fence with a brick base and urn-capped brick posts framing the gate. There is an informal garden. The house is currently a private residence.

The Fitch Tavern (#6) was built circa 1710 by Benjamin Kidder. It is a 2½ story, white clapboard, center chimney colonial structure with 6/6 fenestration. The five bay wide facade has a center entrance with a semi-circular fanlight and keystone crowned by a carved frieze with simple geometrical motifs. There are two dormers in the ridge roof. The west elevation has a ballroom wing and a later bay window and arched piazza. The north elevation has a two story, five bay deep ridge roof wing with center chimney. A one story saltbox carriage house stands to the east of the house. An interesting variety of old walls, gates and fencing border the street. In front of the house is a fence of white wooden spikes set above lattice work on a granite base. To the east of the carriage house an old stone wall encloses a modest side yard. This landmark building, now a private residence, has been little altered. It remains a focal point in town, essential to its sense of historical identity.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Key To Sketch Map & Property Owners:

BUILDING:

OWNER:

1 Mary Sage House-1806
29 North Road
Bedford, Mass. 01730

Blanche Proctor
Same Address

A- c. 1935
25 North Road
Bedford

Gould Motors, Inc.
Same Address

2- 19th C.
21 North Road
Bedford

Mr. & Mrs. George Brady
46 Hillside Ave.
Bedford, Mass. 01730

3- 1861
17 North Road
Bedford

Gladys Davis
Same Address

4- 1840
9-11 North Road
Bedford

Mrs. Ann F. Eno
P.O. Box 104
Carlisle, Mass. 01741

5- Squire Stearns House-1810
4 Great Road
Bedford

Mr. & Mrs. John Forte
Same Address

6- Fitch Tavern-c. 1710
12 Great Road
Bedford

Mr. & Mrs. David Reader
Same

7- Penniman-Stearns House-1772
26 Great Road
Bedford

Dr. & Mrs. Harley Haynes
Same

8- Simonds House-c. 1830
36-38 Great Road
Bedford

Greenwood Realty Trust
Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Greenwood
74 Hancock Street
Lexington, Mass. 02173

9- E. Hartwell House- c. 1830
42 Great Road
Bedford

Beth Ellen Realty Trust
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Agrillo
74 Woodmoor Drive
Bedford, Mass. 01730

10- c. 1830
52 Great Road

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BUILDING:

10- c. 1830
52 Great Road
Bedford, Mass. 01730

11- Albert Bacon House- c. 1850
56 Great Road
Bedford

B- c.1960
60 Great Road
Bedford

C- 1920 & 1950
68-84 Great Road
Bedford

12- Mary Hartwell House- c.1850
90 Great Road
Bedford

13- E.A. Hartwell House-c.1875
22 Springs Road
Bedford

14- Lunt-Bacon House- c.1830
34 Springs Road
Bedford

15- Twin Elms-1834
40 Springs Road
Bedford

16- A.E. Brown House-late 1700's,
c. 1830
moved from Page Road c. 1840
44 Springs Road
Bedford

17- Laws Butler House-c. 1830
48-50 Springs Road
Bedford

OWNER:

Beth Ellen Realty Trust
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Agrillo
74 Woodmoor Drive
Bedford, Mass. 01730
Dr. Michael Koury
49 Fletcher Road
Bedford

Leader Federal Savings Bank
1840 Mass. Ave.
Lexington, Mass. 02173

Mrs Mary Sheldon
90 Great Road
Bedford

Mrs. Mary Sheldon
90 Great Road
Bedford

Mr. & Mrs. Peter Grey
Same Address

William, John, & Helen Pierce
113 Nashoba Road
Concord, Mass. 01742

Mr. & Mrs. Carl Hanson
Same Address

Mr. & Mrs. Howard Manley
Same

Pothier
Miss Jeanette ~~Engelhardt~~
50-48 Springs Road, Bedford
Mr. Robert Ferrick
50 Springs Road, Bedford

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BUILDING:

18- Second Center School House-1806,
1829
56 Springs Road
Bedford, Mass. 01730

OWNER:

Mr. & Mrs. Charles Scrymgeour
Same Address

19- John H. Brown House-c. 1835
64 Springs Road
Bedford

Mr. & Mrs. Phillip Beecy
Same Address

20- Capt. W.H. Saunders House- c. 1880
51 Springs Road
Bedford

Mr. & Mrs. Edwin Qua
Same Address

21- late 19th C.
45 Springs Road
Bedford

Mr. Pierre Dillen
Same

22- c. 1880
31 Springs Road
Bedford

Mr. & Mrs. Alfred Wiggins
Same

23- Bacon Wagon Shop-c. 1850
29 Springs Road
Bedford

Episcopal Church Rectory
100 Pine Hill Road
Bedford

24- Old Burying Ground- 1729
7 Springs Road
Bedford

Town of Bedford
16 South Road
Bedford

25-c. 1880
5 Springs Road
Bedford

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Herlihy
Same

D- 1956
94 Great Road
Bedford

County Bank
12 Norfolk Street
Cambridge, Mass. 02139

26- Domine Manse- 1730
110 Great Road
Bedford

Mr. & Mrs. N.K. Brown
1 Mudge Way
Bedford

27- 1830
120 Great Road
Bedford

Dr. James & Josephine Carroll
7 Oldham Road
Arlington, Mass. 02174

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BUILDING:

E- 1959
128 Great Road
Bedford, Mass. 01730

F- 1958
130 Great Road
Bedford

28- pre- 1885
138 Great Road
Bedford

29- pre-1885
140 Great Road
Bedford

30- Paul Webber House- c. 1890
18 Hillside Ave.
Bedford

G- 1951
24 Hillside Ave.
Bedford

31- c. 1900
34 Hillside Ave.
Bedford

32- 1880
38 Hillside Ave.
Bedford

33- 1924
44 Hillside Ave.
Bedford

34- 1924 Hillside Ave
46 Hillside Ave.
Bedford

H- 1952
48 Hillside Ave.
Bedford

OWNER:

Mr. William Cutter
22 Oxbow Road, Lexington, Mass. 02173

Clifford Realty
Same Address

Donovan Realty
Same Address

Mr. & Mrs. William Mietzner
Same

Mr. & Mrs. Charles Schwerin
Same

Mr. Richard Rue
Same

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Evans
Same

Mr. & Mrs. George Stidworthy
Same

Mr. & Mrs. George Brady
Same

Mr. & Mrs. George Brady
Same

Mr. & Mrs. John Wilds
Same

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BUILDING:

35- c.1840
57 Hillside Ave.
Bedford, Mass. 01730

36- c.1840
moved from The Great Road c.1845
53 Hillside Ave..
Bedford

I- 1936
49 Hillside Ave.
Bedford

J- c.1940
45 Hillside Ave.
Bedford

37- pre-1875
43 Hillside Ave.
Bedford

38- c.1900
37 Hillside Ave.
Bedford

39- S. Davis Estate- c.1890
33 Hillside Ave.
Bedford

40- 1830
25 Hillside Ave.
Bedford

41- Old Parsonage- 1835
moved from The Great Road 1927
143 The Great Road
Bedford

42- Bacon Carriage House- 1836
139 Great Road
Bedford

43- Jonathan Bacon House- 1836
133 Great Road
Bedford

OWNER:

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Barret
Same Address

Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Babor
Same

Mr. & Mrs. Herbert Tyler
Same

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Shea
45 Hillside Ave.
Bedford

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Genetti
Same

Mrs. Edith McNaught
Same

Mr. Charles Edwards
2800 Hillsboro Ave.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55427

Mrs. Cynthia Webber
Same

Dr. & Mrs. Eric Birmingham
Same

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Christie
Same

Associated Estates, Inc.
200 Great Road
Bedford

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BUILDING:

K-c.1950
127 Great Road
Bedford, Mass. 01730

44- D.P. Ladd House-pre-1885
123 Great Road
Bedford

45- William A. Putnam House-pre-1885
119 Great Road
Bedford

L- c.1950
105 Great Road
Bedford

M- c.1950
93 Great Road
Bedford

46- Town Hall- 1856
16 South Road
Bedford

47- pre-1875
20 South Road
Bedford

48- pre-1875
24-26 South Road
Bedford

49- pre-1875
36 South Road
Bedford

50- First Parish Church-1817
75 Great Road
Bedford

51- 1830
33 South Road
Bedford

OWNER:

NWS Nominee Trust- John Wallace
Same Address

Dr. Mary P. Cassidy
Same

Great Fields Realty
1 Mudge Way
Bedford

Texaco Gas Station- Wilford Cyr
100 Water Street
Lawrence, Mass. 01841

Morgan Stores- Allen Morgan
Cochituate Road
Wayland, Mass. 01778

Town of Bedford
16 South Road
Bedford

Mrs. Edna Tuttle
Same

Mr. Robert Pfeiffer
Same

Harry & Clara Silverman
87 Pleasant Street
Lexington, Mass. 02173

First Parish Church
Same

Mr. & Mrs John Riley
50 Old Billerica Road
Bedford

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ITEM NUMBER 4 PAGE 7

BUILDING: 52- c. 1830 4-6 Maple Street Bedford, Mass. 01730	OWNER: Mrs. Betsie J. Soultter Same Address
53- c.1830 8 Maple Street Bedford	Mrs. Abbott Webber Same
54- Reed- Bacon House- 1810, 1850 10-12 Maple Street Bedford	Mrs. Joan Larsen Same
55- Reuben Bacon- Flint House-pre 1850 46 Elm Street Bedford	Mr. & Mrs. Karl Adler Same
56- c.1849 49 Elm Street Bedford	Mr. & Mrs. Allen Pease Same
57- Charles Gragg House- pre-1885 45 Elm Street Bedford	Mr. Tillman Shafer Same
58- 1836 6 School Way Bedford	Mr. & Mrs. Edward Crowe Same
59- pre-1885 10 School Way Bedford	Mr. & Mrs. Salvatore Albani Same
N- Center School-1928, 1951 School Way Bedford	Town of Bedford - R 16 South Road Bedford
60- Union School- 1891 School Way Bedford	Town of Bedford - R 16 South Road Bedford
61- 1825 moved from The Great Road c. 1890 13 School Ave. Bedford	Carol & Grace Dunham Same

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BUILDING:

62- pre-1885
17 School Ave.
Bedford, Mass. 10730

OWNER:

Mr. & Mrs. Alfred deForest
Same Address

63 pre-1885
11 School Ave.
Bedford

Theodora Mack
Same

64- Lucy P. Hartwell House- pre-1850
29 Elm Street
Bedford

Town of Bedford
16 South Road
Bedford

65- c.1850
21-23 Elm Street
Bedford

Mr. & Mrs. Stephan Thomas
Same

66- c. 1850
16 School Ave.
Bedford

Mary Currie
Great Road
Stow, Mass. 01775

67- c.1840
15-17 Elm Street
Bedford

Mr. Charles Edwards
2800 Hillsboro Ave.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55427

68- pre-1885
12 School Ave.
Bedford

Jane Curtin
Same

0- 1948
55 Great Road
Bedford

Police & Fire Stations, Town of Bedford
16 South Road
Bedford

69- 1890
49-51 Great Road
Bedford

Mrs. Barbara Clifford
145 Page Road
Bedford

70- Hartwell- Corey House
moved from Springs Road 1830
43 Great Road
Bedford

Paul & Barbara Birmingham
Same

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BUILDING:

71- Dutton House- 1830
31 Great Road
Bedford, Mass. 01730

OWNER:

David & Susan Packer
Same Address

72- Congregational Church Parsonage-1850
27 Great Road
Bedford

Congregational Church Parson-
nage
Same

73- First Church of Christ-
Congregational- 1833
25 Great Road
Bedford

First Church of Christ Congregational
Same

P- 1953
15 Great Road
Bedford

Administrative Building, Town of
Bedford
Same

Q- 1960
5 Mudge Way
Bedford

N.K. Brown
Same

R- 1960
1 Mudge Way
Bedford

Mr. & Mrs. Nathaniel Brown
Same

74- Amos Cutler House-c.1835
5 Great Road
Bedford

Mr. & Mrs. John F. Brown
Same

75- David Rice House- 1810
1 Great Road
Bedford

Mr. & Mrs. Walter Spofford
Same

76- E.W. Stearns House- 1820
2 Concord Road
Bedford

Mr. & Mrs. Hopkins
Same

77- pre-1885
16 Concord Road
Bedford

Mr. Paul Gilman
Same

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ITEM NUMBER 4 PAGE 10

BUILDING:

78- Wilson Park-pre-1885
Concord & North Roads
Bedford, Mass. 10730

OWNER:

Town of Bedford
16 South Road - R
Bedford

79- The Red Barn- late 1700's
moved from North Road ? date
5 Concord Road
Bedford

Mrs. Kay Brown ✓
Same Address

80- Prescott Estate- pre-1889
14 North Road
Bedford

Prescott Estate ✓
Same

81- Prescott Estate- pre-1894
16 North Road
Bedford

Prescott Estate ✓
Same

S- c.1935
18 North Road
Bedford

Bedford Farms Ice Cream ✓
Same

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CONTINUATION SHEET Bedford Center
Historic District ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

The Penniman Stearns House (#7) was designed and built by the local architect Reuben Duren in 1772. The two story clapboard house is a fine example of the Georgian style with its twin chimneys, hip roof and symmetry. A modillioned cornice runs continuously around the building. Fenestration is 12/12 with many original lights remaining. Wooden quoins decorate the corners. The five bay wide facade has a bold center entrance. The eight panel door is framed by fluted pilasters and headed by a dentiled triangular pediment. The east elevation has a two story projecting entry and a saltbox ell with a connected small barn. This ell antedates the main house. The interior hall is ornamented with Rufus Porter murals and is lighted by a Palladian window on the stair landing at the rear of the house. To the rear of the house is a large drive-through barn with an aviary above the main door, a third floor fanlight, and a cupola. All of the structures are currently painted pumpkin orange with green shutters and doors and white trim. In front of the house is a white octagonal post and rail fence. The house is a private residence.

The Simonds House (#8) was built circa 1830 by Oliver Lane. It is a 3½ story, clapboard, Federal style building with a ridge roof and central chimney. The entablature and corner boards are plain. Fenestration is 6/6. The house is painted yellow with black doors and shutters and white trim. The imposing six bay wide facade has a central double doorway with sidelights. It is shielded by a simple flat roofed porch supported by columns and a wide entablature. There are two full sized windows in each gable end, both headed by a fanlight in the peak of the roof. The three bay deep west elevation has a central Victorian, three sided bay window on the ground floor. This bay has a hip roof supported by brackets. The east elevation has a three story projection with a small Victorian porch in front. The house now contains six apartments which were recently renovated with careful attention to structural soundness as well as historic detail.

Six buildings face southeast onto Springs Road between Hancock Street and Hillside Avenue. Joshua Page opened the area for development in 1829 when he bought the center schoolhouse and moved it from the common to Springs Road. Several Federal style buildings followed. One housed a ladies' school, another a general store, and another a butcher's shop and candy store.

Twin Elms (#15) was built circa 1834. The two story Federal style house has a ridge roof and three unmatched chimneys. Fenestration is 6/6. The five bay wide facade has a center entrance framed by sidelights. A two story ell containing the dining room (original kitchen) and present kitchen projects from the northwest elevation. A Victorian facade entry has been removed. The interior consists of matched sitting rooms flanking a pegged central stairway with twin bedrooms on the second story.

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Bedford Center

CONTINUATION SHEET Historic District ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

Second Center Schoolhouse (#18) was built in 1806 as the town's first new schoolhouse. An older building had earlier been used as the schoolhouse. The new building was probably designed by the local architect Reuben Duren. It appears to have been copied from a schoolhouse built in Charlestown around the same time. The building was purchased and moved in 1829. It was then converted to a two-family home, complete with chimneys through the center which served back-to-back fireplaces. The east elevation ell was a cobbler's shop which was moved from the back portion of the lot. The west facade and north elevation have greenhouses. The green clapboarded building with gold trim now houses a small gift shop.

The block formed by South and Springs Roads on the west, and Hillside Avenue and Bacon Street on the east features several Federal and Victorian period houses, one colonial house, and an assortment of business structures.

Domine Manse (#26) was built in 1730 and is the second oldest building remaining in the town center. The house is a 2½ story white clapboard, ridge roof structure with two chimneys. The five bay wide south facade has a slightly off center projecting entryway. The six panel door is framed and headed by lights. These are framed by double pilasters supporting a molded triangular pediment. Fenestration on the facade is 6/9. There are two ridge roof dormers. The west elevation has a bay window on the first story; its center section is 10/15, flanked by 6/9 at 45°. There is a one story ell on the east elevation. The building has housed a restaurant and now facilitates a law firm and other professional offices.

Jonathan Bacon House (#43) was built by Jonathan Bacon in 1836 and was expanded by his son in 1856. The two story Greek Revival house is sheathed in white clapboards. A wide, molded entablature encircles the building. There are six entrances. The north facade is dominated by four fluted Ionic columns running the full two stories. The gable pediment above contains two small 2/2 windows. The second story has three 2/2 windows, and the first story has two large windows. The main entrance is in the west end, framed by sidelights, flanked by molded pilasters and headed by a slightly projecting molded cornice. The east elevation contains a bay window. A semicircular window and stained glass insets are featured on the rounded bay. It is topped by a flat roof with an intersecting gable overhead. The west elevation has a two story bay in the center. In the northern end of the elevation is another two story projection with an overhanging second story window supported by brackets. This projection contains a center entrance. The Bacon House is especially imposing because of its irregularity of style and its multiple bays. A cement and stone wall forms the front boundary and continues past the former carriage house to the east.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Bedford Center
Historic District ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

Bedford Town Hall (#46) faces the common across South Street and was built in 1856. It was originally planned as a school and meetinghouse and has also housed the public library, the Grange, the Chief of Police Office, and various town offices. The two story white clapboard building stands gable end to the street. The wide overhang of the eaves is supported by brackets, as are the projecting window sills and lintels. The corner pilasters are simply molded and are headed by double brackets supporting the cornice returns. Fenestration is 6/6 throughout. Steps which run continuously along the three bay west facade lead to the three entrance doors. The center entrance is double six panel doors framed by flat pilasters and headed by a bracketed cornice. Above is the old gold on black "Town Hall" sign. These doors are flanked by a single door on both the northern and southern ends, each framed by pilasters and a bracketed cornice. Second story windows stand over the three doors. There is a single window in the gable. On the five bay deep south elevation covered stairs lead to the basement entrance. There is a small porch over the doorway to the second floor fire escape on the east elevation. On the south elevation a more recent brick addition houses the town vault.

First Parish Church on the Common (#50) was built in 1816 as Bedford's second meetinghouse. Oak timbers from the 1729 meetinghouse were used in the construction of this meetinghouse. The church was built by local carpenters, Joshua Page and Leri Wilson, according to a plan drawn up by Samuel Blodgett. Mr. Blodgett was paid \$33.25 for his 16½ days labor, his drawing paper, and the hiring of a horse for travel to view a church elsewhere. The building stands today at the end of the town common. The white clapboard church is a distinguished example of Federal style architecture. Its design appears to be a wooden variant derived from the plan by Asher Benjamin for "a Congregational Meetinghouse at West Boston." It is notable for its projecting four story entrance bay which is surmounted by a small pediment and urns at the corners. The top two stories of the bay are defined by overhanging dentiled cornices. The main entrance door is framed by pilasters and topped by a slightly projecting cornice. This door is flanked by two doors with plain architraves on either side of the bay. Directly above the center entrance is a Palladian window flanked by a 12/16 window on either side. The third story has three round arched windows separated by pilasters. The fourth story has a clock beneath the pediment, flanked by an 8/8 window on either side. The bell tower rises in two square stages. The first has a dentiled cornice and balustrade above. The second stage has an arched louvered opening flanked by pilasters on each side, all crowned by a dentiled cornice. Above this is an octagonal domed cupola with eight arched louvered openings and a weathervane on top. The main body of the building has a 12/12 window on the first story to either side of the entrance bay. The east and west elevations are six bays deep beneath a shallow pitched roof. Fenestration is 12/12 on the elevations.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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NOV 17 1977

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Bedford Center
Historic District ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 4

8
? First Church of Christ, Congregational (#73) was built in 1832. The building was rededicated in 1886 with additions which included a new door arrangement, a shelter over the entrance, and a spire on top of the original square bell tower. A 1966 remodeling restored much of the facade to its original appearance. The simply designed church stands gable end to the street. The entire north facade is sheathed in horizontal boarding, while the side elevations are clapboarded. A shallow two story entrance bay covers most of the facade. This bay contains three entrances. The central door has sidelights and a distinctive Gothic relief overhead. This main door is flanked by a simple foor with molded architrave on either side. Above these east and west end doors are single Gothic arched 6/6 windows. The triangular pediment is unadorned. Above it rises a two stage tower. The first stage has a facade clock; the second stage has Gothic arched windows on each elevation with wide, molded pilasters at each corner. The octagonal spire rises overhead. The east and west elevations are three bays deep; each bay is composed of three 20/20 Gothic windows. There are later extensions at the rear (south) elevation, and a white clapboard Fellowship Hall ell was added in 1958. Small spires which ornamented the corners of the bell tower and porch have been removed.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES Multiple

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bedford Center Historic District is significant as the historical and modern center of community social, commercial, and civic life, and as an area which contains architecture representing several styles. The oldest structure dates from 1710. Most of the buildings were constructed in the 18th and early 19th century.

The district dates back to 1729 when the residents of the new town of Bedford selected it as the site of the town meetinghouse, a place for town government and worship. The meetinghouse was placed in the geographic center of town. The common lands were donated by the town founders. Three buildings were located in the town center at the time of Bedford's incorporation: Benjamin Kidder's farm, built circa 1710; an ancient one room house later to become the first school; and the home of Israel Putnam, located across from the Old Burying Ground. Of the early structures, only the Kidder farm, known today as Fitch Tavern (#6), and Domine Manse (#26) remain.

The Squire Stearns House (#5) originally housed a store. It later became the home of Bedford's first postmaster, and so the first town post office in 1825.

Fitch Tavern (#6) has served as a farm, a tavern, and a school. It is best known as the tavern of Jeremiah Fitch, and as a rallying point for minutemen of Bedford and neighboring towns before their march to Concord's North Bridge on April 19, 1775. The Tavern lawns are now the site of modern day reenactments of minutemen drills. The yard is the traditional repository of the liberty pole raised each year in local Patriot's Day celebrations.

The Penniman Stearns House (#7) was commissioned by Joseph Penniman, who in 1771 became Bedford's third minister. The house is better known as the home of Samuel Stearns, beloved fourth town minister.

The Simonds House (#8) was the home of John Webber Simonds, merchant, surveyor, historian, member of the Great and General Court 1844-52, and chairman of the Convention to Revise the Constitution in 1853. At the rear of the house were several shoe shops which contributed to Bedford's prosperity in the early 1800's. This early shoe industry employed many townspeople in shops behind other homes, such as the Merritt-Gleason House and the Jonathan Bacon House (#43) on The Great Road.

Domine Manse (#26) was the first house built following the town's incorporation in 1729 and was part of the settlement for the town's first minister, Nicholas Bowes. The

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Brown, Abram English, History of the Town of Bedford, 1891.
 Brown, Louise K., A Revolutionary Town, Phoenix Publishing, Canaan, N.H., 1975.
 Brown, Louise K., Wilderness Town, 1968.
 Mansur, Ina, A New England Church 1730-1834, The Bond Wheelwright Co., Freeport, Maine, 1974.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 56.15 acres
 UTM REFERENCES

<u>E</u> <u>19</u>	<u>312110</u>	<u>4707100</u>	<u>A</u> <u>19</u>	<u>312990</u>	<u>4707000</u>
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
<u>B</u> <u>19</u>	<u>312890</u>	<u>4706490</u>	<u>C</u> <u>19</u>	<u>312400</u>	<u>4706460</u> (cont.)
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION DD-19/312-120 4706-670
 The northern boundary of the district begins with the northern boundary of 29 North Rd. (#1), follows the back property lines of properties facing North Rd. and continues east along the rear property lines of properties facing The Great Road. Crossing Fletcher Rd., the district boundary follows the rear property lines of properties facing Springs Road until it reaches Hillside Ave. The eastern boundary follows the rear property lines of properties facing Hillside Ave. The southern boundary follows the rear property lines of properties

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Blaine Mallory and Joseph Orfant, National Register Editor (Thomas F. Babor, Bedford Historical Society)

ORGANIZATION Massachusetts Historical Commission DATE June 1, 1977

STREET & NUMBER 294 Washington Street TELEPHONE 617-727-8470

CITY OR TOWN Boston STATE Massachusetts 02108

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 Elizabeth Reed Amador

TITLE Executive Director, Mass. Historical Commission DATE 6/13/77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Robert B. Rettig DATE 11/17/77
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: Charles [Signature] KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
 DATE 11/16/77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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RECEIVED JUN 21 1977

DATE ENTERED

NOV 17 1977

Bedford Center
CONTINUATION SHEET Historic District ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

minister was granted 16 acres, part of which lie within the district. His mansion, which became the cultural and religious center of Bedford, was presided over by Bowes' wife, a daughter of the Rev. John Hancock of Lexington. Bedford's first schoolmaster lived at Domine Manse. The house and surrounding farm lands were purchased in 1767 by John Reed, Bedford's delegate to the first and second Provincial Congresses.

The Jonathan Bacon House (#43) was built in 1836 by Jonathan Bacon, who specialized in making quality children's shoes. The house remained in the Bacon family until 1925. Only the main house and the carriage house remain from a once extensive estate.

First Church of Christ, Congregational (#73) was built in 1832 after theological differences caused the Trinitarian Congregational Society to separate from the First Parish Unitarian. Jeremiah Fitch gave the land, and the Church was furnished by the Society.

The area remains the center of community life and is an excellent profile of rural New England development, presenting examples of Colonial, Federal, Greek Revival and Victorian architecture in excellent condition.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED

NOV 17 1977

CONTINUATION SHEET

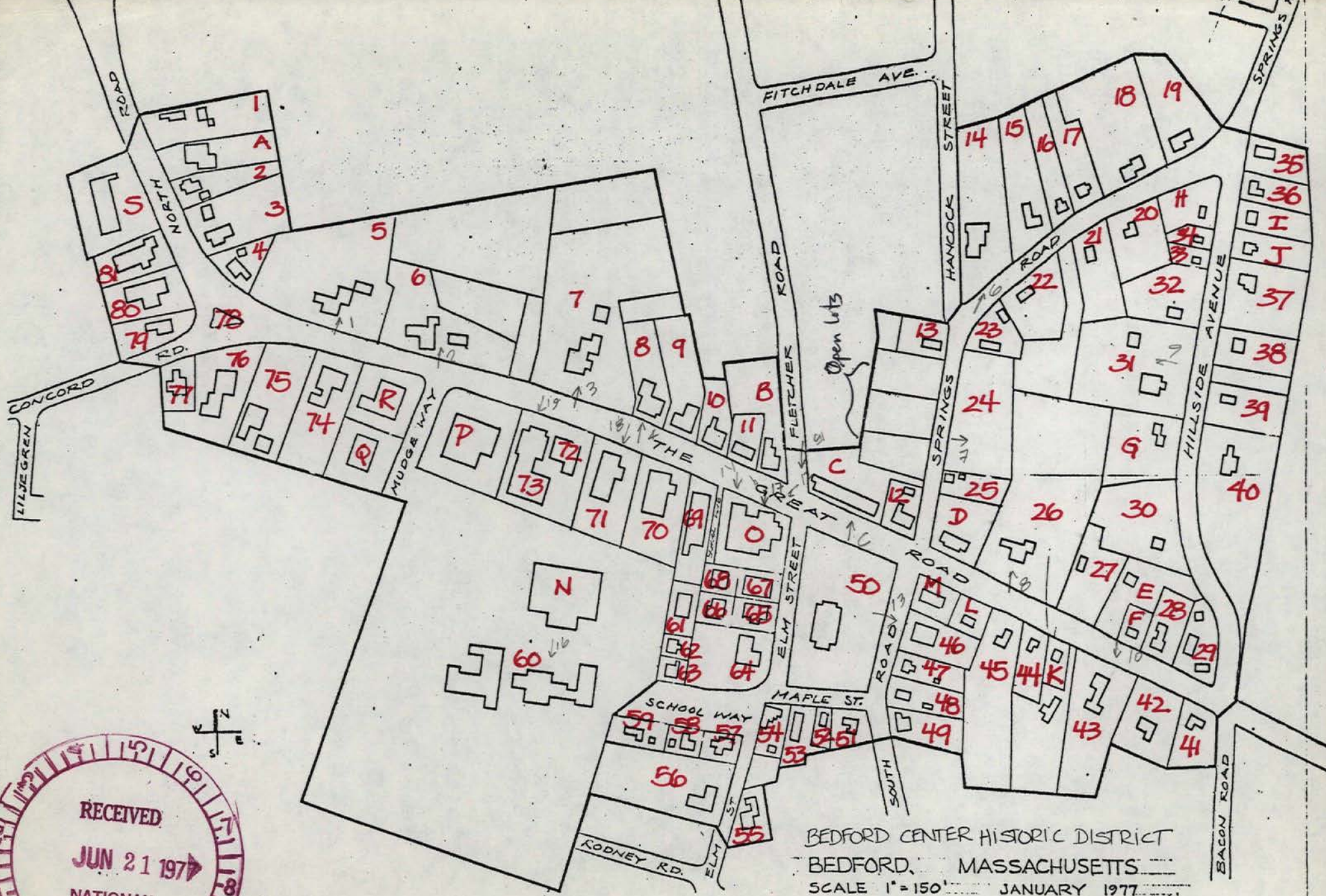
ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 1

Verbal Boundary Description:

facing The Great Road, Maple Street, Elm Street, and School Way, as well as the Great Road again and Concord Road. The west boundary follows the rear property lines of properties facing North Road, ending at the northern property line of 18 North Road (S).

UTM References:

E 19/312 120/4706 670



NOV 17 1977



Old Bedford Center Historic District
Bedford, Massachusetts

1976

Carl D. Fackler

Middlesex County

Bedford Historical Society

17 The Great Road, Bedford, Mass. 01730

#1 *of 19*

Looking north toward the Squire Stearns House
(#5)

JUN 21 1977

NOV 17 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Bedford, Ma.

17867-11



Old Bedford Center Historic District
Bedford, Mass.
1976

Carl D. Fackler

Middlesex Co.

Bedford Historical Society

17 The Great Road, Bedford, Mass. 01730

#2 of 19

Looking north toward The Fitch Tavern (#6)

JUN 21 1977

NOV 17 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Bedford, Ma.

17807-8



Old Bedford Center Historic District

Bedford, Mass.

1976

Carl D. Fackler

Middlesex Co.

Bedford Historical Society

17 The Great Road, Bedford, Mass. 01730

#3 *719*

Looking north toward the Penniman-Stearns House

(#7)

JUN 21 1977

NOV 17 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Bedford, ma.

17351
6-1081



Old Bedford Center Historic District
Bedford, Mass.
1976

Middlesex County

Carl D. Fackler
Bedford Historical Society
17 The Great Road, Bedford, Mass. 01730

#47.19

Looking north toward The Simonds House (#8)

JUN 21 1977

NOV 17 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Bedford, Ma.

17807-10



Old Bedford Center Historic District
Bedford, Mass.

1976

Carl D. Fackler

Bedford Historical Society

17 The Great Road, Bedford, Mass. 01730

#5019

Looking north toward Sheldon Commercial
Block (C)

JUN 21 1977

Middlesex County
NOV 17 1977

~~Block (C)~~
SHELDON COMMERCIAL BLOCK
00-84 GREAT RD.

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



Wendell County

Old Bedford Center Historic District
Bedford, Mass.

1976
Carl D. Fackler

NOV 17 1977

Bedford Historical Society
17 The Great Road, Bedford, Mass. 01730

#6 *0719*
Looking northeast toward #14, #15, #16 on
Springs Road.

JUN 21 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Bedford, Ma.



Middlesex County

Old Bedford Center Historic District
Bedford, Mass.

1976
Carl D. Fackler

NOV 17 1977

Bedford Historical Society
17 The Great Road, Bedford, Mass. 01730

#7 *0719*
Looking east toward The Old Burying Ground

(#24)

JUN 21 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Bedford, Ma.

17507-1



Middlesex County

Old Bedford Center Historic District

Bedford, Mass.

1976

NOV 17 1977

Carl D. Fackler

Bedford Historical Society

17 The Great Road, Bedford, Mass. 01730

#8 *19*

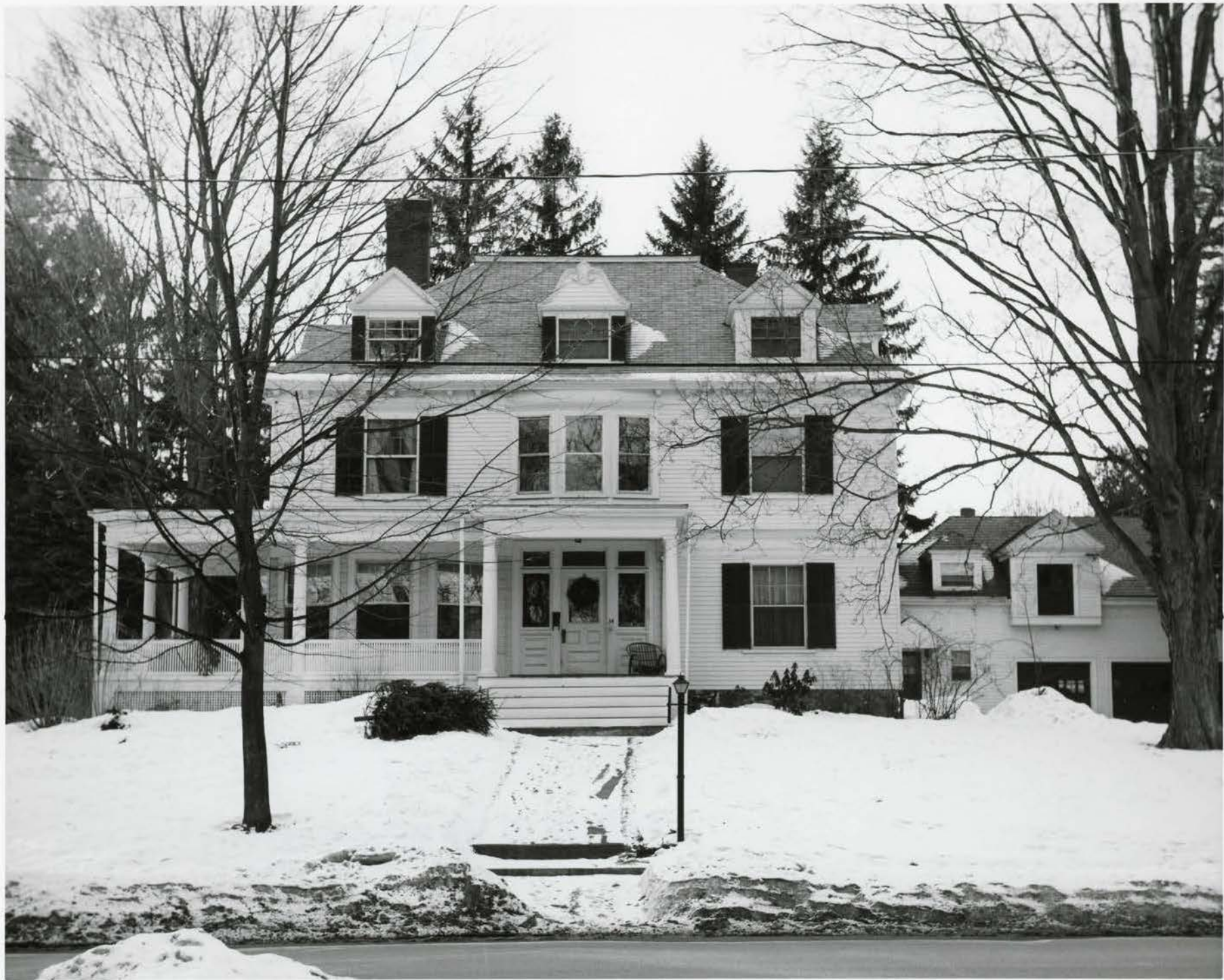
Looking north toward Domine Manse (#26)

JUN 21 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Bedford, Ma.

17508-4



Old Bedford Center Historic District
Bedford, Mass.

1976

Carl D. Fackler

Bedford Historical Society

17 The Great Road, Bedford, Mass. 01730

#90819

Looking west toward #31 on Hillside Ave.

JUN 21 1977

NOV 17 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Bedford, Ma.



15
Old Bedford Center Historic District
Bedford, Mass.

1976

Carl D. Fackler

Middlesex Co.

Bedford Historical Society

17 The Great Road, Bedford, Mass. 01730

#10 *7 19*

Looking ^{south} toward Jonathan Bacon House (#43)

JUN 21 1977

NOV 17 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Bedford, Ma,



m + L
intrusions

Old Bedford Center Historic District
Bedford, Mass.
1976

JUN 21 1977

Carl D. Fackler

Middlesex Co.

Bedford Historical Society

17 The Great Road, Bedford, Mass. 01730

#11 *0719*

Looking north toward Morgan Stores (M) and
Texaco Gas Station (L)

NOV 17 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



Old Bedford Center Historic District
Bedford, Mass.

Middlesex Co.

1976

JUN 21 1977

Carl D. Fackler

Bedford Historical Society

17 The Great Road, Bedford, Mass. 01730

#12 *019*

Looking southeast toward the center of the
district

NOV 17 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Bedford, Ma.

17701-12



Middlesex Co.

Old Bedford Center Historic District
Bedford, Mass.

1976

Carl D. Fackler

Bedford Historical Society

17 The Great Road, Bedford, Mass. 01730

#13 *2019*

Looking east toward Town Hall (#46)

JUN 21 1977

NOV 17 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

17808-6



17701-3

#50
#112

First Parish Church
on the Common

Looking S)

Middlesex County

Old Bedford Center Historic District
Bedford, Mass.
1976

Carl D. Fackler

NOV 17 1977

Bedford Historical Society

17 The Great Road, Bedford, Mass. 01730

#14 of 19

Looking south toward First Parish Church on
the Common (#50)

JUN 21 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Bedford, Ma.



Middlesex County

Old Bedford Center Historic District
Bedford, Mass.

1976
Carl D. Fackler

Bedford Historical Society
17 The Great Road, Bedford, Mass. 01730

#15 *819*
Looking south toward the center of the district.

JUN 21 1977

NOV 17 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Bedford, Mass.

17701-4



Middlesex County

Old Bedford Center Historic District
Bedford, Mass.
1976

Carl D. Fackler

Bedford Historical Society

17 The Great Road, Bedford, Mass. 01730

#16⁰⁸19

Looking south toward Union School (#60)

NOV 17 1977

JUN 21 1977

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

REPRODUCTION OF THIS PHOTOGRAPH IS PROHIBITED

Bedford, Ma.

61-10661



Old Bedford Center Historic District
Bedford, Mass.

1976

Carl D. Fackler

Bedford Historical Society

17 The Great Road, Bedford, Mass. 01730

#17 of 19

Looking south toward Police and Fire
Stations (0)

JUN 21 1977

NOV 17 1977

Middlesex County

Intrusion (0)

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



Old Bedford Center Historic District

Bedford, Mass.

1976

Carl D. Fackler

Bedford Historical Society

17 The Great Road, Bedford, Mass. 01730

#18 of 19

Looking south at the Dutton House (#71)

NOV 17 1977

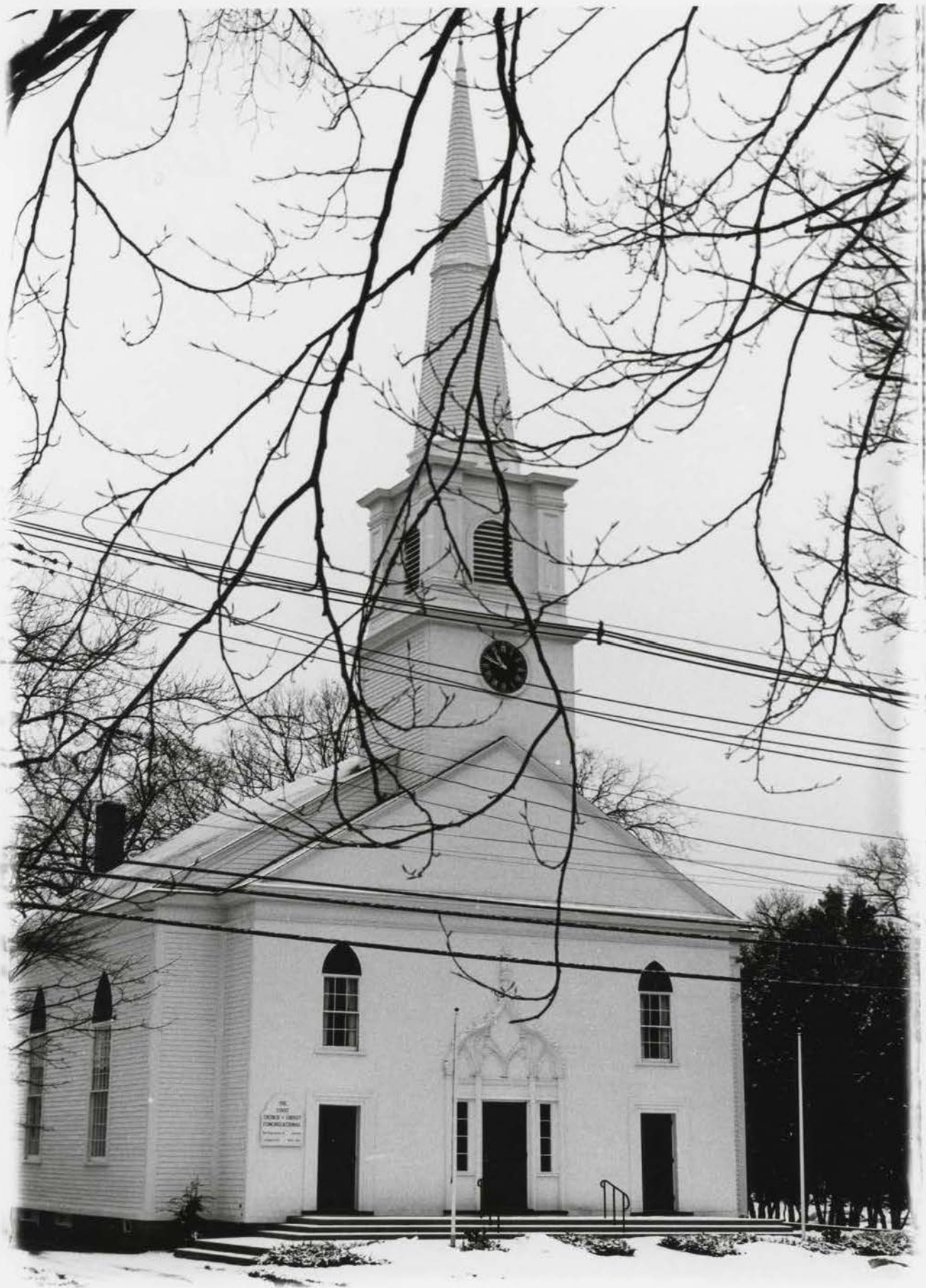
JUN 21 1977

Middlesex County

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Bedford, Ma.

1701-18



THE
FIRST
METHODIST
EPISCOPAL
CHURCH
1840

~~000~~ 73

First Church of
Christ, Congregational

(Looking S)

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Old Bedford Center Historic District
Bedford, Mass
1976

Middlesex County

Carl D. Fackler

Bedford Historical Society

17 The Great Road, Bedford, Mass. 01730

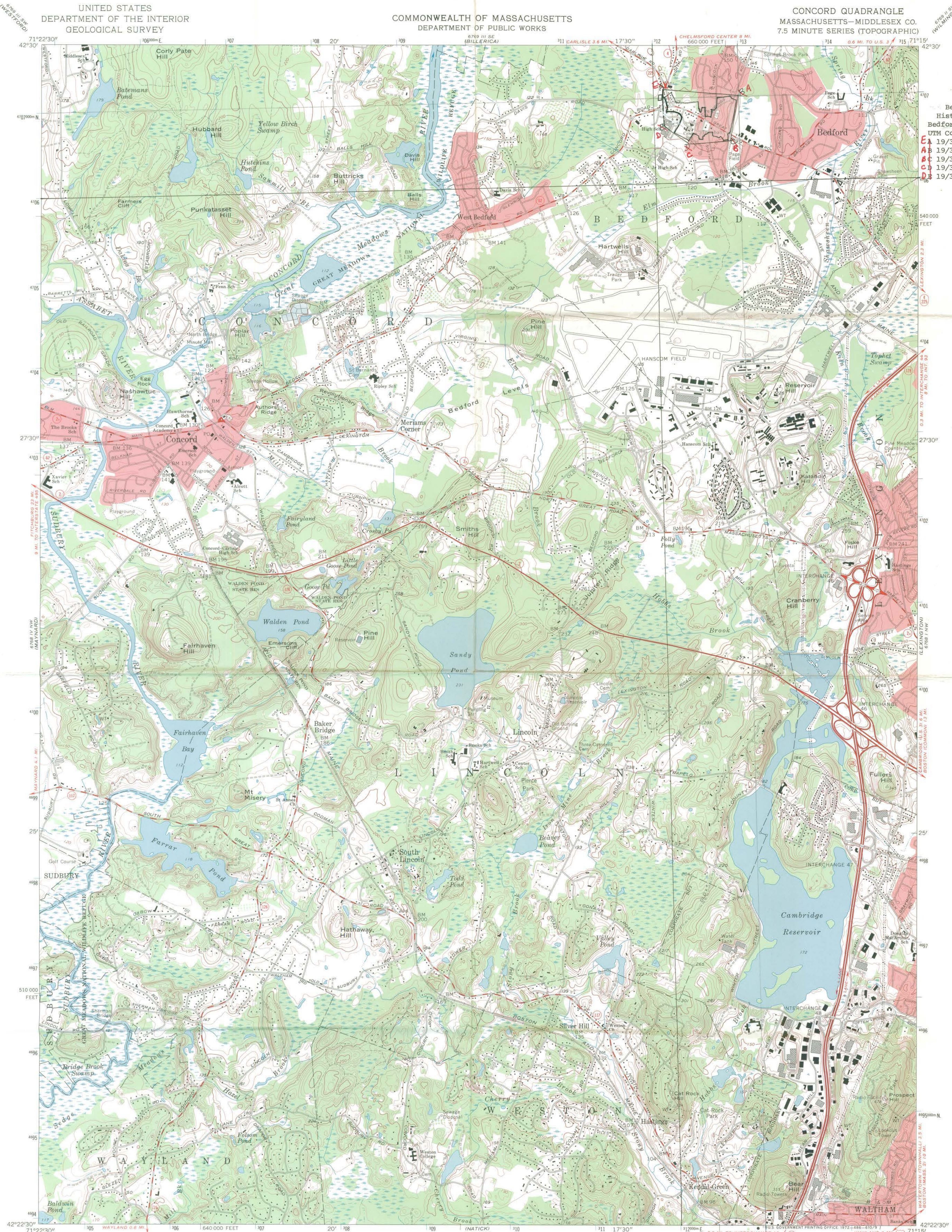
#19 of 19

Looking south toward First Church of Christ,
Congregational (#73)

JUN 21 1977

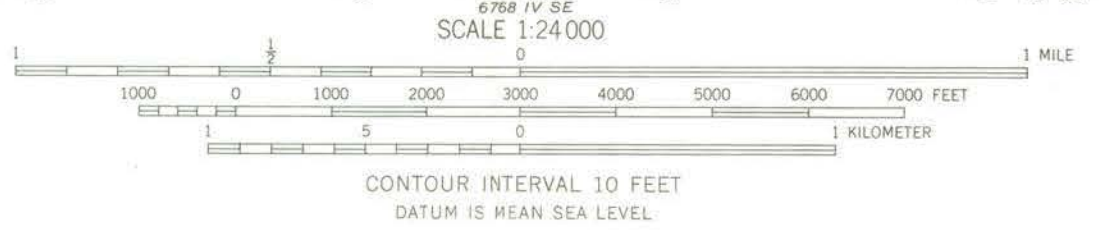
NOV 17 1977

5 Bedford, Ma.



Bedford Center
Historic District
Bedford, Massachusetts
UTM Coordinates:
EA 19/312 110/4707 100
AB 19/312 990/4707 000
CB 19/312 890/4706 490
CD 19/312 400/4706 460
DE 19/312 120/4706 670

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planetable surveys 1940. Revised from
aerial photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1970
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 19 shown in blue
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Unimproved road
Interstate Route
U.S. Route
State Route
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Unimproved road



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

CONCORD, MASS
N4222.5—W7115.7.5

1970

AMS 6758 IV NE—SERIES V814

NOV 17 1977 - DOE

National Register of Historic Places

Note to the record

Additional Documentation: 2014

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY Old Bedford Center Historic District
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Middlesex

DATE RECEIVED: 5/08/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/24/14
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 77000165

NOMINATOR: STATE

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 6-13-14 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

see 14000327

Additional Documentation Approved

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept

REVIEWER Edson Beall

DISCIPLINE History

TELEPHONE _____

DATE 6-13-14

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.

National Register of Historic Places
Memo to File

Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE **MASSACHUSETTS**

Date Entered **NOV 17 1977**

Name

Location

Bedford Center Historic District

**Bedford
Middlesex County**

Also Notified

Hon. Edward W. Brooke

**Hon. Edward M. Kennedy
Hon. Paul Tsongas**

Regional Director, North Atlantic Region

**State Historic Preservation Officer
Mrs. Elizabeth R. Amadon
Executive Director, Massachusetts
Historical Commission
294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108**

880

Mott/js

11/22/77

Property Old Bedford Center Historic District

State Mass.

Working Number 6.21.77.1001

Middlesex

TECHNICAL

Photos 19
Maps 2

CONTROL

pl
OK 6.22.77

Are 3 unmarked lots on Springs Rd. undeveloped? ^{open land!}
Are any of the structures on North Rd. + Concord Rd. which appear on GS map but outside proposed district historically significant? Looks very good. Call + accept

HISTORIAN

Joe Jouna
11-1-77
Called 11/14/77 Accept

NO

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

Accept
Britt 11/1/77

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory _____
Review _____

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

Accept
Lebovich
11/10/77

BRANCH CHIEF

Hearn
11.16.77

KEEPER

Retting for Murtagh
11/17/77

National Register Write-up _____
Federal Register Entry 2.7.78

Send-back _____
Re-submit _____

Entered NOV 17 1977

INT:2106-74

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20240

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
INT. 417

RETURNED TO SENDER

REASON: Unclaimed Addressee Insufficient Address No such street No such office in state No post office in this envelope

OTHER: Refused Unknown number

Teaxaco Gas Station-Wilford Cyr
~~100 Water Street~~
Lawrence, Mass. 01841

~~Bedford Center Historic District~~
~~Bedford, Mass.~~



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:
H34-880

JUL 18 1977

Dear Property Owner:

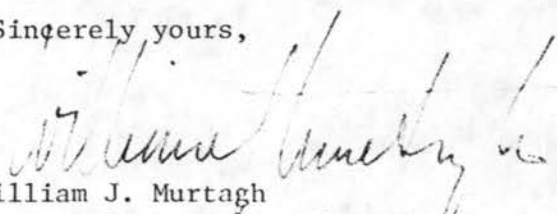
As you have probably already been informed by State or local representatives, the property you own is included in a district that has been nominated by the State for listing in the National Register which is that list of evidences of the past deemed worthy of keeping for the future by the Secretary of the Interior. This nomination is pending in our office.

Since you may not have been aware of potential benefits and provisions of the Tax Reform Act of 1976 when the district including your property was originally considered by the State for nomination, we are sending informative material at this time. If you wish to make comments about your property or the district relative to the National Register "Criteria for Evaluation" (see enclosed green leaflet), we will be pleased to consider them as an adjunct to our evaluation of placing your property in the National Register. Comments should be made within 30 days of the date of this letter and should be addressed to Dr. William J. Murtagh, Keeper of the National Register, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Information concerning standards for rehabilitation may be obtained from Technical Preservation Services, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Questions concerning the National Register program or the implementation of the historic preservation provisions of the Tax Reform Act should also be addressed to the Keeper of the National Register. Inquiries must include the name of the district (see address label) and property address to be properly handled.

Sincerely yours,


William J. Murtagh
Keeper of the National Register

Enclosures

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20240

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
INT. 417

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300



ADDRESSEE UNKNOWN
2701

Mr. Charles Edwards
2800 Hillsboro Avenue
Minneapolis, Minn. 55427

Bedford Center Historic District
Bedford, Mass.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:
H34-880

JUL 18 1977

Dear Property Owner:

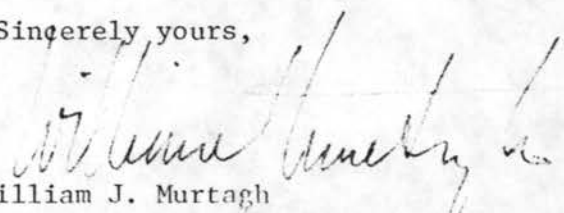
As you have probably already been informed by State or local representatives, the property you own is included in a district that has been nominated by the State for listing in the National Register which is that list of evidences of the past deemed worthy of keeping for the future by the Secretary of the Interior. This nomination is pending in our office.

Since you may not have been aware of potential benefits and provisions of the Tax Reform Act of 1976 when the district including your property was originally considered by the State for nomination, we are sending informative material at this time. If you wish to make comments about your property or the district relative to the National Register "Criteria for Evaluation" (see enclosed green leaflet), we will be pleased to consider them as an adjunct to our evaluation of placing your property in the National Register. Comments should be made within 30 days of the date of this letter and should be addressed to Dr. William J. Murtagh, Keeper of the National Register, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Information concerning standards for rehabilitation may be obtained from Technical Preservation Services, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Questions concerning the National Register program or the implementation of the historic preservation provisions of the Tax Reform Act should also be addressed to the Keeper of the National Register. Inquiries must include the name of the district (see address label) and property address to be properly handled.

Sincerely yours,


William J. Murtagh
Keeper of the National Register

Enclosures

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20240

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
INT. 417



OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300



Mr. Charles Edwards
2800 Hillsboro Ave.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55427

Re: Bedford Center Historic District
Bedford, Mass.



United States Department of the Interior

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20210

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H34-880

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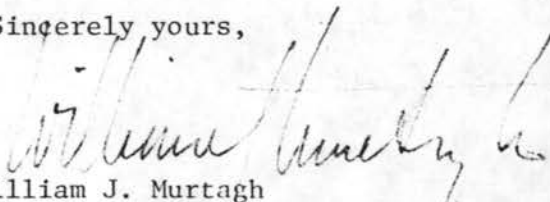
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INT. 417



OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300



REASON CHECKED
Unclaimed _____
Addressee unknown _____
Insufficient Address _____
No such street _____ number _____
No such office in state _____
Do not re-mail in this envelope

- Moved, left no address
- No such number
- Moved, not forwardable
- Addressee unknown

~~Mrs. Betsie J. Soultter
4-6 Maple Street
Bedford, Mass. 01730

Bedford Center Historic District~~



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

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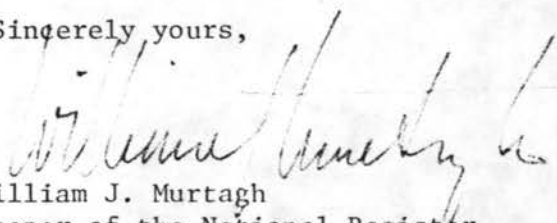
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William J. Murtagh
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(#8 in NR nomination)

The Simonds Family and

The Old Simonds House

Twenty five years after the end of the Revolution, the people of Bedford had found a peace and contentment that was typical of the old New England Towns. In Bedford, just a few miles from the battlefields, the war was not forgotten, but neither was it allowed to interfere with the daily tasks that fall to people who live close to the soil. The Town records for the years after 1800 do not record extremes of any kind. There were few problems of a civic nature, but rather a bright looking ahead toward such advantages as a new century could give them. There were few paupers, and those who were with us seemed well taken care of by the Town Meetings or by the people as individuals. Freedom from war, and the sacrifices which had gone into the making of the Revolution, were now in the past, and the people of Bedford were enjoying their new-found tranquility.

Bedford had had many small home industries, but they were limited in their possibilities because their market was very close. The interesting little businesses were definitely for Bedford people. The gold leaf factory, the cordwainer's shop, the tar kilns, the paint mines, all were operated for home consumption. But a new era was about to begin. The manufactory of shoes had reached great proportions in New England, and at last this home industry with national markets was to come to Bedford.

Benjamin Simonds, of Woburn, came to Bedford in 1805 and bought extensive acreage in the South part of Town. Here he established the Simonds

homestead, and reared a large family. His farm was one of the most productive in Bedford, and remained so for a great many years. But farming was not the most important product of this homestead. Benjamin Simonds was a shoe manufacturer, and his shoe shops were the means of giving employment to many Bedford people. The business of making shoes was one that every farmer could understand and enjoy, for he could, if he wished, work in the Simonds shop, or he could take home different kinds of work to be finished at his own convenience. Within a short space of time, every farm had its own little shoe shop, and here, during the Winter months, or when farm work was not pressing, every member of the family could participate in this new and rewarding work. All shoes were hand sewn, and the Bedford product became known for its quality all over the country. The wealth of the Town suddenly increased, and with improved family incomes, a whole new way of life opened up for the citizens.

Benjamin Simonds, Jr., prospered in the trade of his father. He married Mary Simonds, of Leominster, a distant cousin, and settled on a portion of the Wooley farm. Upon the death of Mary, he married Elizabeth Butler, also of Leominster. Benjamin and Elizabeth had six children, all of whom married and settled in the western part of Massachusetts. Although successful in the shoe business, Benjamin was also a schoolmaster, and legend, but not records, show that when he moved to Clarksburg, Missouri, it was to pursue that profession. He had been much respected in Bedford, and was one of the Town's important citizens.

A second son of Benjamin, the elder, was Zebedee. Like his brother, he followed the shoe business, improving and enlarging as the years went on, the industry that was becoming so popular in New England. He married Amittai Webber, a Bedford girl, and, like his brother, became one of the important men in Town. His name appears often on the old records of the Church and the Town. In a day when Church and State were one, it is significant to find a man in position of importance in the Church, for such a position would at once put him in a small group of elect people. In such esteem was he held by his family that in 1886, sixty years after his death, he was honored by having a memorial window placed in the Congregational Church. The record shows that when Zebedee Simonds died he left nine children, all of whom were minors, three being "minors above the age of fourteen."

The two oldest children of Zebedee and Amittai Simonds were John Webber and George. The home which they established jointly is one of our many well-kept land marks. Presumably, the house was built by John Webber Simonds shortly after he reached the age of 21, when, his father's will having been duly executed by his guardians, he came into his share of the inheritance. He and his wife, Jane, appear on various legal documents as early as 1829. One of these is a deed of land adjoining the property on which his house stood, evidence that the house was not only built before that time, but occupied by Mr. Simonds. A few years ago, in discussing the houses in the center of Town, Miss Edith Lane, then almost 90 years of age, remarked, of the Simonds house, "My grandfather built that house".

Oliver Wellington Lane was a prominent builder in the early years of the nineteenth century, continuing his profession until his death in 1877.

The Simonds house is but one of many of the fine old houses still standing as monuments to his skill as a designer and builder. "Situated near the Meeting House on the northerly side of the road leading to Boston", it was, from its very beginning, a place of importance in the history of the Town.

As far as can be established, neither John Webber Simonds nor his brother, George, pursued the family business, although their home in the Center joined the estate of Phinias Chamberlain, the proprietor of another flourishing shoe business. As young men, they were to experience the trend of hand work toward machine work, and to see the end of a business which had occupied their family for four generations. John Webber Simonds was a prominent man in Bedford, and was admired and respected for his many talents. In the 62 years of his active life, he left many memorials to his love for his native Town. Among other abilities, he was a surveyor, and there are in existence today plans and maps made by him. In 1849, the Town laid out the Shawshine cemetery, and Mr. Simonds was responsible for projecting the plan for the grounds. His careful survey of all possibilities, both of that date and for the future, make this one of the most beautiful of New England burying places. Although not college educated, his native abilities extended into many fields, and he became active in civic matters in the State as well as in his own home town. He was a member of the Legislature for several terms, and, in 1853, was elected to a committee to revise the

Constitution. That he was considered of great value to that committee is proved by the fact that he was often made Chairman.

All future historians of Bedford are indebted to him for his interest in noting historic events, and for his faithful pursuit after historic data. The old History of Bedford, published in 1891, notes his generosity with the information he had found. Ensuing historians are even more grateful to him for his interest in ancient Bedford. Without such collections of historic data, there would be many blank pages in the old history of our town.

George Simonds was but two years younger than his brother, John, and, though considered a highly respected man of Bedford, and although often in office, he seems to have served the citizens in less noticeable ways, for very little is known of him. At his passing, late in the last century, the old house left the family name and possession.

An old house gains its significance from two sources: its intrinsic worth and the importance of the people who lived in it. Many times, even greater significance is gained by the realization that the house is a memorial to an era of great meaning to the Town. Such a house is the Old Simonds House. It speaks silently of the days we like to call the Good Days in Bedford. Surely, without the little businesses developed by the Simonds family, this Town would not have developed into the Town which we love today. Without the guiding hand of men like John Webber Simonds and his brother, George, the new-found prosperity could easily have been diverted into uncomplimentary channels. In itself, the house is a fine example of post-Revolutionary architecture, and time, a natural destroyer of all things, has scarcely harmed it.

The brothers, John and George, lived in a very busy little Town. All along the main street, new and beautiful homes were being built. The white houses which line the Great Road today, and which we admire as examples of the architecture of the early nineteenth century, were the homes of prosperous business people. In keeping with the times, each business was maintained on the property adjacent to the home of the owner. Old maps show carriage shops, harness shops, stores, the businesses of tinsmiths, wheelwrights, and many others. In 1825, it was a mark of prestige to have a well kept business near the home. Near the junction of North Road and Concord Road stood the first Post Office in Bedford. It had been made possible in 1825 by the advent of the new Stagecoach line which had just come into being. The man who owned the line lived in the house across the way from the Simonds house. Mr. Corey, the proprietor, was an excellent business man. His orderly and prompt Stages brought so many people into Bedford that the inns all over Town were constantly doing a fine business. The prosperity of the Town was far-reaching. The individual home-owners extened their pride in possession toward civic and Church property. The new school, which had just been completed, had been modelled after one near Boston, and had all sorts of new and unusual features. The meetinghouse on the Common had been recently restored, and there, too, the marks of the Good Days were seen.

The old Simonds House saw many dramatic changes in Bedford. It saw the passing of stage-coaches and the coming of Railroad trains. It saw the passing of the old yellow roads and the coming of hard-surfaced highways.

It saw the last of the horse-drawn vehicles and the shops that served them. It saw garages take the place of hitching posts and watering troughs. And now, in a fantastic and unbelievable age of change, it remains as a comfortable landmark, a constant reminder of the honor and prestige of old and historic times.



NOV 17 1977

NATIONAL REGISTER DATA SHEET

① NAME as it appears on federal register: **Bedford Center Historic District** ② OTHER NAMES: _____ ③ date of entry: **NOV 17 1977** ④ county code: **17**

⑤ LOCATION street & number **irregular pattern along Great Rd. (over)** city / town **Bedford** vicinity of _____ state **MA** county **Middlesex** ⑥ NPS REGION: **NA**

⑦ OWNER PRIVATE STATE MUNICIPAL COUNTY MULTIPLE FEDERAL (agency name) _____ ⑧ ADMINISTRATOR: _____

⑨ EXISTING SURVEYS NARS HAER NHL ⑩ FUNDED? YES NO ⑪ CONGRESS. DISTRICT **5th** ⑫ SOURCE of NOMINATION STATE FEDERAL _____

⑬ WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT? YES, NAME _____ NO ⑭ WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK? YES, NAME _____ NO ⑮ ACREAGE _____
 if state who prepared form? LOCAL PRIVATE ORGANIZATION _____

⑯ CONDITION deteriorated altered original site excellent ruins unaltered moved good unexposed reconstructed unknown fair unexcavated excavated

⑰ features: INTERIOR SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-1 NOT INTACT-0 UNKNOWN-4 NOT APPLICABLE-7 EXTERIOR SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-2 NOT INTACT-0 UNKNOWN-5 NOT APPLICABLE-8 ENVIRONS SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-3 NOT INTACT-0 UNKNOWN-6 NOT APPLICABLE-9

⑱ ACCESS YES-Restricted YES-Unrestricted No Access Unknown ⑲ ADAPTIVE USE YES NO ⑳ SAVED? YES NO ㉑ IS PROPERTY A HISTORIC DISTRICT? yes no

㉒ AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: ARCHEOLOGY-prehistoric-2 ARCHEOLOGY-historic-1 AGRICULTURE-3 ARCHITECTURE-4 ART-5 ENGINEERING-11 ENTERTAINMENT-26 EXPLORATION-12 CONSERVATION-8 ECONOMICS-9 EDUCATION-10 LANDSCAPE ARCH.-15 LAW-16 LITERATURE-17 MILITARY-18 MUSIC-19 PHILOSOPHY-20 POLITICS/GOVT.-21 RELIGION-22 SCIENCE-23 SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN-24 SOCIAL/CULTURAL-30 TRANSPORTATION-25 RECREATION-28 SETTLEMENT-29 URBAN PLANNING-31 OTHER (SPECIFY) _____

㉓ CLAIMS: explain 'first' 'oldest' 'only'

㉔ functions WHEN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT: _____ CURRENTLY: _____ ㉕ dates of initial construction: _____ major alterations: _____ historic events: _____ ㉖ ETHNIC GROUP ASSOCIATION _____

㉗ architectural style(s): _____ ㉘ architect: _____ ㉙ master builder: _____ ㉚ engineer: _____

㉛ landscape architect / garden designer: _____ ㉜ interior decorator: _____ ㉝ artist: _____ ㉞ artisan: _____ ㉟ builder/contractor: _____

㊱ NAMES give role & date PERSONAL: _____ EVENTS: _____ INSTITUTIONAL: _____

㊲ NATIONAL REGISTER WRITE-UP

5. from Bacon to Concord and North Rds.