

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JUL 22 1975
DATE ENTERED

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Winsor, (Stephen) House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 93 Austin Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN ~~Smithfield~~ Greenville, R.I.
VICINITY OF

STATE Rhode Island 02828 CODE 44 COUNTY Providence CODE 007

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" 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	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Milton J. Fera

STREET & NUMBER 93 Austin Avenue

CITY, TOWN Smithfield VICINITY OF STATE Rhode Island

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Smithfield Town Clerk

STREET & NUMBER 64 Farnum Pike

CITY, TOWN Smithfield STATE Rhode Island

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Not so represented

DATE
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Stephen Winsor house, a commodious and "stylish" farm residence of the 1850's, is located on a site of 10.9 acres far out on a winding road which runs out from the centre of Greenville in Smithfield, about ten miles west of Providence. Its exterior design can be described as a simple but imaginative use of the Italian Villa (sans tower) and "bracketed" styles. Set upon a fine, solid fieldstone foundation, this timber-framed and clapboarded dwelling of two-and-one-half stories is basically a gabled rectangle with its long entrance elevation facing south; however, there are cross-gabled projections from this basic mass in the south-east and north-west portions of the house, giving it the visual asymmetry popular in its era. The house is far back from Austin Avenue on a property surrounded by dry-laid stone walls at front and sides, and it is reached by a long gravel driveway which makes a circle near the rear entrance and which undoubtedly had a turn-off (which the present owners intend to re-create) across the front entrance. There is much old and carefully-planned planting on the property, screening the dwelling from Austin Avenue; there is a Winsor family burying-ground (Smithfield Historic Cemetery No. 31) within the stone wall; and behind the house a fine complex of outbuildings -- now needing restoration but promised it -- survives.

Externally the house presents on its main (south) front a wide and high appearance. Clapboarded as mentioned, it has corner pilasters with panels rounded at top and bottom; these pilasters support a deep entablature (continued all around the house) which has paired, carved brackets placed along it to uphold an overhanging eaves-cornice. At the right (south-east) end of the house is a gabled projection, and here the eaves-cornice makes slight returns on paired brackets. The projection features nearly-floor-length tripartite window openings on first and second floors, with a smaller tripartite, angularly-pointed-top "Palladian" window in the gable of the garret; such smaller window groupings also appear in the other garret gables. In the angle formed by this south-eastern projection is the main entrance, protected by a flat hood supported by paired brackets; the wide doorway has sidelights and a six-pane transom. Around the house, all window openings have heavy, eared drip-mould cappings. Windows have 2-over-2, 4-over-4 or, more usually, 6-over-6 paned sash according to their size. The house apparently never had any exterior sitting porches or uncovered verandahs which would, in fact, have obscured or cluttered its handsome, simple and dignified massing. Two brick interior chimneys pierce the roof and serve six fireplaces (mainly for stoves), of which there are four on the first floor, one in the basement and one on the second floor.

Inside the front door is a shallow entry hall, oblong in shape, from which a staircase curves upward -- one wall conforming to the curve. The stair has a rail with turned balusters of dark wood, a moulded cherry hand rail, and a heavy vasiform newel. The open string has sawn, thin appliques at the end of each step. A door at the right of this hall leads into the "library," a long room because of the mentioned forward projection of the house at this corner. A door at the left leads into the nearly-square parlour, behind which is the dining-room, also nearly square. A room at the rear centre of the house and behind the stairs is the present kitchen; and behind the library, is a first-floor bed-chamber of moderate size, customary at the time this house was built. Three doors are placed across the rear of the dining-room:

See Continuation Sheet 1

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one opens to a china- or serving-pantry now converted to a bathroom; a second opens on stairs to the basement; the third opens to a rear entry-cum-back-stair-hall. Window and door trim on this floor and that above is of wide bands of gently convex mouldings and is all original, as are the six-panel doors, their hardware, and the floors. Wooden mantels are simple and almost of Greek Revival type with short pilasters carrying simple shelves, except that several have -- instead of plain entablatures -- wooden aprons across the upper hearth-surround which are sawn in pendant Gothic forms. There are baseboards throughout the house, but not chair-rails or ceiling mouldings. The plan on the second floor is similar to that of the first, and the garret is one large unplastered storage space. One is inclined to believe that the original kitchen was in the basement, due to the commodious stairs leading down to it from the dining-room and the presence in the basement of a large chimney-base which could serve a coal or wood range and which has at one side two ovens and on the other a large circular rendering or soap-making cauldron. Other kitchen appurtenances, or partitioning of this area, are not present now, as the basement has been made one large open area with a modern concrete floor.

With this last-mentioned exception, the Winsor house exists inside and out in an intact state and, after a short period of neglect and minor vandalism, has been internally restored with great care and little change other than bathroom and kitchen provisions:

In addition to the main house there are behind it three wooden out-buildings on stone foundations, of which the largest is a four-level barn whose levels are partly determined by a northern declivity in its corner of the land, and which has an easterly extension. The present owner states that a Winsor descendant informed him that two levels were for horses and cows, a third for smaller animals (probably pigs and hens) and that the lowest contained additional stalls -- probably for work-horses. To the east of this barn and of the house is a one-story gabled carriage- and wagon-shed; between this latter and the house stands a three-seater privy.

Not least among features of the Winsor property is its planned planting of trees. Just within the stone wall separating it from Austin Avenue is an oblong orchard of apple trees; north of this and close to the front of the house, shielding it from general view, are two parallel rows of now-very-tall and well-shaped conifers; some distance behind the house, and seen between barn and carriage shed, is another rectangular orchard, to the north of which stretches acreage (now probably less than originally) formerly used to grow vegetables, very likely more apple trees, and for pasturage.

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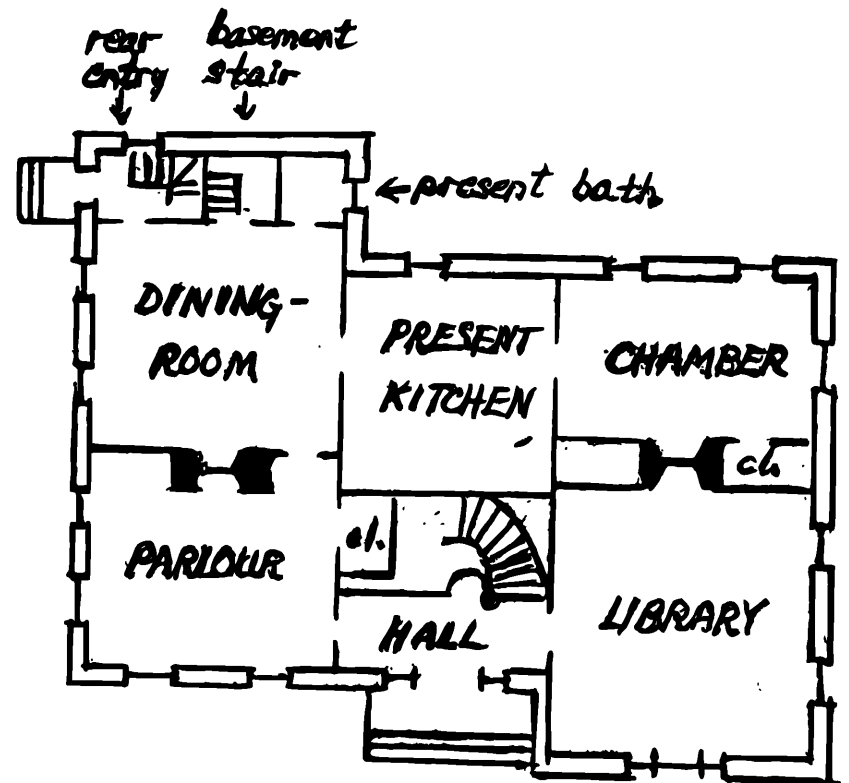
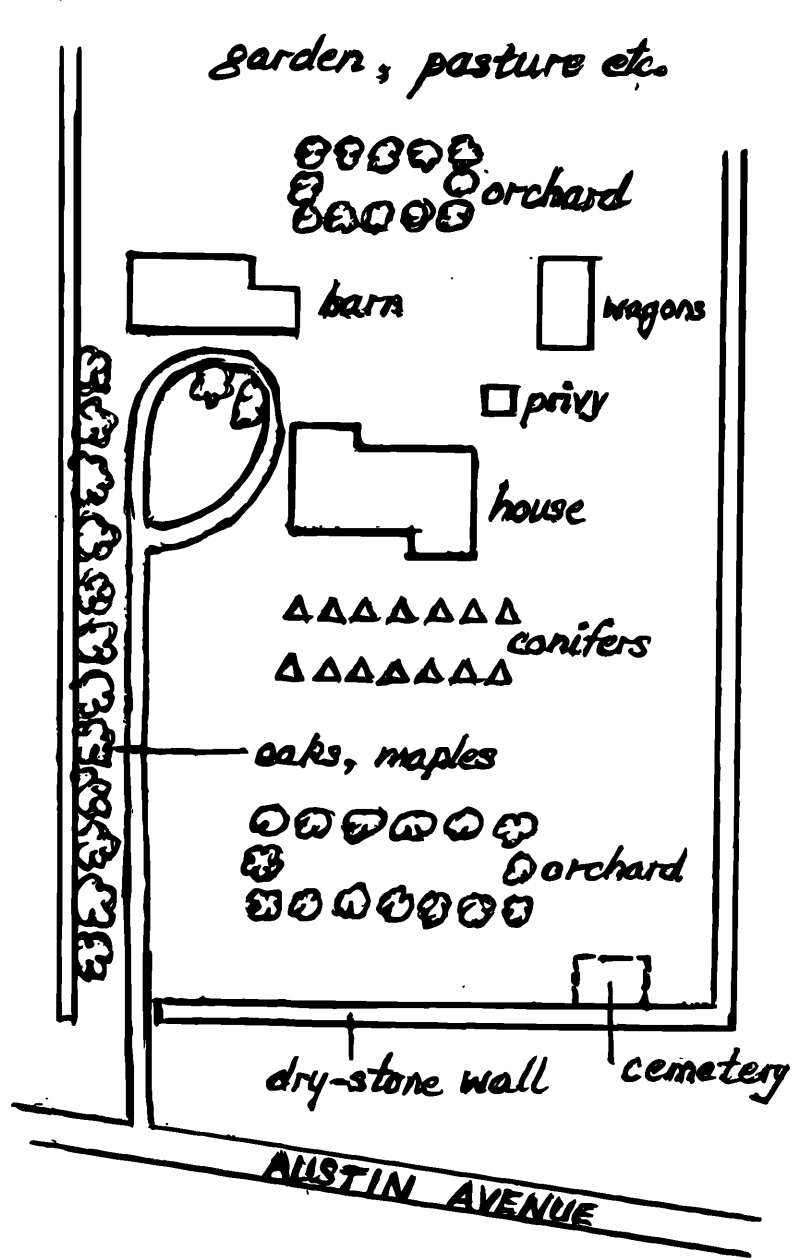
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Sketch-plans of site and first floor of house (not to scale).

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 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 type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input 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 type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Complete XIX-Century farm complex
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES c. 1850-1855

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Winsor family is one of long standing and numerous members in the Greenville-Smithfield area, and Stephen Winsor, who had the large farm property on Austin Avenue in Greenville and built his sizeable residence there in the middle of the XIX Century, was a prosperous and locally prominent man. He was a gentleman-farmer whose flourishing orchards were widely known (and no doubt also profitable), and he was one of Rhode Island's early bankers -- quite likely tying in with nearby textile and manufacturing industries as well. For his home he developed a carefully-planned, well-run, medium-sized modern country "estate." Now reduced to only about eleven acres, it still gives that impression, with its surrounding wall, long drive and orderly plantings.

The Winsor property has fortunately retained not only space and seclusion but also its excellent Italianate main house in an unaltered condition, as well as the grouping of subsidiary buildings behind the residence. Its present owner, Mr. Fera, who acquired this property in August, 1973, is currently (if slowly) undertaking such little exterior restoration of the house as is needed and plans to rehabilitate the out-buildings. Until about five years ago the place was still in the hands of Winsor heirs, and there was only one other owner between them and the present one. The architecture of the house is of value and interest, and this in combination -- especially -- with the outbuildings, the old family cemetery and the landscape plan and plantings makes the whole eminently worthy of a place on the National Register.