

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

For NPS use only

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

received OCT 11 1983

date entered

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

1. Name

historic John Wilder House

and/or common Tuttle House

2. Location

street & number Lawrence Hill Road N/A not for publication

city, town Weston N/A vicinity of

state Vermont code 50 county Windsor code 027

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

4. Owner of Property

name Hickson House Ltd.

street & number P. O. Box 51

city, town Weston N/A vicinity of state Vermont 05161

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of the Town Clerk

street & number N/A

city, town Weston state Vermont 05161

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Vermont Historic Sites and Structures Survey title
has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1973 federal state county local

depository for survey records Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

city, town Montpelier state Vermont 05602

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 type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The John Wilder House and barn stand a short distance west of the Weston village green, overlooking the rural West River valley. The Federal style, two-and-one-half story, brick house with slate-shingled gable roof is distinguished by semielliptical relieving arches above its window and door openings. The broad five-bay south gable front displays a central entrance enframed by a semielliptical fanlight and two-thirds sidelights with curvilinear leading; blind quadrant panels and a date niche (1827) decorate the pedimented gable. A wood-framed and clapboarded, gable-roofed wing of lesser scale projects from each rear (north) corner of the house. The interior retains much original fabric, including some multi-patterned wall stenciling; the first and second stories were partially remodeled circa 1907 in a Colonial Revival manner. Now being converted to condominium apartments, the large two-and-one-half story, woodframed and clapboarded carriage barn (built circa 1907) stands north of the house; its slate-shingled gable roof carries a central hip-roofed cupola.

The Wilder House and barn occupy a sloping site on the north side of Lawrence Hill Road; mature deciduous trees along the road shade the house's front grounds. Both buildings face southward along the valley of the West River, whose channel passes a short distance to the east. The barn stands to the rear (north) of the house, its west eaves elevation set against the upward sloping hillside. Other buildings flank the Wilder House on the east and west. Across the road, the cleared site of a nineteenth-century mill provides a view southward along the river valley.

The Wilder House consists of a Federal style, two-and-one-half story brick block with a slate-shingled gable roof oriented perpendicular to the road. A granite slab foundation underlies the brick bearing walls, which are laid in a six-course American bond. The window and door openings generally have dressed stone sills and are headed by semielliptical relieving arches. The fenestration is arranged symmetrically on the south gable front but irregularly on the other elevations; the windows are fitted with two-over-two sash. A prominent molded wood cornice encircles the eaves.

Two chimneys with corbeled caps surmount the ridge and west slope of the roof. Near the north end of the west eaves, the single survivor of three original interior corner chimneys rises flush with the vertical wall plane. At the north end of the ridge, an exterior chimney interrupts the eaves; a twentieth-century second stack has been added to vent a furnace.

The broad south gable front of the Wilder House extends five bays in width, arranged symmetrically around a central entrance. While the

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windows are recessed beneath single semielliptical arches, the entrance is distinguished by a concentric pair of such arches. The blind outer arch defines a brick surround of the entrance ensemble; the inner arch frames the opening of the semielliptical fanlight and the two-thirds sidelights that flank the six-panel door. Both the fanlight and the sidelights are crafted of clear glass set within delicate curvilinear leading; this glazing was apparently introduced during the circa 1907 renovation, replacing the original small rectangular panes of the sidelights and unknown design of the fanlight. A flight of stone steps leads to a small stone landing at the entrance. The front (south) gable is enclosed by a full pediment, whose brick tympanum is lighted by two standard sash flanked by blind quadrant panels at the gable knees. A segmental-arched niche at the gable peak bears the date of the house's construction, 1827.

The east and west eaves elevations of the house extend three bays in length. The irregularly arranged window openings reflect the positions of the interior fireplace chimneys.

The larger of the house's two wood-framed north wings projects as a one-and-one-half story ell from the main block's northeast corner, its slate-shingled gable roof oriented perpendicular to that of the main block. The ell's four-bay south eaves facade contains two entrances sheltered by a full-width two-bay porch with turned posts.

Added possibly circa 1907, the smaller one-story northwest wing is offset westward from that corner of the main block to reveal a two-bay south half-gable front; a one-bay, shed-roofed porch with turned posts shelters the right-bay entrance. The wing extends three bays in length along the east and west eaves elevations.

The exterior of the Wilder House has been altered only slightly during its history. The most significant change has been the twentieth-century (post-1907) removal of two front corner (southeast and southwest) chimneys that originally matched the existing northwest chimney. On the east elevation, an original secondary entrance has been replaced by a window. The present two-over-two sash have replaced nineteenth-century six-over-sixes. Circa 1907, a full-width open deck protected only by a front balustrade was added to the south facade; later rebuilt in concrete, that deck was removed in 1982.

Probably also circa 1907, the northeast wing was converted from a carriage

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shed to residential use. Previously the wing's south elevation was opened by at least two carriage stalls with angled upper corners.

The interior of the Wilder House is arranged around a central stair hall. On the first story, two original front (south) rooms flank the hall; the partitioning of the rear (north) half has been successively shifted (most recently in 1983), the present plan comprising a large east room (corresponding to the original kitchen) and a small west room. The second-story plan also comprises a pair of front rooms flanking the stair hall but three rooms occupy the rear half. The third story contains two front rooms and a larger rear room separated by a hall perpendicular to the lower-story stair halls; a project now underway will introduce a bathroom within the hall's east end.

Eight fireplaces exist in the house. The north exterior chimney serves fireplaces in the former kitchen and the rear third-story room; the north-west eaves chimney serves fireplaces in the corresponding corner rooms on the first and second stories. The four fireplaces in the front rooms of the latter stories have lost their chimneys above the roof line.

The fireplaces display various combinations of brick and granite or soapstone in their fireboxes and hearths; most of the fireboxes are lined with channeled stone slabs. The large cooking fireplace in the original kitchen is flanked by a brick oven; its upper door bears in raised letters the legend, "C. Rich, Shoreham, Vt., No. 2." The kitchen fireplace, which had been enclosed within the wall for many years prior to 1983, lacks a mantel. The other fireplaces retain mantelpieces generally displaying classically derived ornamentation. Denticulated or bracketed mantelshelves recur in several cases together with paneled surrounds of the fireboxes. A Colonial Revival pilastered mantelpiece and a soapstone firebox facing and hearth distinguish the fireplace in the second-story southeast room.

Woodwork in the house varies from room to room in the complexity of its molding. Reflecting their relatively public nature, the first-story stair hall and front rooms display the most heavily molded window and door surrounds and baseboards. Sliding pocket doors within a Colonial Revival surround link the first-story east rooms. The third-story rooms offer the contrast of woodwork with simple one-bead molding that complements the four-panel doors with original iron hardware. The main flight of open-string stairs incorporates a carved newel and a molded rail and balusters installed probably circa 1907.

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The walls and ceilings are generally finished in plaster, the former being in relatively good condition. Cracked ceilings in several rooms are currently (1983) being sheathed with gypsum board. A circular plaster medallion on the ceiling of the central stair hall marks the position of a missing chandelier that once lighted the entrance.

The second-story southeast room and, to a lesser extent, the third-story north room retain original polychrome wall stenciling of high quality and excellent condition. In the second-story room, seven different patterns of stylized foliage appear on the west interior wall and the chimney breast against the east wall, the latter surface being distinguished by the pattern of a weeping willow tree applied directly above the mantel. At least five of the patterns match those used by Moses Eaton, a prominent nineteenth-century stenciler from New Hampshire. The stencils are predominantly green in color with minor highlights of red, and are applied over a mustard background. Similar stenciling on the room's south and east (exterior) walls had faded severely, and those walls were painted in 1983. The stenciling in the third-story room consists simply of a border around each wall; the border on the north (exterior) wall was restored in 1983.

Two different types of wood flooring exist in the house. Floors on the third story and part of the second story retain the original wide softwood boards. The remainder of the second story and the first-story floors have been relaid (probably circa 1907) with matched hardwood boards.

The northeast wing presents a rather different interior appearance. While the west half of the first story is currently being stripped for renovation, the central stair hall and heretofore unpartitioned second story of the ell are completely sheathed with beaded match boards and finished in varnish; this sheathing (and the present interior plan) quite probably dates from the house's circa 1907 remodelling. The east end of the ell remains an unfinished shed; the shed's framing reveals that the ell was trapezoidal in plan until its northeast corner was extended outward to a right angle.

Situated a short distance behind and slightly to the northwest of the house, the large two-and-one-half story, wood-framed and clapboarded carriage barn was constructed circa 1907; it is oriented with its slate-shingled gable roof parallel to that of the house. The barn stands on a river stone foundation mortared with recessed joints to reveal the rounded profiles of the stone; the slope of the ground exposes fully the basement story on the east and north elevations.

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The barn is currently being converted to condominium apartments, and its exterior openings have been altered to accommodate the interior subdivision. The south gable front retains the original placement of door and window openings; however the large central entrance has lost its sliding door in favor of new apartment doorways recessed behind the opening and, directly above, the former second-story loading door has been replaced by a fixed window. The barn's original two-over-two sash remain in the side bays and gable of the south facade but have been mostly replaced on the other elevations with new double-hung or fixed windows; a row of small stall windows on the east elevation has been eliminated. Original open bays in the exposed basement walls have been infilled with new windows.

An original flagpole rises above the barn's ridge from the south gable peak. At the center of the ridge is mounted a short square cupola. The lower surfaces of the cupola are shingled with slate, above which are two rectangular openings on each face. A molded cornice encircles the projecting eaves of the hip roof. A copper weathervane in the form of a horse surmounts the roof.

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 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 type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates	1827	Builder/Architect	Unknown
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Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The John Wilder House constitutes a distinctive expression of transitional Federal style residential architecture, possessing the stylistic features of Federal design together with the gable front orientation of the emerging Greek Revival style. The house was constructed in 1827 for John Wilder, a locally prominent public official and politician. Early in the present century, Wilder's granddaughter partly renovated the house in a Colonial Revival manner; fabric from that period represents a revival of family association with the house. The surviving original interior decoration includes multi-patterned wall stenciling, whose high quality and characteristic forms suggest attribution to Moses Eaton. An extensive project currently (1983) underway to refurbish the house has been designed especially to enhance its nineteenth-century character.

Prior to the construction of the Wilder House, John Wilder resided briefly in a brick cottage (now Weston's public library) sited diagonally across the Lawrence Hill Road. Wilder was born at Winchendon, Massachusetts in 1795, and moved to Weston in 1825. Within two years, he undertook construction of what became the family homestead. The distinctive Federal style brick house bears the year of its completion (1827) on its front gable.

Wilder soon achieved prominence in his adopted community, serving in various administrative and political offices. His political career began in 1828 when he represented Weston in the Vermont General Assembly. In 1829 or 1830, he was appointed Postmaster, and he held that position until 1850 or 1851. The Post Office occupied a room in his house during most of that period and beyond; a middle nineteenth-century photograph shows a sign reading "Post Office" affixed to the east corner of the house's south facade.

Wilder served several terms as Selectman of Weston, initially from 1834 to 1837, again in 1843-44, and finally from 1851 to 1857. After his last term in the town's legislative body, Wilder returned to state politics; in 1858, he was elected to the Vermont Senate from Windsor County. Wilder also served the county in a judicial role, being a side judge of the county court for some years.

Following Wilder's death in 1877, the family relinquished ownership of

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet 7.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 0.58

Quadrangle name Wallingford, Vt.

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UTM References

A

118	678850	4795400
Zone	Easting	Northing

B

Zone	Easting	Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet 8.

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

state	N/A	code	county	code
-------	-----	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Hugh H. Henry

organization Historic Preservation Consultant date July 1983

street & number Green Mountain Turnpike telephone 802-875-3379

city or town Chester state Vermont 05143

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.

Deputy
State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Eric Galt

title Director, Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

date 9/31/83

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 11/10/83

John Melrose Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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the house. Then in 1907, Lewis and Emma Wilder Parkhurst (granddaughter of John Wilder) acquired the family homestead. The Parkhursts proceeded to renovate the house in the contemporary fashion, giving its interior an overlay of Colonial Revival decorative elements. About the same time, the large carriage barn was constructed to the rear of the house. The Parkhursts became summer residents of the homestead while Emma Wilder's brother, Edward, lived there year around.

The Parkhursts also extended their efforts to the buildings across the road from the homestead. In 1908, they purchased John Wilder's first house and converted it to the Wilder Memorial Library. A nineteenth-century, wood-framed mill standing uphill from the library along Cold Spring Brook was demolished, clearing the view from the homestead southward along the West River valley.

The last generation of Wilder descendants to occupy the family homestead was Edward's daughter, Helen Wilder Tuttle. Helen's husband, Clyde Tuttle, owned a local sawmill, and eventually converted part of the barn to a wood-working shop. The Wilder-Tuttle family ownership of the property concluded following the death of Helen Wilder Tuttle in 1981.

The Wilder House holds particular architectural significance as an expression of late Federal design influenced by the emerging Greek Revival style. On the south facade, the semielliptical arches surmounting the windows and the dual-arched entrance of shallow relief with fanlight and sidelights reflect the earlier stylistic theme. Nevertheless the gable front orientation and the high pediment with its emphatically projecting cornices clearly anticipate the later style.

The original exterior design of the house remains largely intact. The only substantial alteration involves the chimneys; two of the three original corner chimneys have been removed above the roof line. Presuming that the chimneys survive below the roof, restoration of the missing stacks appears possible. The house's original six-over-six sash have been replaced by the present two-over-two sash but, similarly, could be restored.

The interior of the Wilder House displays an amalgam of stylistic elements and materials. Much original or nineteenth-century fabric survives, complemented in two rooms by some uncommon decoration. The latter consists of the polychrome wall stenciling in seven different patterns that match the stencil designs of Moses Eaton, Jr. (1796-1886), a skilled stenciler

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from Dublin, New Hampshire who practiced his craft also in southern Vermont. The high quality and excellent condition of the stenciling are enhanced by the presence on one wall of a rare weeping willow pattern. The early twentieth-century renovation introduced Colonial Revival decorative elements and contemporary materials (notably the beaded matched sheathing applied in the northeast wing) that represent the second period of Wilder family association with the homestead.

The Wilder House bears a striking similarity of exterior design to the brick block of a contemporary tavern in the adjoining township of Andover. Simons' Inn (commonly known as Rowell's Inn) was erected one year before the Weston house, raising the possibility that John Wilder knew the Andover building and intentionally replicated its design (see the National Register nomination for Simons' Inn, entered in the Register on March 2, 1979; Simons' Inn is distinguished visually by a projecting wood-framed gable front with recessed porch.) The similarity also suggests that the same builder or mason was responsible for both buildings; the name of that person, however, has not been recorded.

Whoever created the design of Wilder's house, the building exemplifies the stylistic transition then underway in Vermont. (Coincidentally in the year of the house's construction, Asher Benjamin published one of the earliest builder's guides illustrating the new Greek Revival style.) The Wilder House belonged through most of its existence to a family prominent in Weston community affairs, and its present appearance represents the architectural evolution of that ownership.

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Orton, Ellen. History of the Helen Wilder Tuttle House, Weston, Vt. 1982? Unpublished typescript available from the author, Weston, Vermont.

Pannes, Ernestine Dunaway. Waters of the Lonely Way. Canaan, N. H.: Phoenix Publishing, 1982.

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The property being nominated consists of the Wilder House and barn together with their irregularly shaped lot adjoining the north side of the Lawrence Hill Road. The 0.58-acre lot extends approximately 105 feet along the road (its south boundary), approximately 262 feet along its west boundary, approximately 178 feet along its north boundary, and approximately 243 feet along its east boundary. The deed to the property is recorded in Book 34, Pages 128-130 of the Weston Land Records. The nominated property corresponds essentially to the house's original lot, and is sufficient to enclose and protect the historic resources.