

1788

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

SEP 25 1989

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Thurston, Phineas House  
other names/site number The Home Farm

2. Location

street & number Barnet Town Highway #12 N/A not for publication  
city, town Barnet, N/A vicinity  
state Vermont code VT county Caledonia code 005 zip code 05861

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>1</u>	_____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A  
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.  
[Signature] 9/20/89  
Signature of certifying official Date  
Vermont  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:  
 entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.  
 determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.  
 determined not eligible for the National Register.  
 removed from the National Register.  
 other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

[Signature] 10/30/89  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Cape Cod

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation granite

walls weatherboard

roof wood

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

See Continuation Sheet for description.

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The Phineas Thurston House is a well-preserved Cape Cod farmhouse. The house is a typical story and a half Cape Cod with a connecting ell that includes a summer kitchen and two arched, open bay, carriage openings at the end. Among its distinctive elements are the Cape Cod form, original paneled central doorway and transom, and many original interior features such as paneling, wainscoting, doors, trim, and floors. The house, which faces east across a lawn toward Barnet Town Highway #12, is located in a rural area on one acre and it is surrounded on all four sides by a nearby dairy farm. The environs have remained agricultural throughout the history of the property. The only buildings within a quarter of a mile are dairy barns and silos; thus the integrity of its setting remains intact. The property also retains its integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

## House: Exterior

The house itself consists of a broad sweeping roof of cedar shingles facing the road over a one story facade of five bays. Windows are nine over six with louvered shutters unless otherwise noted. The south (gable end) facade is 1 1/2 stories and two bays wide. The upstairs windows are closer together than those below and there is a small attic window under the gable peak.

An ell is attached to the north (side) wall. It is recessed from the front wall plane of the house. The ell becomes a barn with a two-bay carriage shed at the northernmost end. The portion of the ell nearest the house is a summer kitchen with a door on the east facade between two windows. Beyond this on the east are a single window and a door, and the carriage shed. The ell is one story tall with a high attic covered by a metal roof. The back side of the main house and ell line up with each other. The back of the main block consists of (south to north): a door, two 1/1 kitchen windows, and two more house windows. The ell has from south to north a 2/2 window and door in the summer kitchen, small square window, two doors, and two small square windows in the barn. The north gable of the barn has two large windows. The north gable end of the main block of the house has two windows on the second floor (one small, one large) and a small window in the gable peak.

There are two gabled dormers, one on the back of the house and another above the back side of the summer kitchen. A

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single brick chimney projects through the center of the ridge on the main block of the house. This is modern and consists of concrete block inside the house.

The exterior construction materials are weatherboard and wood trim, a granite foundation, a cedar shingle roof on the house, and a metal roof on the barn ell. The clapboards on the front of the summer kitchen are graduated top to bottom from small to larger and feathered at the butts. These and some on the north gable of the house and front of the barn appear to be original and are nailed by hand-wrought nails. Most of the rest of the clapboards are modern replacement double pine clapboards on both house and barn. The gables do not project and the original molding is intact where the ell attic was added. Some original clapboards also appear on the north side of the house, now inside the attic, and are almost unweathered. Apparently the ell was added soon after the house was built, although maybe not to its full 54' length.

The house and ell (carriage barn) structure is post and beam. This can be observed in the kitchen ceiling, which has 8" x 8" joists and 8" x 10" summer beams. Framing in the attic includes a large ridge beam. The framing in the ell (carriage barn) is of pegged 12" x 12" timbers with corner braces. There is no ridgepole in the ell (carriage barn) and each set of rafters is pegged together at the top.

There are currently no porches although a photograph taken about 1880 shows one in front of the summer kitchen. The windows, for the most part, are nine over six sash with 9" x 7" panes. The two in the front of the summer kitchen appear to be original; the others are all replacements. Large granite blocks provide stepping stones for entrances to both the house and summer kitchen. Concrete and slate entries serve the back doors to the house and summer kitchen and a dirt ramp leads up to the back door to the barn. The eaves of the house are boxed in with a strip of molding below. There is a five light transom over the front door. The arches over the carriage shed bays consist of wooden segments of different widths with a wood keystone over each. The windows on the north side of the house have lintels with sloping sides, which appear to be original. Those on the south side of the house are replacement window lintels and frames. The frames on the north side still have vertical molding strips, which have disappeared or been replaced elsewhere on the building. All window frames on the north

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and front of the house have a bead.

The front door is 39 1/2" wide with six panels. It has a Suffolk latch and the original hinges. A similar door leads from the ell into the carriage shed but without the original hardware. The other exterior doors are not original.

House: Interior

On the inside, many original features are still intact. The front door opens into a small hallway and stairway to the second floor. To the right is the large living room and to the left a room with paneling. To the rear of the living room are a small bedroom (originally a pantry) and bathroom. To the left is a window-less storage room where the chimney once stood. All fireplaces and the original central chimney have disappeared. Behind the paneled room is a small study (borning room originally). Between this room and the bathroom is the kitchen with a long narrow pantry against the back wall of the house on the south side.

All rooms have wide board floors of softwood except the kitchen and storage room, which have hardwood strip flooring.

The front hallway has a wainscot and chair rail in one corner and hand-planed boards in another. The rest of its walls, which have doors leading to other rooms, are plaster. The plaster walls were stencilled in 1975.

The living room has 9" baseboards, a 24" wainscot, and chair rail all around. The floor has a trap door, which was used for lowering milk cans into the basement to make cheese. There are seven doors in this room; six have Norfolk latches, most of them original to the house. Seven doorways are beaded and six of the doors are of four panels. One of the doors is to a dish cupboard with grooved shelves for display of dishes at the back. The door is a replacement from an old door and has a brass thumb latch. The walls and ceilings are of plaster. There are replacement beaded rails for hanging things on four sides of the room. Moldings around the doors and windows replace those whose presence were detected by paint marks and whose shapes were indicated by a surviving fragment.

The storage room contains nothing original. The small bedroom has grooves where pantry shelves once stood, and

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beaded baseboards and two door frames (one door now covered over with plaster). The bathroom also has beaded baseboards and a door frame.

The paneled room is the most elegant. It has a fireplace mantel, a paneled fireplace wall, three doors with H-L hinges, a cornice all around, and on three sides a 26" single board wainscot and chair rails. The original moldings surround each door and the three windows. The baseboard is 6" high. An unusual feature is the floor boards, which are scored and nailed to look like 4 1/2" strips although most boards are actually about 9" wide.

The small room off the paneled room was the borning room and is notable for wide floor boards and high baseboards. It has a small closet and a replacement chair rail.

The kitchen has been much altered. After a fire in 1978, the beams in the ceiling were exposed. The joists are roughly on three foot centers with the butts set in the summer beam on the east. The two panel door to the pantry is original and has a Suffolk latch. The wood stove is early 20th century. The door frames contain (replacement) molding, which were indicated by paint marks, and original beading. The two 1/1 windows are modern, as are the wall cupboards and sink.

The front stairway has a quarter turn and leads upstairs from the front hallway. Upstairs are three bedrooms. Door frames, doors, and baseboards indicate that the upstairs was probably finished off at a later date although the wide boards in the floors seem to date from the time of construction of the house. On the south side is a large bedroom, which has two windows and a large closet. North of the hallway is another bedroom with the kneewall three feet high. This room has a closet with a built-in cupboard and rails with cast iron hooks. In the back corner is a small bedroom lit by a dormer and a former outside window, which is now covered by the summer kitchen attic (to which access is given by a door).

The basement covers all the area beneath the house itself. It is of large granite slabs on the outside and inside a wall of brick one course thick with an air space between. Below grade, all is field stone, now mortared. The floor is mostly dirt. The framing reveals the size of the original chimney. Butts of the summer beams are supported by a brick

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and a wood post where the chimney once held them. Many of the floor joists have been replaced or duplicated so the framing pattern is irregular.

The large attic has 6" x 6" rafters and a similar ridgepole. There are also attics on either side of the kneewalls.

The ell begins with the summer kitchen. There are remnants of a brick oven under a plain mantel. The room is designed for cross ventilation with three windows and two doors. Original chair rails and wainscot are on all four sides. The doors lead north to two old rooms. That on the front is now a workshop and has original door frames and chair rails intact. The back room is now a stable and appears to have no original features.

An old 39" wide door leads from the front room to the carriage shed, which is three steps lower. The two bays of the shed, of unequal width, are used for garages. Above the first floor is a long attic divided in two by a wooden wall and a stairway. The attic is lighted by a dormer and two large windows at the northern gable.

**Outbuildings:**

Two sheds stand behind the barn. One was recently covered with clapboards and is now a chicken coop. The other, once a horse barn and now a tool shed, has been recently covered with cedar shingles. Both are built on a concrete slab. They may date from the early 20th century. An old stone ramp leads to the site of a barn, which burned down in 1925. The foundations remain west of the present property.

**Grounds:**

Behind the house is a small apple orchard and there are sheep pastures on either side of the property. A modern pergola leads from the back of the house through a flower garden to the orchard. The property is landscaped with lawns and a number of native trees.

**8. Statement of Significance**

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

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

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

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

c.1787

Significant Dates

c.1787

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

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

See continuation sheets for Statement of Significance

See continuation sheet



**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Map of Caledonia County, Vermont, from Actual Surveys Under the Direction of H.F. Walling. New York: 1858.

County Atlas of Caledonia, Vermont, from Actual Surveys by and Under the Direction of F.W. Beers. New York: 1875.

Wells, Frederick Palmer. History of Barnet, Vermont. Burlington, Vt.: Free Press Printing Co., 1923.

Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. Survey of Barnet, Vermont, Vermont Historic Sites and Structures Survey. Montpelier, Vt.: 1980.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

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

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property + 1 acre

UTM References

A 18 7317080 4916560  
 Zone Easting Northing

C \_\_\_\_\_

B \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zone Easting Northing

D \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The property is a rectangular lot of land, slightly over one acre, that is located three-quarters of a mile south on Town Highway #12 from the intersection with Waterford Town Highway #38. It is bounded on the east by Town Highway #12, on the other sides by open fields, and is 17.42 rods (287.5') wide and 9.39 rods (155') deep.  
Barnet Town Records, Vol. 72, p. 169 (8/16/1985)

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The current lot is that associated with the house since c.1955 and is sufficient to protect the historical associations of the property.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title James F. White  
 organization \_\_\_\_\_ date August 1, 1988  
 street & number RFD #3 telephone (802) 748-3925  
 city or town St. Johnsbury state Vermont zip code 05819

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The Phineas Thurston House, one of the older houses in what is known as the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont (Caledonia, Orleans, and Essex Counties), is significant as being a good and well-preserved example of a Cape Cod farmhouse. It is in the town of Barnet, first settled in 1770 but little developed until after the Revolution. The Thurston House represents nearly two centuries of farm life in that part of Vermont, and was a center of farm life from 1788 to 1971. The Thurston House remains relatively intact. Significant features are its Cape Cod form, the paneled central doorway and transom, the early attached ell containing a summer kitchen and two open carriage bay arches at the end, and many original interior details. The chief changes have been the loss of the central chimney and fireplaces and the addition of modern plumbing, heating, and wiring.

A survey done in 1976 showed Cape Cods to be the predominant building type of older houses in the town of Barnet. The Thurston House is a good and well-preserved example of a Cape Cod house, and is one of the most intact examples of its type in the area. The house has the typical Cape Cod form, being 1 1/2 stories high and five bays wide, with a gable roof and a central entrance. It is also significant for its early attached ell, which includes two, arched, open, carriage bays at the far end. The wood trim framing the arches have wooden keystones.

Inside most of the original woodwork and much of the door hardware have survived. Missing hardware and some chair rails have been salvaged from other buildings of the same period. No new woodwork has been added unless its presence was indicated by paint marks, nail holes, or surviving fragments. Former residents saw little reason to discard or alter much over the nearly two centuries of the house's existence. It remains largely intact as built despite a fire in 1978 which damaged some of the upstairs.

In October 1787, Phineas Thurston purchased four hundred acres in Barnet and adjacent Waterford. That same year, a sawmill began operations at the foot of the hill. Thurston's origins are unknown. In 1788, he paid his taxes with wheat apparently grown on the site. Presumably the house was constructed about that time. Many of the interior details are identical with those in the nearby Goodwillie House, built in 1791.

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Phineas Thurston farmed the place for the remainder of his life and left it to his daughter and her husband, who sold it to Amos Kinney (sometimes Kinne) soon after the turn of the century. He and his son, Loren, farmed it for most of the nineteenth century until 1884. It is often referred to as the "Home Farm." After Loren Kinney's death in 1884, it passed through a number of hands, mostly farmers from Quebec. Gradually the land was sold off to other owners.

The last farmer was Ray Moulton, who died in 1971. He managed to make a living off the land, now reduced to a single acre, by raising hogs, heifers, 800 chickens and by making snowshoes and repairing chain saws. His only changes to the place were to make chicken coops out of the barn and to bring a horse shed from a logging job in Lyndonville to use for hogs.

James and Susan White, the present owners, have tried to do as careful and accurate a restoration as possible. This work is virtually complete except for the possible reconstruction of a central chimney and fireplaces.

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PROPERTY OWNER:

James F. and Susan J. White  
RFD #3  
St. Johnsbury, Vermont 05819

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National Park Service**

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

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Photograph label

This information is the same for all photographs:

Phineas Thurston House

Passumpsic, Vermont

Credit: Susan J. White

Date: July, 1988

Negative filed at the Vermont Division for Historic  
Preservation

Photograph 1: Overall context looking north

Photograph 2: Front facade looking west

Photograph 3: Front facade of barn looking west

Photograph 4: Side facade looking north

Photograph 5: Barn, house, and outbuildings looking north

Photograph 6: North and west walls of paneled room