

Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

(NATIONAL HISTORIC
LANDMARKS)

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Massachusetts	
COUNTY: Essex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON: John Greenleaf Whittier Home
AND/OR HISTORIC: John Greenleaf Whittier Home

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: 86 Friend Street, corner of Pickard Street			
CITY OR TOWN: Amesbury			
STATE: Massachusetts	CODE: 025	COUNTY: Essex	CODE: 009

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____
		<input type="checkbox"/> Comments	_____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Whittier Home Association, Inc.		
STREET AND NUMBER: 86 Friend Street		
CITY OR TOWN: Amesbury	STATE: Massachusetts	CODE: 025

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Essex Registry of Deeds, Northern District		
STREET AND NUMBER: 381 Common Street		
CITY OR TOWN: Lawrence 01840	STATE: Massachusetts	CODE: 025

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: none		
DATE OF SURVEY: <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local		
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:		
STREET AND NUMBER:		
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The John Greenleaf Whittier Home stands on a rectangular lot at the southeast corner of Friend and Pickard Streets in Amesbury, Massachusetts. The house, which faces northwest, is set back about 20 feet from Friend Street and occupies most of the lot's 65-foot frontage.

The original portion of the Whittier Home was constructed about 1811. It was then a 1-1/2 story, gable-roofed Cape cottage with four rooms on the main floor and one in the attic; a 1-story kitchen ell and woodshed extended to the rear of the frame and clapboard building. When Whittier purchased the house in 1836, he added a single bedroom at the rear of its southeast corner.

Whittier and his family (his mother, aunt, and younger sister) soon found the house too small to accommodate both themselves and their many guests and, in 1847, with the assistance of English philanthropist Joseph Sturge, they were able to enlarge it. The new southeast bedroom was lengthened to form a sitting room and study, a porch was built along the eastern side of the house, and a gable-roofed second story--covering the porch, the sitting room, and the eastern two bays of the original house-- was added.

In 1900, the house was again enlarged by Whittier's heirs. The western bays of the house were raised to two full stories and the rear kitchen ell (moved to the southeast corner of the lot where it still stands) was replaced by a two-story wing with rear porches. It was probably at this time that the building's 6/6 sash windows were replaced with 2/2 sash; louvered blinds were retained or, where necessary, duplicated. The open, rectangular front porch and the bay window above it may also date from this period.

Boundaries of the National Historic Landmark: Beginning at the intersection of the east curbline of Pickard Street and the south curbline of Friend Street; thence, easterly along the south curbline of Friend Street, 65 feet more or less, to the western line of the adjacent residential property; thence, southerly along the western line of said residential property and of property owned by the New England Telephone Company, 180 feet more or less, to the northern line of residential property at 17 Pleasant Street; thence westerly along said line, 65 feet more or less, to the east curbline of Pickard Street; thence, northerly along said curbline, 180 feet more or less, to the point of beginning.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1811; 1836-1892**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi-	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	osophy	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Literature	itarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> Music	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

John Greenleaf Whittier, American author, abolitionist, and humanitarian, did most of his major writing in this 2-story frame house at 86 Friend Street in Amesbury, Massachusetts. Whittier purchased the house, then a 5-room structure built in 1811, in 1836 and enlarged it substantially before his death in 1892. Today, the main portion of the house looks as it did in Whittier's lifetime and most of the furnishings, including his desks, remain as he left them.

Since 1918, the John Greenleaf Whittier Home has been owned by the Whittier Home Association, Inc. The building is open to the public on a year-round basis, Sundays and Mondays by appointment, Tuesday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (closed Thanksgiving and Christmas).

Biographical Summary¹

John Greenleaf Whittier was born on a farm near Haverhill, Massachusetts, on December 17, 1807. Though his formal education was limited to district school and two terms at Haverhill Academy, Whittier, like the rest of his Quaker family, loved learning as well as religion, and he read widely throughout his life. His early enthusiasm for Burns, Byron, and Scott broadened to include Spencer, Shakespeare, and Marvell; Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Lamb, who were lasting favorites; and his contemporaries on both sides of the Atlantic. His deepest and most constant admiration, however, was for Milton, whose role as apostle of freedom and righteous living he sought to imitate.

As a young man, Whittier burned with literary ambition. After his older sister Mary sent his "The Exile's Departure" to William Lloyd Garrison for publication in the Newburyport Free Press and Garrison encouraged other poetic contributions, Whittier wrote copiously and enthusiastically. However, when his father convinced him of the impracticality of poetry as a vocation, he turned to journalism. He edited newspapers in Boston and Haverhill and, by 1830, had become the editor of Hartford's New England Weekly Review, the most important Whig journal in New England. He continued as editor until 1832, meanwhile writing verse, sketches, and tales of New England, publishing his first volume, Legends of New England, in 1831. By 1832, need for him at home following his

¹Excerpted from "John Greenleaf Whittier," Encyclopedia Britannica (Chicago, 1967), vol. 23, p. 494. (continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Arms, George. The Fields Were Green (1953).
 Leary, Lewis. John Greenleaf Whittier (1961).
 Pickard, John B. John Greenleaf Whittier (1961).
 "John Greenleaf Whittier," Encyclopedia Britannica (Chicago, 1967),
 vol. 23, p. 494.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES	
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		U.T.M.	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	19.341860.4746390		
NW	° ' "	° ' "			
NE	° ' "	° ' "			
SE	° ' "	° ' "			
SW	° ' "	° ' "			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: .27 acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Polly M. Rettig, Historian, Landmark Review Project; original form prepared by J. Walter Coleman, Historian, 7/21/61

ORGANIZATION: Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service DATE: 12/24/74

STREET AND NUMBER: 1100 L Street NW

CITY OR TOWN: Washington 20240 STATE: D.C. CODE: 011

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

<p>As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name <u>N/A</u> <u>National Historic Landmark</u></p> <p>Title _____</p> <p><u>(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)</u></p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS) <u>Landmark Dec 29, 1972</u> <u>Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</u>..... date _____</p> <p>(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS) <u>Boundary Commission</u> <u>Chieftain</u>..... Date <u>June 6-30-75</u> ATTEST: <u>Chief, Hist. & Arch. Surveys</u> date _____</p> <p>Boundary Commission <u>Keeper of the Register</u>..... Date <u>7/2/75</u> Director, _____</p>
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(Continuation Sheet)

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8. Significance: (1) John Greenleaf Whittier Home, Amesbury, Mass.

father's death, disappointment in a love affair which seems to have foundered on religious differences, discouragement with lack of literary recognition, and ill health caused him to resign and return to Haverhill.

Whittier decided that his rebuffs had been caused by personal vanity and by his forgetting the high ideals of Quakerism. He resolved to devote himself to more altruistic activity and soon embraced Garrisonian abolitionism. His fiery pamphlet Justice and Expediency was widely read and made him prominent in the abolition movement. Although he never wholly abandoned his literary efforts, Whittier was for a decade primarily an abolitionist and probably the movement's most effective writer. He was also active politically, serving one term in the Massachusetts General Court (1835-36), and becoming well known as a lobbyist in Boston and Washington. After 1836, Whittier lived in Amesbury, Massachusetts, with his mother, aunt, and younger sister.

By 1843, Whittier had broken with Garrison, having decided that more could be accomplished through regular political channels. Thereafter he supported antislavery candidates, including Lincoln, and continued to write against slavery and for various reforms. He also became more active in literature, and avenues of publication began to reopen for him. In 1843 he was represented in Lowell's new magazine The Pioneer and published a volume of poems, Lays of My Home. Over the next twenty years, he published eight additional volumes of poems and five of prose (most of his literary prose, including his one novel, Leaves from Margaret Smith's Journal, was published in this period). During the Civil War, both national and personal grief, including the death of his beloved younger sister Elizabeth, furthered Whittier's literary maturity. The publication in 1866 of his best-known poem, Snow-Bound, was followed by other triumphs in The Tent on the Beach, Among the Hills, and The Pennsylvania Pilgrim.

In the latter part of his life, Whittier shared with Longfellow the distinction of being a "household poet," both in America and England. He was elected an overseer of Harvard College in 1858 and received from that institution an honorary master's degree in 1860 and doctorate in 1886. He was a member of the famous Saturday Club of Boston and his 70th and 80th birthdays were literary events. Whittier considered his success less the crown of ambition than the vindication of a consecrated life. In old age he counseled a boy of 14, "My lad, if thou wouldst win success, join thyself to some unpopular but noble cause."

Whittier died in 1892. He was an eloquent advocate of justice and tolerance and a poet of faith, comfort, and joy. Many of his poems are sung as church hymns by many denominations. Not a literary genius of the highest stature, he was nevertheless an important voice of his age. In "Proem," written in middle life, he said his limited gifts had been laid on the shrine of Freedom.

(continued)

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8. Significance: (2) John Greenleaf Whittier Home

He never forgot this dedication, but the more tranquil atmosphere of his later years enabled him to write poems that have earned him such titles as "America's finest religious poet" and "balladist of New England."