

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

JUN 5 1985

date entered

JUL 19

Continuation sheet 41 *North Kingstown MRA* Item number 7

Page 41

NAME: Esbon Sanford House
LOCATION: 88 Featherbed Lane
OWNER: Robert & Diane Plante
88 Featherbed Lane
North Kingstown, RI 02852
CONDITION: Excellent; Altered; Original site

DESCRIPTION:

The Esbon Sanford House is a one-and-one-half-story, five-bay, gable-roofed house, its detailing an amalgam of the Federal and Greek Revival styles.

The chimney centered on the flank-gable roof is deceptive because the plan is organized around a center hall. The flues of the fireplaces in two rooms flanking the hall join on the second floor and emerge from the roof as a single stack, with a smoke chamber tucked in the niche below their intersection. A kitchen ell which appears to have been constructed at the same time as the front section, extends from the center of the back.

Exterior ornamentation is indicative of a period of stylistic transition and vernacular creativity. The front doorway, centered on the facade, has three-light sidelights; the overdoor panel is framed by pairs of flat pilasters. Recessed panels edged by bolection molding ornament the corner posts.

Two alterations have been made in the past decade. A gable-roofed entry porch was added to the north wall of the ell. The roof of the ell was raised by half a story to permit creation of a large room on the second floor.

Interior woodwork is simple. Shallow panelled pilasters frame the two front fireplaces and support a wide entablature interrupted only by a single strip of horizontal molding. Panels with raised molding extend below the windows to the floor in the northeast parlor. Window and door frames have a simple molding; some have corner blocks with gouged circles. Panelled interior shutters fold into the splayed sides of deep-silled windows on the first floor. A third chimney is located in the kitchen ell. The kitchen fireplace is edged by molding and has a simple shelf.

The house rests on a foundation of granite blocks. A cellar runs beneath the entire structure. Along the Featherbed Lane frontage a wood picket fence stands on a granite base and has granite gateposts. Two small, gable-roofed outbuildings are set directly behind the house. To the southwest low stone walls surround three sides of what was, perhaps, the site of a barn.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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

For NPS use only

received

JUN 5 1985

date entered

Continuation sheet 42

Item number 7

Page 42

PERIOD: 1800-1899

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture, Industry

SPECIFIC DATE: probably 1832

BUILDER: Esbon Sanford

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Esbon Sanford House is significant for its unusual chimney arrangement, an interesting hybrid resulting from the desire to retain the traditional central chimney on the exterior while accommodating the newer central hall plan. The quality and creative design of the exterior and interior woodwork are also noteworthy, particularly given the rural context. The house is also of interest as the long-time residence of Esbon Sanford, founder of the nearby Annaquatucket mill, no longer extant.

The house presumably dates from about 1832, the year that Esbon Sanford, Jr., dammed the Annaquatucket River to form a mill pond. He soon thereafter established a factory to produce jean cloth and red and blue flannel. His house and five others, including the Stephen Northrup house at 99 Featherbed Lane (also nominated to the National Register), formed a hamlet on the fifty-acre parcel of land owned by Sanford. He and several relatives were involved with other milling enterprises in North Kingstown as well, but the mill by his house was probably his major interest.

A new dam was built to enlarge the Annaquatucket Pond in 1861. At this time Sanford was leasing the fifty acres with the factory and buildings in the hamlet to Owen Vaughan, who was active in the previous decade at the Hamilton Mill to the east. When Sanford died in 1864 his heirs continued the lease. The original factory burned in 1875 and was rebuilt. In 1877 the heirs sold the property to Joseph Greene of New York, who had taken over the mill at Hamilton several years earlier. The mill ceased operation early in the twentieth century and is now a ruins, but the dam remains, with Featherbed Lane running across it. Fortunately the Sanford and Northrup Houses have survived as a remnant of the earlier mill hamlet.

ACREAGE: less than one

QUAD NAME: Wickford, R.I.

UTM: A 19 295790 4602610

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION:

The Sanford House boundary is the lot line of Assessor's Plat 70, lot 17, and includes the Sanford House, its nearby outbuildings, and their immediate surroundings.

LEVEL: Local

Photo numbers 29-32