

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Enoch Whitmore House (Underground Railroad in Massachusetts MPS)

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 12 Daniels Lane _____ not for publication

city or town Ashburnham _____ vicinity

state Massachusetts code MA county Worcester code 027 zip code 01430

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Brona Simon November 19, 2007
Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date
Massachusetts Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. 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 of the Keeper

Date of Action

Edson H. Beall 1-9-08

Enoch Whitmore House
Name of Property

Worcester, MA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

(Check only one box)

☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

2 building

1 sites

structures

objects

3 Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Underground Railroad in MA MPS

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: animal facility

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: agricultural field

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

EARLY REPUBLIC: Federal

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: granite

walls SYNTHETICS: vinyl

roof ASPHALT

other WOOD

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Enoch Whitmore House
Ashburnham (Worcester), MA

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Narrative Description

The Enoch Whitmore House is situated on a 19.4-acre parcel on a private lane north of Tuckerman Road in the town of Ashburnham, Worcester County, Massachusetts. The nominated property is located in the northeastern corner of the town, within a mile of the New Hampshire state line. The picturesque dirt access road (Daniels Lane) leads in a northwesterly direction from Tuckerman Road to the house about 100 yards up a gradual incline. It is lined with stone walls and mature sugar maple trees. Meadows on both sides of the road terminate at a forest line that now characterizes the majority of the property. The house is sited on the east side of the road in a clearing at the northern end of the entrance *allée*; a barn is located opposite it on the west side of the road. Most of the open space in this clearing is maintained in mown lawn embellished with ornamental trees and gardens. The road continues past (north of) the house to another clearing containing a tenant house that was moved there from a location closer to the main house in the early 20th century. The road, stone wall, tree rows and meadows (one site) and the Whitmore house and barn (two buildings) are all contributing features of the nominated property. The tenant house has been altered and sits on a lot that has been subdivided from the property containing the house and barn; it is not included in this nomination.

Exterior

The house is comprised of four distinct geometric and functional sections in the typical manner of 19th-century connected farmsteads in northern New England (PHOTOS 1-4). In many cases a barn was also part of this assemblage, but this does not appear to have been the case here.¹ The main part of the house is a two-story, single-pile (one room deep) gable-roof form with a south-facing, five-bay, center-entrance, front façade (PHOTO 1). This wood frame section is constructed on a full stone basement, part of which is reputed to survive from an earlier house built by Enoch Whitmore's father, although there is no physical evidence that clearly substantiates it. The framing of this part of the house suggests that it was built in a single campaign in the early decades of the 1800s. Two brick chimneys are aligned with the rear (north) wall of the front section (PHOTO 4), which is consistent with a practice popular in the region encompassing northern Massachusetts and southern New Hampshire during the late 18th and early 19th centuries: the chimneys vented fireplaces in rooms on both the first and second stories.

The chimney on the west side of the main house also connects to a kitchen fireplace contained in the 1½ story ell connected to the north side of that section (PHOTOS 1, 2 & 4). The ridge line of the kitchen ell is perpendicular to and about two feet lower than that of the main house, and it abuts the western chimney. The ell contains two window bays on the principal (west) facade, with those on the upper story

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¹ Thomas Hubka, *Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn*, (Hanover, NH: UP of New England, 1984).

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compressed under the eave of the roof. A doorway in the west end of the main house provided access to both the kitchen and the west room of the main house through a narrow passageway between the chimney and the west wall. An exterior vestibule has been added outside this doorway. The east wall of the kitchen ell contains two windows and a door on the ground floor, and only one window centered in the upper level where a interior passage is located (PHOTO 4). There is no basement under the kitchen or any of the other rear appendages.

Two one-story back houses connected perpendicularly are attached to the north end of the kitchen ell. The first section, a back or summer kitchen, is aligned with the kitchen ell and contains a large masonry hearth and chimney at its north end (PHOTOS 1-3). A large iron kettle built into the masonry indicates that this was an auxiliary work space where butchering and other tasks took place. The southern end of this section has been fitted with a modern kitchen, bathroom, and laundry which have obscured any further evidence of original use, but it is likely that it accommodated food preservation activities and food storage. There is an entrance and window on both the east and west sides of this extension; modern windows have been added to each side. The final section attaches to the northeast corner of the back kitchen (PHOTOS 2&3). Its unheated interior remains in essentially original condition with its wall and roof framing unenclosed. It appears to have been a workshop, well illuminated with three windows each on its north and south sides. Ground level drops abruptly at the eastern end so that there is a part-stone, part-wood frame enclosure underneath the east end of the section. A three-hole privy in the southeast corner of the section indicates the function of this small basement area. Its awkward connection to the previous section suggests that this last ell may have been an addition, although its construction materials and methods are consistent with the period in which the rest of the house was built.

The period and design of the house is largely conveyed by its form and structure, particularly since any ornamental features that exist along the roof lines or around the windows and doors are now concealed by vinyl clapboard siding. The artificial shutters, asphalt shingle roof, carriage lamps, and eagle emblems all conspire to give the house a late-20th century Colonial Revival appearance. Nevertheless, decoration would have been restrained and plain at best, and limited to the verticality of the single-pile main block and the regimented symmetry of horizontal bands of windows. This, combined with the thin cornice lines, narrow cornerboards, and attenuated entrance elements, dates the house to late Federal Period, sometime after 1818 when Enoch Whitmore's father, Isaac, conveyed the farmstead to him in consideration of \$2,000.² (The entrance architrave with turned corner blocks may be a somewhat later feature based on the absence of this feature elsewhere in the house. This doorway has clearly been altered in a number of stages and whatever series of porches or platforms that existed at the entrance are now gone and their evidence concealed behind the present siding.) Enoch was 22 years of age and ready to marry and begin a family; his father was 63 and

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² Worcester County Deeds, 7 October 1818, recorded 15 July 1829, 269:131.

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ready to retire. The local tradition is that Isaac's house was moved from this site, although there is no specific evidence of this having had occurred. Isaac Whitmore lived until 1847 or 1848 (his wife died in 1840), and it is also possible that both generations shared the large new house.

Interior

The rooms in the main section of the single-pile house are also plain in decoration. What distinguishes them are their large, square proportions and abundant windows (the existing 12/12 sash windows are recent replicas of the originals). Woodwork is minimal around windows and doors, and each room has simple chair rails and wood mantels as their only embellishment (PHOTOS 5-7). The chimneys on the rear walls are flanked by either doorways or closets built into the voids their projections create. The two first-floor rooms are divided by a center passage illuminated by 4/4 sash sidelights flanking the front entrance, and containing a straight run of stairs with an open balustrade (PHOTO 5). The location of a removed chair rail is visible in the plaster wall on the west side of the passage. The room west of the passage is largely intact (PHOTO 6). It connects to the side door and the kitchen, suggesting that it was more a "hall," or common room, than a parlor in the tradition of early 19th-century domestic plans. In this way, with two rooms fronting a rear kitchen, this house essentially has a center chimney plan with the chimney disassembled for a center passage. The room east of the passage was likely the parlor. It is the room most remote from the kitchen and the back of the house, providing the most seclusion. Yet this room has been renovated to a degree that makes a firm conclusion impossible. The floor framing and floor were replaced in 1975 to address moisture and insect damage. The fireplace has been walled over (this fireplace would have been flanked by two closets since it was on an outside wall), and only the window and door trim and chair rail remain intact, although they give no clues to a hierarchy of finishes that would designate this room as the best room (except that the best-finished chamber is located above it). However, 19th-century plan changes came with functional shifts as well. The west room could have been used as a dining room, and the east room could have served as a private apartment for Enoch Whitmore parents during the latter years of their lives.

The plan of the second story of the main block follows that of the first except with the addition of a small chamber in the front of the center stair hall. A steep winding stairway to the attic is enclosed in the front of the hall. The two bed chambers flanking the hall are largely unchanged with wood mantels, chair rails, closets, and door and window trim (PHOTO 7). They also have the unusual feature of shallow cabinets recessed into the chimney above the mantel shelves. The mantel on the fireplace in the east chamber is more embellished, indicating that this was the better location within the hierarchy of rooms. The attic is unfinished and the rafters—rounded spars flattened only on the top for roof sheathing—are butted against a hefty ridge beam.

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Both first- and second-floor passages connect to the kitchen ell attached to the rear of the main house. A single room occupies the ground floor of the kitchen, which is dominated by a large cooking fireplace with a bake oven on the side on the south wall and sharing the main house chimney. A door on the east side of the fireplace opens on stairs leading to the basement. Original plaster walls and ceiling and wood flooring in this space have been replaced with new materials. Part of the north wall of this room was opened to link it with a modern kitchen installed in the east side of the back kitchen section; a bathroom opening into the old kitchen room has been enclosed on the west side of this rear section. Two small bed chambers are located on the west side of the upper story of the kitchen ell connected by a narrow passageway running along the east side of the space. These spaces are basically unchanged.

The large stone hearth and cauldron survives in the north end of the back kitchen. This area was intentionally preserved while the rest of the section was renovated. A board partition once divided the rear part from the rest, but that was dismantled to connect the old space with the new kitchen. It does not appear that the attic above these rooms was used for anything more than storage, a use that continues presently. Access to this attic is made from the rear room in the second story of the kitchen ell. The rearmost section built or added perpendicularly to the north-south axis of the other connected buildings is quite intact, attested by its exposed wall and roof framing. It was unheated and contains an interior privy, which was quite a luxury in Enoch Whitmore's time. Located at the easternmost end of this section, an aisle would have had to have been maintained through whatever took place in the room to provide unimpeded access to it.

If any notable changes were made by Enoch Whitmore's son, Lorenzo Locke Whitmore, in the years he owned the house from 1857, when Enoch conveyed the farm to him, until his death in 1899, they have been removed in subsequent renovations. (For instance, was a wide piazza ever added to the front façade of the house?) Overall, it appears that the house changed little after Enoch Whitmore died in 1860. Lorenzo L. Whitmore's widow continued on in the house, and it was later sold in the early 1900s to John Daniels, for whom the private road is named. Daniels maintained it as a summer residence, as did at least four subsequent owners, until it was returned to a permanent home in 1969, which probably marked the beginning of the modernizing efforts evident in the house today.

Barn

On 14 August 1848, Lorenzo L. Whitmore wrote in a letter to his brother, Flint, "Father has built him a fine barn this summer it is to be the greatest thing in town when finished, having a cellar under, the whole

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bigness and the body of the barn clapboarded and painted.”³ This account describes the barn that survives on the nominated property (PHOTO 8). It has a frame consisting of hewn principal timbers and sawn wall studs and rafters produced at the Whitmores’ mill or one of the numerous other sawmills in the locality. The basement opens at ground level on the south side of the building. The east gable end contains three doorways: a large central doorway opens on a threshing floor and two at the corners access side aisles where horse stalls and other spaces were defined; hay was stored above these areas in the great roof cavity. The barn has been re-sided with vinyl clapboards, and a recent metal roof covers the building.

Archaeological Description

While no ancient Native American sites are known on the Whitmore House property or in the general area (within one mile), sites may be present. Environmental characteristics of the property represent locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, proximity to wetlands) that are favorable for the presence of Native sites. The house occupies a well-drained, level to moderately sloping east-facing terrace in close proximity to wetlands. An unnamed tributary stream and swampland are located within 1,000 feet east of the house. The area lies within the Miller/Connecticut River drainage. Given the above information, the size of the nominated property (19.4 acres), and known patterns of Native American subsistence and settlement for northern Worcester County and the Worcester Plateau locale, a high potential exists for locating ancient Native American sites on the Whitmore House property. Ancient sites in the area may be characterized by smaller, short-term, special purpose type sites specializing on the exploitation of upland floral, faunal, and lithic resources. Larger village-type habitation sites may be located south of the Whitmore House in the vicinity of the Miller River and larger lakes in the region.

A high potential also exists for locating historic archaeological resources on the Whitmore House property. Additional historic research combined with archaeological survey and testing may locate the site of an earlier house believed built on the property by Enoch’s father Isaac probably during the late 18th century. Confusion exists whether Isaac’s house was moved or incorporated into the existing house. The wood frame section of the existing house is reported to survive from the earlier house built by Enoch’s father, although there is no physical evidence that clearly substantiates it. Local tradition also states that Isaac’s house was moved from the site, although there is no specific evidence of this having occurred. Isaac’s house may represent a new house built by him, or a house, possibly the third on the property, built by his father Joseph, Enoch’s grandfather. Structural evidence may exist from homes belonging to three generations of Whitmores who occupied this property. Construction features and structural evidence may also exist that one or more earlier houses were incorporated into the existing house. Structural evidence of barns, outbuildings, and occupational-related features (trash pits, privies, wells) associated with Enoch’s, his father’s, and grandfather’s homes and/or occupations may survive. Structural evidence of a tenant house, barns, outbuildings, and associated occupational-related features may also survive on the property. The tenant house, now subdivided from the property, was moved to a clearing from a location near the main house in the early 20th century. The original tenant house site may be located on the nominated property.

No residential structures, barns, outbuildings, or occupational-related features specifically identified with the Underground Railroad have been identified on the Whitmore House property.

(end)

³ Whitmore Family Papers (private collection).

Enoch Whitmore House

Name of Property

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☒ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Worcester, MA

County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

ca. 1818-1865

Significant Dates

ca. 1818

1847

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Enoch Whitmore

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Enoch Whitmore House
Ashburnham (Worcester), MA

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Summary

The Enoch Whitmore House at 12 Daniels Lane in Ashburnham, Massachusetts, is historically significant for its association with the Underground Railroad and with the expression of abolitionist sentiment in a rural place. It meets National Register criteria A and B at a state level of significance for its social and political history, African American history, and its association with the Underground Railroad. The property fulfills the Registration Requirements defined in the Underground Railroad in Massachusetts Multiple Property Submission for Property Type #2, a dwelling associated with persons active in the Underground Railroad. In March 1847, the Boston Vigilance Committee, the commonwealth's principal fugitive assistance group, sent the Maryland fugitive Josiah Thomas to Ashburnham to work at the spool factory Enoch Whitmore and Gilman Jones jointly owned and operated there. Thomas and his family initially lived on the Whitmore property, and they remained in Ashburnham until the late 1870s. The fact that Boston abolitionists sent Thomas to Ashburnham supports the argument that connections existed between fugitive assistants in urban and rural places, and illustrates the reach of abolitionism into the North's hinterlands. Constructed ca. 1818, the Whitmore House also meets National Register Criterion C as a distinctive example of Federal-style design in the region and for its associations with the tradition of connecting dwellings and outbuildings that frequently characterizes farmhouse architecture in northern New England. Although the barn was not attached at the rear end of the complex as is usually the case, the present detached barn, built in 1848, is a contributing building. The period of significance extends from the date the house was built ca. 1818, to 1865, when ratification of the 13th amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolished slavery. The property, however, remained in the family until 1902. The nominated property retains integrity of location, setting, association, feeling, design, workmanship, and materials.

Historical Background

Enoch Whitmore (8 August 1796 - 13 September 1860) was the third generation of his family to live in Ashburnham, which was settled in the 1730s and incorporated in 1765.¹ His grandfather, Joseph Whitmore, came to the town from Leominster by 1780 and settled in its northwestern section. His father, Isaac, served in the Revolution while living in Leominster, married Rebecca Foster in Ashburnham in 1781, and lived on his father's homestead.² Enoch Whitmore was the third of seven children. On 7 June 1818 he married Clarissa

Willard, whose grandfather had moved to Ashburnham from Harvard, Massachusetts, in 1768. Four months after the marriage, Isaac Whitmore sold Enoch a 170-acre tract that included the farm on which he and his family then lived, as well as all of his livestock and farming tools and equipment. Enoch Whitmore's family owned the property until 1902.

Local historian Ezra Stearns called Enoch Whitmore "a farmer and manufacturer in Ashburnham and a leading man of his time." He was often addressed as Colonel Whitmore because of a commission he was given in the local militia in 1829.³ Like his father-in-law Silas Willard, Whitmore held many local offices in the early decades of the 19th century, and he was one of the town's most prosperous citizens by mid-century. About 1830 he went into business with Gilman Jones to make thread spools for nearby mills in New England's then-blossoming textile economy. The families had been connected since 1768, when Isaac Whitmore's oldest sister Mary married Enos Jones, Gilman Jones's grandfather. In 1784 Isaac Whitmore bought the first portion of his Ashburnham farm from Enos Jones, a tract that bordered land owned by Enos Jones's son Edmund, Gilman's father.

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¹In the family's earliest years in this country the surname was often spelled Whittemore.

²Ezra S. Stearns, *History of Ashburnham Massachusetts from the Grant of Dorchester Canada to the Present Time, 1734-1886, with a Genealogical Register of Ashburnham Families* (Ashburnham, MA: by the town, 1887), 954.

³Stearns, *History of Ashburnham*, 954, 485.

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The woodenware firm of Whitmore and Jones was one of many such factories in Ashburnham and in this north-central region of Massachusetts. The watershed divide between the Connecticut and Merrimack Rivers runs through the town, and a full 1,500 of Ashburnham's 24,500 acres are water. Factories turned out not only spools but chairs, chair stock, matches, tubs, pails, boxes, furniture, even violins. In 1850 almost 13 % of the Ashburnham labor force worked in the wood industries as chairmakers, turners, chair seaters, sawyers, and lumbermen. By 1860 the percentage of working persons in woodenware trades nearly tripled, to 37.1 % of the work force; over that decade the percentage of farmers among working people fell from 51 to 25 %. By 1860 the industry had reached into the female population: of 111 chair seaters in Ashburnham census that year, 106 were female. By contrast, all 122 chairmakers in town were male, and very few of the growing number of Irish laborers were employed at these trades.

At their mill on Bluefield Brook (now part of Sunset Lake), Whitmore and Jones made not only spools but shingles, clapboards, and a variety of boxes.⁴ In 1840 the mill burned, but the two rebuilt it immediately: at the end of 1841 Enoch's eldest son Lorenzo wrote to his brother Flint, then in Baltimore, that the company had "booked 800 dollars for spools since the mill was burned. Spool business is first rate, have nearly 3000 gross on hand to get out now." By 1848 Enoch Whitmore reported to Flint, "Our business holds good, cannot possibly answer all orders—have now in our employ sixteen hands & shall have to employ one or two more."⁵ Tax records for 1849-50 show that the mill had been capitalized at \$6,000, used 725 cords of timber, and had fifteen employees whose average wage was \$25 a month. Whitmore and Jones at that time produced thirty thousand gross of spools (valued at \$5,000) and five thousand gross of match boxes (valued at \$1,000); its workers also cut one hundred thousand feet of lumber (worth \$1,000) and undertook "miscellaneous sawing" worth \$430.⁶ In 1850 the federal census shows Enoch Whitmore's real estate value as \$8,500, the third most valuable in town.

Whitmore's Abolitionist Activity

By this time, the political sympathies of both Enoch Whitmore and Gilman Jones were well known. With Alvan Ward, whose sister Sylva married Gilman Jones, the men formed a tight clot of abolitionist impulse and action. That Enoch Whitmore named his tenth child Orange Scott Whitmore indicates that he was in the abolitionists' camp by the boy's birth in 1836. Orange Scott (1800-1847) was a Methodist reformer and abolitionist who was one of the founders of the first Methodist antislavery society in the country, in 1834. He wrote against slavery often in the Methodist serial *Zion's Herald* in the mid-1830s and was denied the position of presiding elder because of his views.⁷ That Alvan

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⁴ See Henry Allen, Leominster, to Col. E. Whitmore, 7 July 1837; Wm Merian, Sterling, to Enoch Whitmore, 12 Oct 1837; James Whitmore (Enoch's brother), Framingham, to Enoch Whitmore, 18 Apr 1840, Whitmore Papers, private collection. Thanks to Robert and Wendy Feen for allowing us access to the transcripts of these letters.

⁵ L. [Lorenzo Locke] Whitmore, Ashburnham, to "brother Flint," 27 December 1841; Enoch Whitmore to Flint Whitmore, March 1848.

⁶ Thanks to Joseph F. Von Deck of Ashburnham for these tax statistics.

⁷ Fred J. Hood, "Methodists Bishops and Abolitionism," *Border States: Journal of the Kentucky-Tennessee American Studies Association* 1 (1973), at <http://spider.georgetowncollege.edu/HTALLANT/border/bs1/hood.htm>

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Ward supported abolitionism by this time is also clear: he named his son Garrison, no doubt after the editor of *The Liberator*, in 1836. In 1839 both Whitmore and Jones were named to a committee charged with reorganizing the "local county Anti-Slavery Friends."⁸ In the late 1830s and early 1840s both Gilman and Silva Jones and Alvan Ward were corresponding with Boston abolitionists about both the cause and the production of articles for the annual antislavery fair in Boston, for which antislavery advocates from all over the state made or donated goods that might be sold to support the activities of the Massachusetts (later New England) Anti-Slavery Society. At the behest of Boston abolitionist Maria Weston Chapman, Gilman Jones designed and manufactured inkstands based partly on Chapman's pattern.⁹

In the years before 1850 it is unclear how widespread the views of the Whitmores, Joneses, and Wards were in Ashburnham. "The course of abolition progress slowly in A.," Sylva Ward Jones wrote to abolitionist Ann Warren Weston in 1837. "The death of brother Lovejoy has awakened some to action; but a lethargy [*sic*] seems to overspread this place in consequence of the pressure [*sic*] of the times," meaning the Panic of 1837.¹⁰ Indeed, there is some indication that Whitmore's abolitionism provoked civic censure, as historian Ezra S. Stearns (born 1839) wrote in his 1887 Ashburnham history:

The anti-slavery cause early enlisted his sympathies and found in him an intelligent and steadfast support. With him the sentiment was not the offspring of emotional sympathy, but a living principle of human right and justice. In this and in all questions of moment, Colonel Whitmore was a radical but not a fanatic. In his view the institution of slavery was wrong, and to oppose it with the force of a persistent nature was a natural sequence. For many years he was in the minority and during an age of strong political prejudices, his political views were a bar to promotion in public service; yet his frequent election to office was a spontaneous recognition of his worth and ability.¹¹

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⁸ Joseph F. von Deck, "A Mortgage Shell Game" (typescript, 11 October 1999), private collection.

⁹ Silva W. Jones, Ashburnham, to Mrs. [Maria Weston] Chapman, 10 November [1837], Ms.A.9.2.16.74, Antislavery Collection, Rare Books and Manuscripts Department, Boston Public Library (hereafter cited as BPL Antislavery Collection); Gilman Jones, Ashburnham, to Mrs. Chapman, 4 December 1837, Ms.A.9.2.9 p. 95, BPL Antislavery Collection; Alvan Ward, Ashburnham, to Mrs. M. W. Chapman, 23 July 1840, Ms.A.9.2.13.106, BPL Antislavery Collection. In Silva W Jones, Ashburnham, to Miss [Ann W.] Weston, 15 December 1837, Ms.A.9.2.9 p. 102, BPL Antislavery Collection, is enclosed a "List of Articles" the Ashburnham people had made for the upcoming fair—"2 work boxes, 1 cravat, 6 night caps, 14 pair of stockings at 30 cen, 1 pair stockings at 50 cts, 1 pair of mittens, 4 "shop hats/ or rather Mechanical Hats", 1 bag of mustard, 1 bag of carraway, 2 baskets, 2 aprons, 2 thread boxes, 1 holder, a pr of hose, a spool of thread," forty-seven "table mats" at different prices, and "& some trifles."

¹⁰ Silva W. Jones to Miss Weston, 15 December 1837. "Brother Lovejoy" was Elijah P. Lovejoy, editor of the abolitionist *Alton Observer* in Illinois, who was killed by an antiabolitionist mob on 7 November 1837.

¹¹ Stearns, *History of Ashburnham*, 485.

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Whitmore's business appears to have been unaffected by his abolitionism, and family papers make clear that he traded with others of like mind. In 1842 George Sanderson Burrage, then of Leominster but a leading chair manufacturer in Ashburnham by the late 1840s, wrote to Whitmore about buying hemlock bark and what he perceived to be the cause of their mutual business difficulties. "We can sympathize with you in your losses for we have for the last six years lost eight or ten thousand dollars, and what makes it more aggravating is that we lost most of it by slaveholders," Burrage wrote. "It has gone to support the cursed institution of slavery. It is slavery that is now crushing all northern free labor. How long shall we have to bare the knee and kiss the toe of this southern despot? He will not be satisfied till we have surrendered the last right."¹² In the same year that Burrage wrote, the Congregational church in Ashburnham experienced a schism that may have been related to its unwillingness to take a position against slavery. Gilman Jones was part of the new Union Church of North Ashburnham, and from 1847 Enoch Whitmore was for many years clerk of the Proprietors of the Union Meeting House, apparently formed from the earlier Union Church.

Enoch Whitmore and several of his sons were also caught up in the sensational antislavery case of the Reverend Charles Turner Torrey in the first part of the 1840s. Torrey, born in Scituate, Massachusetts, had moved from Massachusetts to Washington, DC, about 1842. Between his arrival there and his arrest in Annapolis, Maryland, in June 1844, Torrey claimed to have helped between two hundred and four hundred enslaved people escape to the North. Torrey was desperately ill in a Baltimore jail when Flint Munroe Whitmore, Enoch's second son, moved to that city to work in the shirt factory and store of Oliver Fisher Winchester, whose cousins Charles and George Caleb Winchester were major Ashburnham manufacturers and land owners. Like his father, Flint Whitmore disdained slavery. "I knew that I was leaving a fond Mother, a kind Father and Brothers and Sisters and Friends if perchance I might have any," he wrote to his father shortly after settling in Baltimore, "and not only this, but knew that I was going from my own native soil, New England, the land where freedom reigns triumphantly, to a land where Aristocracy and Slavery reigns, and impartial liberty is not known. . . . When I behold the scores of poor oppressed and degraded Africans, both free and slaves, it seems unpleasant in the extreme."¹³ Shortly after his move, Flint tried unsuccessfully to visit Torrey in prison, and his father and brothers relied upon him for news of Torrey's condition. "Have you been to see poor Torrey?" his brother Arthur asked in an undated letter. "If not go if you can before his soul takes its departure." On 8 May 1846 Flint's oldest brother Lorenzo wrote, "Let me know if Poor Torrey yet lives, and among those demons of earth."

In early April 1846 Flint reported to his father that Torrey "was a little more comfortable, but no prospect that he would ever leave the prison alive. I should think that the most of people consider him no better than a robber and have no more feelings for him than for a dog." For his part, Enoch passed on to Flint what Massachusetts news he knew relating to Torrey, whose wife, Mary Ide Torrey, was then living in Medway, Massachusetts. "We learn by way of Mr.

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¹² G. S. Burrage, Leominster, to Col. E. Whitmore, 11 June 1842, private collection.

¹³ Flint M. Whitmore, Baltimore, to Enoch Whitmore, 21 February 1846, private collection.

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Ide brother of Mrs. Torrey who has been on to B. [Baltimore] to take leave, in behalf of his friends, of Mr. T. that it is not expected he will survive but a few days. O Slavery! thou has changed men to Demons.”¹⁴ On 9 May, a week after Enoch Whitmore wrote this letter to his son, Torrey died in jail at the age of forty-three. Flint wrote to his father that though the man’s death was “deplorable,” Torrey’s aggressive approach to abolitionism—he was one of the few known fugitive assistants to travel into the South and both urge and assist fugitive escapes—probably hurt the cause overall. “The general opinion, as near as I am able to judge, is that the Abolitionist would be glad to see the slaves cut their masters throats, and all such like proceedings; that they justify all of Mr. Torrey’s proceedings and others who have gone to slave states and helped slaves to escape, and as a proof of this they ask why the Abolitionist sympathised so deeply with Mr. Torrey. So it may be observed that such things have a tendency to injure the cause; and there was where Mr. T. erred,” Flint wrote.¹⁵ Whether Enoch Whitmore shared his son’s view cannot be determined from known evidence.

Assisting the Fugitive Josiah Thomas

Enoch Whitmore’s first documented act of fugitive assistance occurred just ten months after Torrey’s death. In May 1847 he wrote to Flint, who was still in Baltimore, “Our business is quite good have 14 hands beside ourselves in the Mill & 2 out doors not including my farmer—one of our out door hands is one of your Maryland ‘Gemman’ a runaway from the peculiar institution, who with his wife & 2 children lives in the old sheep-fold boarded [?]. The other is a ‘Paddy’ who with his wife & 2 children live in a shanty he has put up in the field on the East side of the road near the bridge.” This runaway Marylander was Josiah Thomas, whom the 1846-47 Boston Vigilance Committee had sent to Whitmore on 18 March. John White Browne, the committee’s secretary, made his first record about Thomas on 4 March:

Josiah Thomas (David Lewis) 25 years of age—wife & two children—one of them 3 the other one year old—his wife Elizabeth—all came from Queen Anne’s County, Md. Caroline Thompson, owner—wife free—came away in a buggy with wife & children, & his sister & her child—rode about 15 miles, then turned the horses head back, & let him run home—then found aid. Have been stopping about 8 months in same place with Evans. Evans came the day after me—have been at work tending masons, & farming.

On 18 March Browne wrote that Thomas “went with wife & children to Ashburnham, to live with Jones & Whitmore.” He further recorded that Gilman Jones had come to the committee’s Boston office on 26 April and “says Thomas doing well.”¹⁶ Evidence suggests that it was unusual for a fugitive to be sent to a manufacturing plant,

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¹⁴ Flint M. Whitmore, Baltimore, to Enoch Whitmore, 1 April 1846; Enoch Whitmore, Ashburnham, to Flint Whitmore, 2 May 1846; private collection.

¹⁵ Flint M. Whitmore, Baltimore, to Enoch Whitmore, 17 May 1846, private collection.

¹⁶ Irving H. Bartlett, “Abolitionists, Fugitives, and Imposters in Boston, 1846-1847,” *New England Quarterly* 65, 1 (March 1982): 102-3. Bartlett’s article contains a complete transcription of vigilance committee records.

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and it is therefore not surprising that Thomas was put to work outdoors, probably at lumbering, sawing, or general maintenance.

The "Evans" to whom Thomas referred in his account to Browne was Levin Evans, known in slavery as Elijah Conway, who had come to the vigilance committee's attention on the same day Thomas and his family had. They must have met in Chester County, Pennsylvania, and escaped further north together from that place. Browne's record of Evans states that he was "from lower part of Newcastle County Delaware—owner Anthony Higgins—wife & child (2 years old) with him. Higgins owned all. Thinks himself 23 years old—escaped by aid of friends to Pennsylvania, there about eight months, Schukill township, Chester County, his work there tending masons, mowing & cradling. Teamster & farmer. Left Penn. thinking himself not safe there." Browne sent Evans and his family to Alvan Ward in Ashburnham on 9 March, nine days before he directed the Thomases to Whitmore and Jones. About six weeks later Ward wrote to Browne to report that Evans was "dissatisfied," and three days afterward Evans himself came to Browne's Boston office "& complained that Ward had not paid him according to agreement." Three days after that, on 30 April 1847, Browne wrote Ward advising him to pay Evans "for a month & a half at \$8.00 a month." What then became of Evans is not known: under either name he does not appear in Massachusetts censuses between 1850 and 1865. A man of African descent named Levin Evans is found, however, in the federal census for the Baltimore Hundred settlement in Sussex County, Delaware, in 1870. His approximate birth date matches Browne's 1847 account, and his wife in 1870 was also a Delaware native. Evans may have moved back to his native state after the Civil War ended, and this Evans remained there at least through 1900.

Josiah Thomas, however, stayed in Ashburnham, and he kept the name he had assumed in the free states. By 1850 the Thomases were one of two black families in the town, where censuses show only one or two as Ashburnham residents between 1800 and this mid-century point. Thomas is shown as a thirty-year-old laborer; in his household were his wife Elizabeth, age thirty; their five-year-old son Samuel Benjamin Thomas, their son Josephus, four years old, and their one-year-old daughter Elizabeth. Only the infant Elizabeth was listed as having been born in Massachusetts, though her birth was not recorded in the state. The Thomases lived close to the Whitmores, on Ashby Road near Lake Winnekeag, but no longer on their property, and it is not clear whether Josiah Thomas was still working for Whitmore and Jones at that time. In 1852 and 1853 both Samuel Benjamin and Josephus attended Ashburnham's school number ten in the Lane Village section of the town, at both the 1852 summer session and the 1852-53 winter session.¹⁷

In 1855 the Thomas family comprised six of the eight people of color in Ashburnham, and the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 probably compelled them to state the birthplaces as Pennsylvania rather than Maryland. The 1850 census in Thomas's district was compiled on 19 September, only a day after President Millard Fillmore had signed the act into

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¹⁷ In the school's summer session, from 3 May to 28 July 1852. Benjamin (shown as seven years two months old) attended sixty of the term's sixty-six days and was "given a mark showing a need for improvement," while Joseph (five-and-a-half years old) attended fifty-five days and received an excellent mark in deportment. In the 15 November-17 February winter session, the boys did not attend for the first two and last four and a half weeks. Thanks to local historian Joseph F. Von Deck for this information; most of the details of the Thomases' lives in Ashburnham comes from his research.

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law. No doubt Thomas had not perceived how the act might have affected him, if he then knew of it at all; thus he saw no need to be anything but candid about his place of birth. Although no deed in Thomas's name is recorded until 1865, the 1855 tax list shows that he occupied and paid taxes on the forty-acre "Cushing lot," probably on Ashby Road.¹⁸ By 1857 he owned a cow, and he appears to have worked cutting timber and cultivating hay.¹⁹

The Thomas family is listed in the 1860 census and on the 1858 and 1861 tax lists, but by 1859 they were clearly struggling. In 1859 the town paid four dollars in poor relief to Thomas's wife, and she also spent fifty-six days in the almshouse; she was again there in 1863, the year she died of cancer at the age of forty-five. Five months after his wife died, Josiah Thomas enlisted in Company C of the Fifth Cavalry and served until the end of October 1865. During his service at least one of his children, thirteen-year-old Sarah, was on the town's dependency list.

For his Civil War service Josiah Thomas received a bounty of \$325,²⁰ money he probably put toward his purchase of a 1.5-acre lot with its buildings in early December 1865. According to local historian Joseph Von Deck, the house was located at the corner of Harris and Old Pierce Roads. Thomas paid five hundred dollars for the property and took out a mortgage of \$100 with its former owner. In 1867 he is listed as owning a two-acre home lot, a cow and a yearling, and a house valued at \$350. In 1871 he sold the property for the price for which he had purchased it, and he moved to Lake Road in North Ashburnham, where he apparently lived alone. Beginning in 1874 and through 1881 Arietta Thomas, who must have been Thomas's second wife, was in the almshouse with her children Charles (through 1878), Sarah, William (through 1878), and Martha; the boys were probably bound out. Only Martha remained at the almshouse after 1881, and she ran away from the place when she was thirteen, in 1886.

By 1878 Josiah Thomas no longer owned property, and he died on 31 March 1879 "while riding to his home in North Ashburnham over a winter road across 'Stearns' Meadow,'" local historian Stearns wrote. "His horse also perished in the cold and storm."²¹ He is buried on Ashburnham's Meeting House Hill. What ultimately became of Thomas's other children by his first wife is not known. In 1862 Josephus Thomas, then sixteen years old, appears to have left his father's household, as his father published notice in the Fitchburg *Sentinel* that he had released his son Josephus and would not be responsible for any of his debts and obligations. Josephus appears to have moved to Groton, Massachusetts, where he was worked processing ice and lived in the home of ice dealer Oliver Pierce. Two other "ice

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¹⁸ A Copy of the Valuation and Taxes of the Town of Ashburnham, for the Year 1855 (Fitchburg, MA: E. & J. F. D. Garfield, 1855), 23. Thanks again to Von Deck for this information.

¹⁹ In August 1857 Thomas sold two tons of English hay, which he had stored in Jonas Willard's barn, and five cords of softwood to Daniel Ellis Jr.; he also stored a ton of hay on Ohio Whitney's farm, all of which suggests he had no barn of his own. Town Records, Book of Mortgages, 2:168, cited in Joseph F. Von Deck, Ashburnham, to Martha Mayo, 28 November 2003.

²⁰ *Massachusetts Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines in the Civil War* (Norwood, MA: Norwood Press, 1931-35), 4:505; *Record of the Massachusetts Volunteers* (Boston: Wright and Potter, 1868-70), 1:772.

²¹ Stearns, *History of Ashburnham*, 548.

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workers" lived with Pierce, one was a man of color from New Hampshire and the other was an Irish immigrant. In 1910 Josephus was sixty-five years old and working as a laborer at odd jobs in Ayer, Massachusetts. Josiah's daughter Elizabeth (probably shown as Mary E. in town records), moved to Leominster in the fall of 1879 and then to Chelsea by 1884. She lived with a stepsister, Sarah, who was committed at some later point to the State Lunatic Hospital at Danvers. There is no record of Elizabeth's presence in Chelsea in either censuses or city directories. Of Samuel B. Thomas, the couple's oldest child, nothing has so far been discerned.

Whether Enoch Whitmore aided other fugitives is not yet known: his correspondence with his son, the chief source of information about the man, ends about 1850, shortly after Flint moved from Baltimore to Boston. He became a prominent local member of the Free Soil party, founded about 1847 in opposition to the extension of slavery in United States territories. He was chosen chairman of a central committee of the Ashburnham Free Soil League organized in the north part of Ashburnham; in 1849 Simeon Merritt of Ashburnham, explained in a letter to Whitmore that "we thought that by so doing we could go forward with work with more energy and spirit than we could if the head was down here."²² About a month after the Fugitive Slave Act passed, Whitmore, Gilman Jones, and others in Ashburnham spoke of it "in terms of severest condemnation"; at a meeting the next day, those assembled unanimously endorsed a statement about the act: "The fugitive slave bill!—inhuman—unchristian and abhorrent to the Almighty; it should be utterly set at naught by all who fear Him! We feel toward it an *abhorrence* equalled only by our *contempt* for the BASE TRAITORS who enacted it! We will leave no righteous means unapplied to smite it dishonored to the dust!"²³

The Whitmores in Business

The Whitmore and Jones woodenware mill burned again in 1850, and in the fall of that year the owners built a larger mill with a steam engine. But the Panic of 1857 appeared to break the enterprise. Gilman Jones sold his property to Charles and George C. Winchester and moved to Hubbard, Wisconsin, where the census shows him as a mechanic; by 1870 he was living in Allegan, Michigan, and manufacturing agricultural implements; and in 1880 he had returned to Wisconsin to live with his son Homer, an engineer. Whitmore asked his son Alfred, who was then the station agent at Ashburnham Junction, to return home to run the mill, but in March 1857 Alfred Whitmore was compelled to sell it, its yard, and its machinery to the Winchesters for \$2,000. The mill ceased to operate at some point after 1861, but it remained on its site until at least 1886. Today portions of the earthen dam and the mill's foundation stones are still visible where the Bluefield Brook enters Sunset Lake, a more recent man-made recreational resource. (The mill remains are not contiguous to the Enoch Whitmore House property and are not included in the nomination.)

In 1855 tax lists show Enoch Whitmore as owner of his 170-acre homestead, 130 acres of pasture land in three different tracts, and livestock. The next year, when he was sixty years old, he sold more than 190 acres of his land to his son Lorenzo, who had by then become a physician, and on the same day he deeded another sixty acres abutting this

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²² Simeon Merritt, Ashburnham, to Enoch Whitmore, 10 October 1849, private collection.

²³ *North Star*, 24 October 1850.

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one to his son Silas's wife Althea. In 1857 Enoch and his wife Clarissa turned the homestead, then mortgaged, over to Lorenzo as well.²⁴ In 1860 the former Jones and Whitmore mill was recorded as E. Whitmore's mill, and it produced only \$1,500 of match woods and employed just two people. Enoch Whitmore continued to work at the mill until 13 September 1860, when he died from "injuries received in his mill, a piece of wood flying from a saw and striking him."²⁵

By 1865 Lorenzo Locke Whitmore still owned the homestead and nearly two hundred acres of land, but he sold a tract of family land to the Winchesters in the same year. By 1880 his mother Clarissa and his unmarried sister Mary, who then seated chairs for a living, lived with Lorenzo's married sister Laura Kibling and her two sons. Enoch's daughter Clarissa worked as a household domestic in Fitchburg in the same year. By 1887 Clarissa and her daughter Laura had moved to Fitchburg, and by that time she had sold more pasture land to her son Lorenzo. In 1901, two years after Lorenzo Whitmore died, the Whitmores' other children sued to be included in a trust for the property that they claimed Lorenzo had established with his mother when she passed the homestead on to him. The court ruled that the estate be sold and its proceeds divided among the lawful heirs.²⁶ By then, Lorenzo's widow, Maria Sophia Whitmore, had died, and the property passed to her mother Lucy Baker and her sister Ada E. Balcom, with whom she lived until her death. In September 1902 the two passed the property on to Francis Streeter, one of Enoch and Clarissa Whitmore's daughters.²⁷ Frances sold the property about 1905 to John H. Daniels, who appears to have been renting it from at least early in 1899.²⁸ Daniels and a succession of later owners used the house as a summer home. In 1970 Martin T. Mulroy bought the property, and at his death in 1971 the house became the property of his widow Wendy, who married Francis Robert Feen in 1974.

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²⁴ Enoch Whitmore to Lorenzo L. Whitmore, 5 September 1856, Worcester County Registry of Deeds 571:446; Enoch Whitmore to Althea G. Whitmore, WCD 5 September 1856, 571:447; Enoch and Clarissa Whitmore to Lorenzo L. Whitmore, 17 March 1857, WCD 576:412.

²⁵ "Quarterly Obituary," *New England Historical Genealogical Register* 15 (January 1861): 90.

²⁶ Laura Kibling, Fitchburg, to Worcester County Registry of Deeds, 152:490; *Laura A. Kibling et als v. Percival Blodgett exr et al*, Worcester County Superior Court, June 1902, photocopy in private collection.

²⁷ Ada E. Balcom and Lucy Baker, Templeton, to Frances E. Streeter, 19 September 1902, WCD 177:449.

²⁸ That M. Sophia Whitmore was in Templeton, where she was raised, is clear from a letter she wrote to Daniels on 6 March 1899 (private collection). "Yours received containing Insurance Policies which no doubt are all right. As you insured my furniture &c it looks as though I ought to bear a part of the expense, and I am willing to do whatever is right. It is a lovely day. Such nice days as this I wish myself back in my own home with everything as it used to be. I know it is all right yet at times it seems too hard to bear. . . . I wish you would buy my horse. I'll drive her for Mrs. Daniels if I go over next summer, as I hope to be courageous enough to do."

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Architecture

The Enoch Whitmore House is a distinctive example of Federal-style architecture, particularly in Ashburnham where it was the centerpiece of one of the most highly valued properties in the town. The Whitmores' prominence is reflected in the scale and complexity of the complex of connected buildings comprising the residence. The two-story front section with its large windows, five-bay front façade with central entrance conveys a high status even with the characteristic plain appearance. The two main floor rooms were designed for public interaction with the more isolated easterly room designated the best room, or parlor, and the westerly room potentially used as a dining room. This reflected Enoch Whitmore's leadership role in the community, as he both held public office and was an officer in the local militia. He was politically active and likely hosted meetings at his house, including those involving his more radical endeavors as an abolitionist. Second-story bedchambers accommodated the family.

The nearly two-story kitchen ell attached to the rear of the main house provided a spacious domain for the housewife. The large workspace on the main floor connected with larders in the basement and storerooms and other domestic areas in the two attached wings further in the rear. Two small bedchambers on the second floor were where the Whitmore's laborers and servants were housed. (In 1850 the house contained five boarders—a boxmaker, two farm laborers, a carpenter and a spoolturner—in addition to the Whitmore's large family.) Typical of early 19th-century New England farmhouses, the architectural tradition of the center-chimney house can be discerned in the plan of the Whitmore House. With two principal rooms at the front of the plan and the kitchen at the rear, the traditional layout and room use of the New England farmhouse was preserved while deconstructing the center chimney mass and distributing it to the sides of the house so that a central passage could penetrate the house. In many cases, the chimneys were moved to the gable-end walls, but in the Whitmore House they are located in the rear walls of the rooms. This position has many precedents in the 18th-century architecture of New Hampshire, which is less than a mile away. So the house shows the distinctive characteristics of the local building practice in Ashburnham, and its design sources both in the past and the present.

More often than not, the series of connected buildings terminated with the barn. The Whitmore House is an exception to that norm, which is perhaps a factor of its higher status. The present barn on the property was built in 1848, based on a letter written by Lorenzo Whitmore to his brother, Flint, proclaiming it to be "the greatest thing in town."²⁹ It was a progressive barn with accommodation for milk cows in the basement where they were protected from the winters and could be efficiently maintained by dropping feed and bedding from a threshing floor and hay mows in the levels above. The new barn replaced an older and, presumably, much smaller barn located north of it. This barn may have been built by Enoch's father, Isaac, who managed the farm before him.

Both the house and barn have been re-sided with vinyl clapboard and re-roofed with modern materials (asphalt shingles and ribbed metal sheets, respectively). Doors and windows have been largely replaced, as well, the windows in the house being 12/12 energy-efficient replicas. Interior alterations have also occurred, but the overall form and proportions of the buildings have been preserved, as have their principal material elements (the sidings merely conceal authentic historic fabric). The setting of the house and barn also evokes the period of significance, although the property has greatly reduced in size and the farm is no longer in agricultural use. The approach to the house, lined

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²⁹ Whitmore Family Papers (Private collection).

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with stone walls constructed of boulders and aged sugar maple trees, contributes to the feeling and association of the nominated property.

Archaeological Significance

Since patterns of ancient Native American settlement in Ashburnham are poorly understood, any surviving sites could be significant. Ancient sites located on the nominated property can be important by adding information to our understanding of the role and importance of upland/interior sites along tributary streams of the Miller/Connecticut River drainage played in the local/regional Native American subsistence and settlement systems. Native sites in this area could be part of a large, possibly seasonal, settlement network of sites based along the Miller River, larger lakes in the region, the Connecticut River, or part of a specialized adaptation to local environments in the uplands and Worcester Plateau locale. Many subsistence and settlement theories indicate that prehistoric socio/political/economic boundaries are based along riverine basins. Although sites in this area are ultimately part of the Connecticut River drainage, the area is also in close proximity to drainage areas that are part of the Nashua/Merrimack River drainage that drains the eastern half of the town. Ancient Native American sites in this area may enable a test of theories relating to riverine adaptations and the importance of sites and settlement/subsistence patterns that are geographically close but in different drainages.

Historic archaeological resources described above may contribute important information related to 19th and early 20th century settlement, agriculture, and manufacturing in the rural town of Ashburnham. Information may also exist that contributes examples of the ways the farm and its inhabitants exhibited an expression of abolitionist sentiment in a rural place.

Additional historical research combined with archaeological survey, testing, and analysis may contribute important information related to the location of farmhouses, barns, outbuildings, and occupational-related features on the property, and their relationship to one another and the evolution of the farm. Documentary and archaeological research may determine how many farmhouses were located on the property and their relationship to one another. Historical and archaeological research may determine whether the original site of Enoch's grandfather's (Joseph Whitmore) house is located on the nominated property. The same research may also determine if Enoch's father Isaac built a new house or moved in with his father. The wood frame section of Enoch's home was reportedly reused from an earlier house built by Enoch's father Isaac.

Archaeological and architectural research may contribute the first physical evidence that demonstrates how many Whitmore homes are located on the nominated property, and pattern of reuse that may have existed among two and possibly three homes built by Enoch Whitmore, his father Isaac, and his grandfather Joseph. Archaeological and architectural research may contribute important structural and artifact evidence that portions of Enoch Whitmore's existing house were built by his father Isaac, or his grandfather Joseph. The same research may also contribute the first evidence that corroborates or refutes local tradition that Isaac's house was moved from the site.

Structural evidence from earlier Whitmore farmhouses, barns, outbuildings, and detailed analysis of the contents from occupational-related features may contribute important evidence related to the development of agriculture in north-

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central Massachusetts, and its relationship to manufacturing in the Whitmore family and in Ashburnham. Enoch Whitmore and his descendants were involved with both agriculture and woodenware manufacturing. By the second quarter of the 19th century, the Whitmore mills were located south of Whitmore House. Historical and archaeological research may contribute evidence that while most manufacturing was performed at the mill off the property, some manufacturing was also performed in the home as a type of cottage industry. Important evidence may exist that documents the relationship between farming and manufacturing to the Whitmore family, and the role potential late 18th and early 19th century cottage industries played in the growth of larger mill-type manufacturing interests that developed in the later 19th century.

Since the Whitmore House property type is characteristic of properties associated with persons active in the Underground Railroad, the focus of potential research is on the owners and inhabitants of the house, and only indirectly on fugitive slaves. No fugitives were known to inhabit the Whitmore House. If fugitives were secretly hidden at the Whitmore House, detailed analysis of the contents of occupational-related features may contribute evidence of their stay. The same analysis may also contribute important evidence related to inhabitants of the farm, their social and political history, and their expression of abolitionist sentiment in a rural place. Identification and accurate mapping of structural evidence from farm residences, barns, and outbuildings may reveal architectural types and building patterns typical of abolitionists and other communal/utopian communities of the period. Detailed analysis of the contents of occupational-related features may also reveal social, cultural, and economic characteristics of the farm's inhabitants involved in the social and political movements described above.

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(end)

Enoch Whitmore House
Name of Property

Worcester, MA
County, State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 19.4 acres

UTM References See continuation sheet.

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1. 19 256680 4730740
Zone Easting Northing

2. 19 256820 4730340
Zone Easting Northing

3. 19 256420 4730440
Zone Easting Northing

4. 19 256400 4730570
Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kathryn Grover and Neil Larson, with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, MHC

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date November 2007

street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone 617-727-8470

city or town Boston state MA zip code 02125

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Robert & Wendy Feen

street & number 12 Daniels Lane telephone 978-829-0099

city or town Ashburnham state MA zip code 01430

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Enoch Whitmore House
Ashburnham (Worcester), MA

Section number 10 Page 1

UTM References

Ashburnham Mass. — N.H. Quadrangle
Scale 1:25,000
(continued)

	<i>Zone</i>	<i>Easting</i>	<i>Northing</i>
5	19	256480	4730730

Verbal Boundary Description

See attached Town of Ashburnham Assessor Map #6. The nominated property consists of Lots #5 (on which the barn is located) and #7 (which contains the house). The entrance road divides the two lots and is flanked by stone walls, mature maple trees, and meadows in both lots.

Boundary Justification

The boundary was drawn to contain what is left of the Whitmore property associated with the house.

(end)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Enoch Whitmore House
Ashburnham (Worcester), MA

Section number photos Page 1

PHOTOGRAPHS

All photographs by Neil Larson, 2006.

Film negatives with owner

Digital images scanned from negatives at Massachusetts Historical Commission

List of Photographs

PHOTO 1: Exterior from southwest

PHOTO 2: Exterior from northwest

PHOTO 3: Exterior from southeast

PHOTO 4: Exterior from northeast

PHOTO 5: Interior, first floor, entry & passage

PHOTO 6: Interior, first floor, southwest room

PHOTO 7: Interior, second floor, southeast chamber

PHOTO 8: Barn from northeast

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Whitmore, Enoch, House

MULTIPLE NAME: Underground Railroad in Massachusetts MPS

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Worcester

DATE RECEIVED: 11/26/07 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 12/17/07
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 1/01/08 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/09/08
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 07001362

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 1.9.08 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the
National Register

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



MA - Ashburnham (Worcester County) - Whitmore l. tif

Enoch Whitmore House
Ashburnham, Worcester Co., MA

Photo 1: Exterior from southwest



MA - Ashburnham (Worcester County) - Whitmore 2. tif

Enoch Whitmore House

Ashburnham, Worcester Co., MA

PHOTO 2: Exterior from northwest



MA - Ashburnham (Worcester County) - Whitmore 3. tif

Enoch Whitmore House
Ashburnham, Worcester Co., MA

PHOTO 3: Exterior from southeast



MA - Ashburnham (Worcester County) - Whitmore 4.tif

Enoch Whitmore House

Ashburnham, Worcester Co., MA

PHOTO 4: Exterior from northeast



MA - Ashburnham (Worcester County) - Whitmore S. H.

Enoch Whitmore House

Ashburnham, Worcester Co., MA

PHOTO 5: Interior, first floor entry & passage



MA - Ashburnham (Worcester County) - Whitmore b..tif

Enoch Whitmore House

Ashburnham, Worcester Co., MA

PHOTO 6: Interior, first floor, southwest room



MA - Ashburnham (Worcester County) - Whitmore 7..tif

Enoch Whitmore House

Ashburnham, Worcester Co., MA

Photo 7: Interior, second floor, southeast chamber



MA - Ashburnham (Worcester County) - Whitmore 8. tif

Enoch Whitmore House

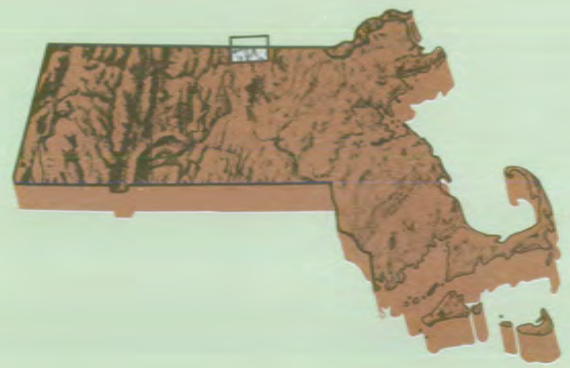
Ashburnham, Worcester Co., MA

PHOTO 8: Barn from northeast



Ashburnham MASS.-N. H.

1:25 000-scale metric
topographic map



- 7.5 X 15 MINUTE QUADRANGLE
SHOWING
- Contours and elevations in meters
 - Highways, roads and other manmade structures
 - Water features
 - Woodland areas
 - Geographic names



Produced by the United States Geological Survey in cooperation with Massachusetts Department of Public Works
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Commonwealth of Massachusetts agencies
Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1960-61. Field checked 1965. Map edited 1968
Supersedes Ashburnham and Ashby 1:25,000-scale maps dated 1965
Projection and 1000-meter grid, zone 19
Universal Transverse Mercator
10,000-foot grid ticks; Massachusetts coordinate system, mainland zone, and New Hampshire coordinate system 1927 North American Datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983, move the projection lines 5 meters south and 39 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

CONTOUR INTERVAL 3 METERS
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
CONTROL ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER
OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.5 METER

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

CONVERSION TABLE		DECLINATION DIAGRAM	ADJOINING MAPS			
Meters	Feet		1	2	3	4
1	3.2808		1	A	B	5
2	6.5617		4			8
3	9.8425					
4	13.1234					
5	16.4043					
6	19.6852					
7	22.9660					
8	26.2469					
9	29.5278					
10	32.8084					
To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808		UTM grid convergence (00) and 1980 magnetic declination (M0) at center of map		1 Monmouth 2A Pennington South 3 Greenville (7.5) 4 Winchester 5 Ashburnham 6 Ashby 7 Fitchburg 8 Ayer		
To convert feet to meters multiply by 0.3048		Diagram is approximate				

ISBN 0-607-23472-5
9 780607 234725

Topographic Map Symbols

- Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Unimproved road, trail
Route marker: Interstate, U. S. State
Railroad: standard gauge, narrow gauge
Bridge: drawbridge
Footbridge, overpass, underpass
Build-up area: only selected landmark buildings shown
House: barn; church; school; large structure
Boundary:
National, with monument
State
County, parish
Civil township, precinct, district
Incorporated city, village, town
National or State reservation; small park
Land grant with monument; land section corner
U. S. public lands survey: range, township; section
Range, township; section line: location approximate
Fence or field line
Power transmission line, bare
Dam, dam with lock
Cemetery: grave
Campground; picnic area; U. S. location monument
Windmill; water well; spring
Mine shaft; prospect; adit or ore
Control: horizontal station; vertical station; spot elevation
Contours: index; intermediate; supplementary; depression
Distorted surface: strip mine; lava; sand
Bathymetric contours: index; intermediate
Perennial lake and stream; intermittent lake and stream
Rapids, large and small; falls, large and small
Swamp; marsh
Submerged marsh; land subject to controlled inundation
Woodland; scattered trees
Scrub; mangrove
Orchard; vineyard

A pamphlet describing topographic maps is available on request

FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

November 19, 2007 William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Mr. J. Paul Loether, Chief
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW, 8th floor
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

Enoch Whitmore House, Ashburnham (Worcester), MA
Underground Railroad in Massachusetts MPS

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. The owners of the property were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30 to 45 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betsy Friedberg".

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Kathryn Grover, Neil Larson, consultants
Robert & Wendy Feen
Christina Sargent, Ashburnham Historical Commission
Mark Carlisle, Chair, Board of Selectmen
John MacMillan, Planning Board