

WILLIAM THOMPSON HOUSE
45 Central Street
Franklin
Merrimack County
New Hampshire

HABS No. NH-223

HABS
NH
7-FRANK,
5-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
Northeast Region
U.S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
WILLIAM THOMPSON HOUSE

HABS
NH
7-FRANK,
5-

HABS NO. NH-223

LOCATION: 45 Central Street, Franklin, Merrimack County, New Hampshire.

USGS Franklin, New Hampshire Quadrangle,
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:
19.285010.4813060

PRESENT OWNER: State of New Hampshire

PRESENT USE: Vacant

SIGNIFICANCE: Built circa 1875, the Thompson house is a contributing element to the West Franklin historic district. The house-to-carriage house connected plan was a distinctive feature of domestic building in New England towns during the nineteenth century.

I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date of Erection: The house was constructed by William F. Thompson circa 1875, subsequent to his purchase of the lot from James Taylor.

2. Architect: unknown.

3. Original and Subsequent Owners: References are to deeds and other documents in the office of the Registry of Deeds and Registry of Probate, Merrimack County Administration Building, Concord, New Hampshire.

1871 Deed, 19 July 1871, Book 209, p. 149. James A. and Mary J. Clark to James A. Taylor.

1875 Deed, 5 May 1875, Book 225, p. 160. James Taylor to William F. Thompson.

1890 Deed, 13 May 1890, Book 290, p. 285. William F. Thompson to Hannah J. Rohe.

1898 Deed, 25 June 1898, Book 328, p. 123. Hannah J. Rohe to Charles H. Carpenter.

1910 Deed, 8 January 1910, Book 390, p. 117. Charles H. Carpenter to J. Sarah Barney.

1948 Deed, 30 June 1948, Book 649, p. 396. J. Sarah Barney to Richard Davis.

1977 Will, 20 September 1977, Probate Record #77-450. Richard Davis to Brenda Edwin, Carol Smode and Judith Bannon.

1979 Quitclaim, 12 June 1979, Book 1249, p. 989. Brenda Edwin, Carol Smode and Judith Bannon to Judith Bannon.

1979 Deed, 19 November 1979, Book 1361, p. 987. Judith Bannon to John S. and Evelyn G. Clement.

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: unknown.

5. Original plans and construction: No documentary information on the original appearance of the house has been located.

6. Alterations and additions: Physical evidence shows that the hyphen connecting the house and carriage barn is not original to the building design. The hyphen appears to have originated as a one story ell attached to the southeast corner of the house but not connected to the carriage barn. At a later date the ell was expanded and the second story porch added, thereby connecting the house to the carriage barn.

B. Historical Context

The town of Franklin was incorporated in December 1828 from adjoining portions of four towns (Salisbury, Andover, Sanbornton and Northfield), largely at the behest of those wanting to exploit more fully the manufacturing potential present along the lower Pemigewasset and Winnepesaukee rivers and tributaries thereto (Hurd 1885:310-311).

At the time of incorporation, the principal village then in existence was located on the west bank of the Pemigewasset. This small community had risen around the activities of Ebenezer Eastman, who after coming to this area from Concord in 1797 established a dam and sawmill on Chance Pond Brook, opened a tavern, and commissioned construction of a toll bridge across the Pemigewasset on the road to Sanbornton and Northfield in 1802 (Hurd 1885:310; Nadeau 1978: 8). At the time, the village was part of the town of Salisbury, and was called variously Pemigewasset or "East Village", the latter due to its location within that town (Farmer & Moore 1823:232). In 1824, four years before the creation of the town of Franklin, the village of Pemigewasset boasted a meetinghouse, two stores, a tavern, post office, tannery, several cooper shops and a blacksmith shop. The village's industrial activity was concentrated primarily along Chance Pond brook, which flowed from the "great pond in Andover" (Webster Lake) southeast to the Pemigewasset a short distance above what is now Webster Street. Along the brook were, in 1824, three sawmills, a grist mill, and a blacksmith shop "with trip-hammers" as well as one unspecified "manufacturing establishment" (McClintock 1880:133).

The major industrial development of Franklin ultimately centered on an area to the east, known as Franklin Falls, on the Winnepesaukee, bringing with it a concentration of commercial and residential activity. However, the village on the Pemigewasset, also known as "West Village" and Franklin, remained a distinct and viable community through the 19th century. Not only did it have its own, nearby mill privileges, but also the Boston & Maine railroad, which extended its line north to the village in 1846; in addition, due to its location at a major river crossing, it was able to reap economic benefits from passing travelers. In 1855, the community called Franklin still remained

WILLIAM THOMPSON HOUSE
HABS NO. NH-223 (PAGE 4)

the town's "principal village", with two hotels, seven stores, two meetinghouses (Congregationalist and Christian Baptist), a fire house, and an academy (McClintock 1880:133). Its industrial base, as of 1858, included a tannery, forge, foundry, grist mill and wool carding mill (Walling 1858).

By 1880, fourteen firms were listed with premises along Chance Pond Brook, including a sawmill, grist mill, iron foundry, brickmaker, carriage manufacturer, knitting machine factory, needle factory, and wool dyer (McClintock 1880: 137-138). Although the village never boasted the rows of attached brick commercial buildings which were built along Central Street in Franklin Falls, it did have several detached "blocks" from which local merchants purveyed goods and services, such as the brick Pike's Block, Messer's Block, and the Sturtevant Block (Sanborn 1884; Hurd 1892). From such premises, as well as from small building containing both shop areas and residences, the merchants of Franklin village offered such items as boots and shoes, harness and wagon robes, groceries and "India goods", hardware, furniture, and the all-encompassing "general merchandise" (McClintock 1880:140).

As Franklin Falls became more heavily industrialized, and urbanized in the later 19th century, Franklin retained its village character and informal, linear plan along Main Street. Manufacturing tended to cluster in its traditional location along Chance Pond Brook toward the north end of the village, and the south end was primarily residential; between and within these areas, however, the mingling of function (housing, religion, commerce, public services) persisted, although most of the commercial activity was oriented around the west end of the bridge and north to Webster Street (Sanborn 1884, 1892).

Franklin was incorporated as a city in 1894; this change in municipal status was reflected in the village primarily by its designation as "West Franklin". In the 20th century, with the rest of the city, West Franklin experienced industrial and population decline as manufacturers closed or relocated their operations elsewhere. In April 1931, the old covered bridge across the Pemigewasset, known as the Republican bridge and built in 1839 by Boston John Clark to replace the earlier structure, was dismantled, its timber removed by the city for other uses, and the stone of its piers laid along the riverbanks as riprap. The new bridge, erected by the Eastern States Bridge Company of York, PA and Concord, was named the Daniel Webster bridge by vote of the city council (Franklin Journal Transcript, 16 April 1931, 30 April 1931; City of Franklin, 1930).

The Thompson house lot was one of three parcels subdivided from the Clark Homestead parcel by James Taylor after his purchase of the property in 1871. Taylor sold the lot to William Thompson, a carpenter, in 1875 (Supplement to The Trumpeter 1978:12). Thompson resided there until 1890 when the property was sold to Hannah Rohe. Ms. Rohe sold the house in 1898 to Charles Carpenter, proprietor of the

"Hourly," a horse-drawn taxi service that transferred passengers between Franklin's two railroad depots (Shepard 1957:548).

In 1910 Carpenter sold the house to Dr. J. Sarah Barney. Dr. Barney had moved to Franklin in 1897 as an assistant to Dr. Charles W. Adams after receiving her M.D. from Boston University in 1895 and completing an internship at the Memorial Hospital for Women and Children in Brooklyn, New York. She opened her own practice on Main Street in 1898 and later moved the office into her dwelling at 45 Central Street. Dr. Barney was an active member of the Franklin Women's Suffrage Club, becoming president in 1906, and was among the first staff members appointed at the Franklin Hospital in 1928 (Shepard 1957:563).

Dr. Barney sold the property in 1948 to Richard Davis. Davis willed the property to his three daughters in 1977. They retained ownership of the property until 1979 when the house was sold to John and Evelyn Clement. The property was acquired by the State of New Hampshire in 1992.

II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

a. General Statement

1. Architectural character: The Thompson House is a free-standing dwelling exhibiting vernacular characteristics of the Greek Revival and Italianate styles, including cornice returns at the gable ends and a bracketed hood sheltering the entrance stoop.

2. Condition of fabric: The house is in good condition and appears to have been well-maintained.

B. Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions: A rear, two-story ell joins the main block of the house to the carriage barn, creating a traditional, New England connected farmhouse plan. The main block is three bays by five bays and 2 1/2 stories in height. It measures approximately 25 feet by 38 feet. The two story ell, measuring approximately 25 feet by 20 feet, is attached to the rear of the house, and behind the ell is the two story carriage barn, 23 feet by 26 feet. A small addition, measuring 6 feet by 3 feet, emerging from the rear of the ell, contains a two-seat outhouse.

2. Foundations: The house and carriage barn rest on a foundation of granite rubble and brick, faced on the north (facade) and west elevations with ashlar-cut, granite blocks. There is a full basement beneath the main block of the house, and a partial, finished, basement beneath the carriage barn.

3. Walls: The exterior walls are sheathed with narrow clapboards.

4. Structural system: The Thompson house is framed with circular sawn, dimensional lumber. Structural elements were not visible in the house, but the carriage barn is heavy-timber framed with sawed members and pegged mortise and tenon joinery.

5. Porches, stoops, etc.: The front entrance is sheltered by an Italianate portico with arched, open sides. The flat roof is supported on posts and pilasters with classical capitals and recessed panels. A plain, modern, concrete stoop marks the side entrance to the house. To the south of the stoop is a block of granite that marks an earlier entrance to the ell. The second story of the hyphen is a screened porch. It is accessed from either the second story, rear hall of the house or the second story of the carriage barn.

6. Chimneys: Two brick chimneys with stepped tops are located on the ridge of the main block of the house, positioned toward the front and rear ends of the block. The northernmost chimney is topped with an iron cap.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: The main entrance is located in the eastern bay of the facade. The entry is filled by a wooden door with paired arched glass panes above paired recessed panels. A row of dentils is located above the doorway. A side entrance is located toward the rear of the west elevation of the main block. The wooden side door varies from the front door by having rectangular instead of arched panes of glass. This door is also protected by an aluminum storm door. The glass panes in both doors appear to be a modern alteration, replacing original wooden panels. Physical evidence indicates that the side entrance to the dwelling was originally one bay further to the south of its present location. This would have entered directly into the ell rather than into the main block of the house. It is unknown when the original doorway was removed or when the present one was added.

b. Windows: The three window openings in the second floor of the main block and those along the side walls are regularly spaced. The openings are filled with 2/2 double hung sash protected by aluminum exterior storm windows. The windows are set in plain surrounds with projecting ledge lintels, those in the upper story windows set close to the frieze on the side walls.

A semi-hexagonal, projecting bay window occupies the western half of the facade at the first story level. Two windows fill the front of the bay and one is located in each of the sides. These are long, rectangular 1/1 sash. Small modillion blocks are located

below the eave of the flat roof of the bay, and recessed panels are found below the sash.

8. Roof

- a. Shape: The house has a gable roof covered with asphalt shingles.
- b. Cornice, eaves: A plain, unmolded frieze runs the length of the main block below boxed eaves. It is terminated at each corner by cornerboards with Doric capitals and by cornice returns in the gable ends.
- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: None of these features are present.

C. Description of Interior

1. Floor plans: See floor plans for existing room arrangement. The house was constructed with a side-hall plan. Few alterations have been made to the original arrangement of the rooms. A small section of the dining room behind the stairs was partitioned off with folding doors to form an office. The house appears to have been built with a smaller, one-story ell that was not connected to the carriage barn. At a later date the ell was expanded and the second story porch was added. After the expansion of the ell, two bedrooms and a bathroom were constructed in that space on the first floor. The new rooms are identifiable by flat plank door surrounds and clear glass door knobs. The slight alterations that were made to the second story floor plan are identifiable by these same features, suggesting that the changes were made during roughly the same era.

2. Stairways: See floor plan for exact position of the stairs. The main staircase is a straight run from the entrance hall to the second floor. It has a late-Victorian newel post with applied medallions and a turned balustrade. The former owner, Mr. Clement, reported that the house originally had a back staircase for the use of servants. Evidence of this was found in the rear room on the second floor, where the opening had been patched into the floor boards. No information is available on the appearance of the back stairs.

3. Flooring: Variable width (6-11") board floors remain intact through most of the second floor. The floors in the front hall, living room, dining room, and office have narrow (2 1/2") oak parquet. The remaining floor area is covered with modern linoleum and carpeting.

4. **Wall and Ceiling Finish:** The walls are finished with smooth plaster over sawn lathe. Many of the rooms have been wallpapered. The ceilings are also plaster, although some have been covered with pressboard panels or acoustical tile.

5. **Openings:**

a. **Doors and Doorways:** The original doorways are framed with slightly peaked surrounds and filled with four-panel, wooden doors with brown porcelain knobs set in brass escutcheon plates, standard stock items of the late-nineteenth century. The office has a similar doorway and doors, suggesting that it was an original feature of the dwelling. Later doorways are identifiable by flat plank surrounds, and two-panel wooden doors with clear glass knobs. These later doors are clustered at the rear of the house and were probably added early in the twentieth century.

b. **Windows:** Window treatment mirrors that of doorways throughout the house. The original windows were framed in slightly peaked, molded surrounds, similar to the doorways. These surrounds remain intact throughout most of the house. The original windows have cast brass latches with small porcelain knobs, standard stock items during the late-nineteenth century. Windows added at a later date, such as those in the rear ell, are set in flat plank surrounds.

6. **Decorative Features and Trim:** Many decorative elements are found throughout the house. They date to at least two different stylistic periods and reflect the tastes of multiple owners. The earliest features, such as the door handles and window latches, appear to be original to the design of the house. These, as described above, are cast brass with floral designs and were standard stock items in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

The original newel and balustrade of the main stair and the fireplace mantel appear to have been replaced around the turn of the century. The existing elements are very heavy, late-Victorian in character and seem somewhat out of place in the light, airy Greek Revival/Italianate house. The newel is a square, walnut post topped with a shallow cup, perhaps for holding a plant. The chamfered corners have acorn pendants at the top and bottom of the chamfering, and leaf and lion's head medallions are applied to the flat sides. The turned balusters are strung with chunky blocks. The fireplace mantel is constructed of walnut-colored glazed brick. Its very heavy, ornamental appearance is late-Victorian in character, suggesting that it was added around the same time as the newel. The mantel has a shelf cut down from the top. It is adorned with bands of icanthus leaves and small, bead-like designs, and column capitals are found at the top corners of the fireplace opening. The dark, heavy, masculine character of both elements suggest the taste of a male owner, probably

Charles Carpenter who purchased the dwelling 1898 from Hannah Rohe and sold it in 1910 to Dr. Sarah Barney.

7. Mechanical Equipment:

a. Heating: Cast iron floor grates are present in most rooms of the house. Baseboard heating elements are found in some rooms as well. A small iron door at the base of one chimney in the basement reads "Miller Iron Co./Prov./RI".

b. Lighting: All rooms have fixtures hanging from the center of the ceiling. No original fixtures are extant. The white glass shade with an art deco motif in the kitchen dates to the 1930s.

c. Plumbing: The fixtures in the first floor bathroom have a streamlined design, dating to the ca. 1940s. The remaining plumbing fixtures are modern.

D. Site

1. General setting and orientation: The Thompson House is located on the south side of Central Street in the City of Franklin. This portion of Central Street is lined with frame dwellings, many of which were constructed during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The Federal period, Clark Homestead dwelling is located to the east as is the Shingle Style Sulloway House.

2. Landscape design: No formal landscaping is evident at the Thompson House with the exception of a large mulberry tree planted in the small front yard. A concrete driveway runs along the west side of the house terminating at the carriage barn. The land behind the house drops sharply to the bank of the Pemigewasset River.

3. Outbuildings: A two story carriage barn is attached to the rear of the ell. The carriage barn, built in to the side of the hill, rests on a foundation of brick and rubble stone. The cornice and eaves of the clapboarded building are treated in the same manner as those of the house, with plain frieze panels below boxed eaves running the length of the side and terminated by cornerboards with Doric capitals and cornice returns. The main entrance to the carriage barn, located in the north facing facade, is a plank, sliding door with a large iron handle. The plank hay door, located directly above the sliding door, has iron strap hinges. Regularly spaced 6/6 double-hung windows along the sides at the first and second story levels illuminate the interior.

The interior of the carriage barn is divided into four levels. At the rear, slightly below grade from the top of the hill, is a room that may originally have served a storage function. The front (south) wall of the room has a bank of modern windows. Below

the level of the windows the wall is brick. The rear wall of the room is granite rubblestone. The same heavy timber framing seen throughout the rest of the building is present in this room. The room is entered from the outside through a tongue-in-groove door and a plank door covered with chicken wire. Both the doorway and the windows have flat plank surrounds.

The main floor of the carriage barn, entered from the driveway, appears unaltered. In the rear (south) half are three stalls, probably for horses, with remains of plank feed troughs at the head of each stall. Immediately in front of the stalls is a trap door cut in the floor to facilitate cleaning. Beside the stalls, at the southwest corner, is a larger space for a carriage or wagon. An open plank staircase at the front of this floor leads up to the second floor.

The second floor is reached either via the staircase or from the second story porch in the hyphen. The only division of the large, open space occurs vertically. A mezzanine forms a loft space in the rear half of the second story.

III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Courier Steam Press

1894 City of Franklin, New Hampshire, Directory. Courier Steam Press, Haverhill, New Hampshire.

Farmer, John and Jacob B. Moore

1823 Gazetteer of the State of New Hampshire. Jacob B. Moore, Concord, NH.

Franklin, City of

1930 City of Franklin Annual Report.

Franklin Journal-Transcript

1930-31 Issues for 6 November 1930, 26 March 1931, 16 April 1931, 30 April 1931.

Goss, Irving V. (comp.)

1902 Business Directory of the City of Franklin. Towne & Robie, [n.l.].

Hurd, D. Hamilton (ed.)

1885 History of Merrimack and Belknap Counties, New Hampshire. Lewis & Co., Philadelphia.

Hurd, D.H. & Co.

1892 Town and City Atlas of the State of New Hampshire. D.H. Hurd & Co., Boston.

Manning, H.A., Co.

- 1932 Manning's Franklin, Tilton-Northfield, Belmont, Boscawen, Canterbury (NH) Directory. H.A. Manning Co., Springfield, Massachusetts.
- 1937 Manning's Franklin, Tilton-Northfield, Belmont, Boscawen, Canterbury (NH) Directory. H.A. Manning Co., Springfield, Massachusetts.
- 1939 Manning's Franklin, Tilton-Northfield, Belmont, Boscawen, Canterbury (NH) Directory. H.A. Manning Co., Springfield, Massachusetts.

Manning, H.A., Co.

- 1942 Manning's Franklin, Tilton-Northfield, Belmont, Boscawen, Canterbury (NH) Directory. H.A. Manning Co., Springfield, Massachusetts.
- 1947 Manning's Franklin, Tilton-Northfield, Belmont, Boscawen, Canterbury (NH) Directory. H.A. Manning Co., Springfield, Massachusetts.

McClintock, John

- 1880 "Franklin, New Hampshire", Granite Monthly 3 (January), pp. 132-143.

Nadeau, Andrew N.

- 1978 History of the Franklin Fire Department. Privately printed.

Price Lee & Co.

- 1874 Directory of Franklin, New Hampshire. Price Lee & Co., New Haven, Connecticut.

Roscoe E. Collins Pub.

- 1881 Directory of Franklin and Franklin Falls, New Hampshire. Roscoe E. Collins Pub., Franklin Falls, New Hampshire.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Co.

- 1884 Fire Insurance Map of Franklin, New Hampshire. Sanborn Insurance Co., New York.

- 1892 Fire Insurance Map of Franklin, New Hampshire. Sanborn Insurance Co., New York.

1929 Corrected

- to 1954 Fire Insurance Map of Franklin, New Hampshire. Sanborn Insurance Co., New York.

Shaw, Will E.

1888 Franklin & Tilton Directory. Vol. 1. Will E. Shaw, Haverhill, NH.

1891 Franklin Citizens' Directory. Vol. 2. Will E. Shaw, Haverhill, NH.

Shephard, Alice M.

1957 "History of Franklin, New Hampshire." unpublished manuscript, on file at State Historical Society Library, Concord, New Hampshire.

Towne & Robie

1895 Souvenir Directory of the City of Franklin. Towne & Robie, Franklin Falls, NH.

Union Publishing Co.

1912 City of Franklin, New Hampshire, Directory. Union Publishing Co., Boston.

1914 City of Franklin, New Hampshire, Directory. Union Publishing Co., Boston.

1917 City of Franklin, New Hampshire, Directory. Union Publishing Co., Boston.

1926 Lothrop's City of Franklin, New Hampshire Directory. Union Publishing Co., Boston.

1929 Lothrop's City of Franklin, New Hampshire Directory. Union Publishing Co., Boston.

Walling, Henry

1858 Map of Merrimack County, New Hampshire. Smith & Peavey, New York.

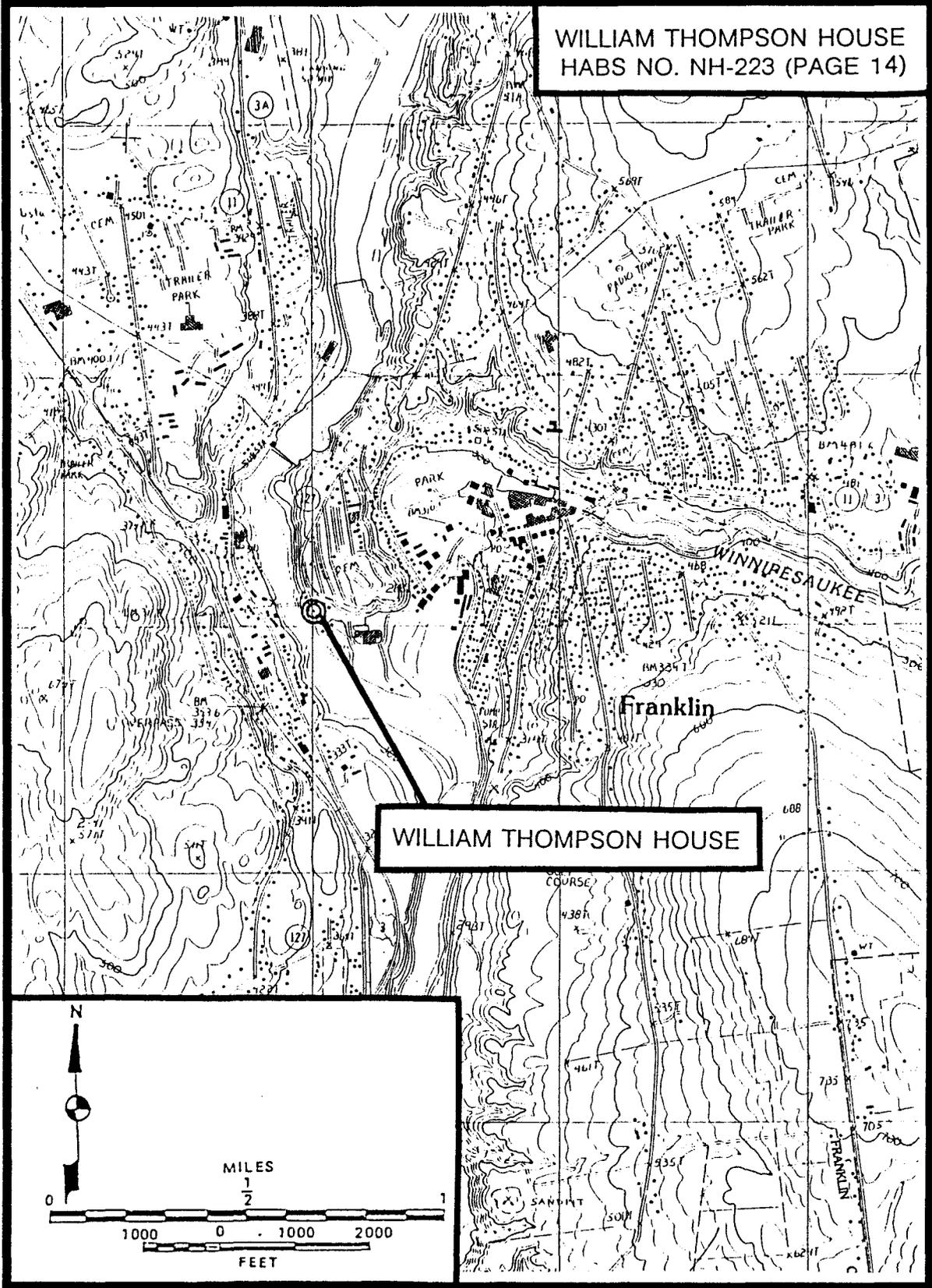
IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The William Thompson House was recorded October, 1991, and June, 1992, by the Cultural Resource Group of Louis Berger & Associates, Inc., East Orange, New Jersey, for the New Hampshire Department of Transportation, Concord, New Hampshire. The documentation was undertaken pursuant to a Memorandum of Agreement between the Federal Highway Administration, the New Hampshire Department of Transportation, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. The project for which the MOA has been prepared is the replacement of the Daniel Webster Bridge over the Pemigewasset River and redesign at the intersection of Central Street with

WILLIAM THOMPSON HOUSE
HABS NO. NH-223 (PAGE 13)

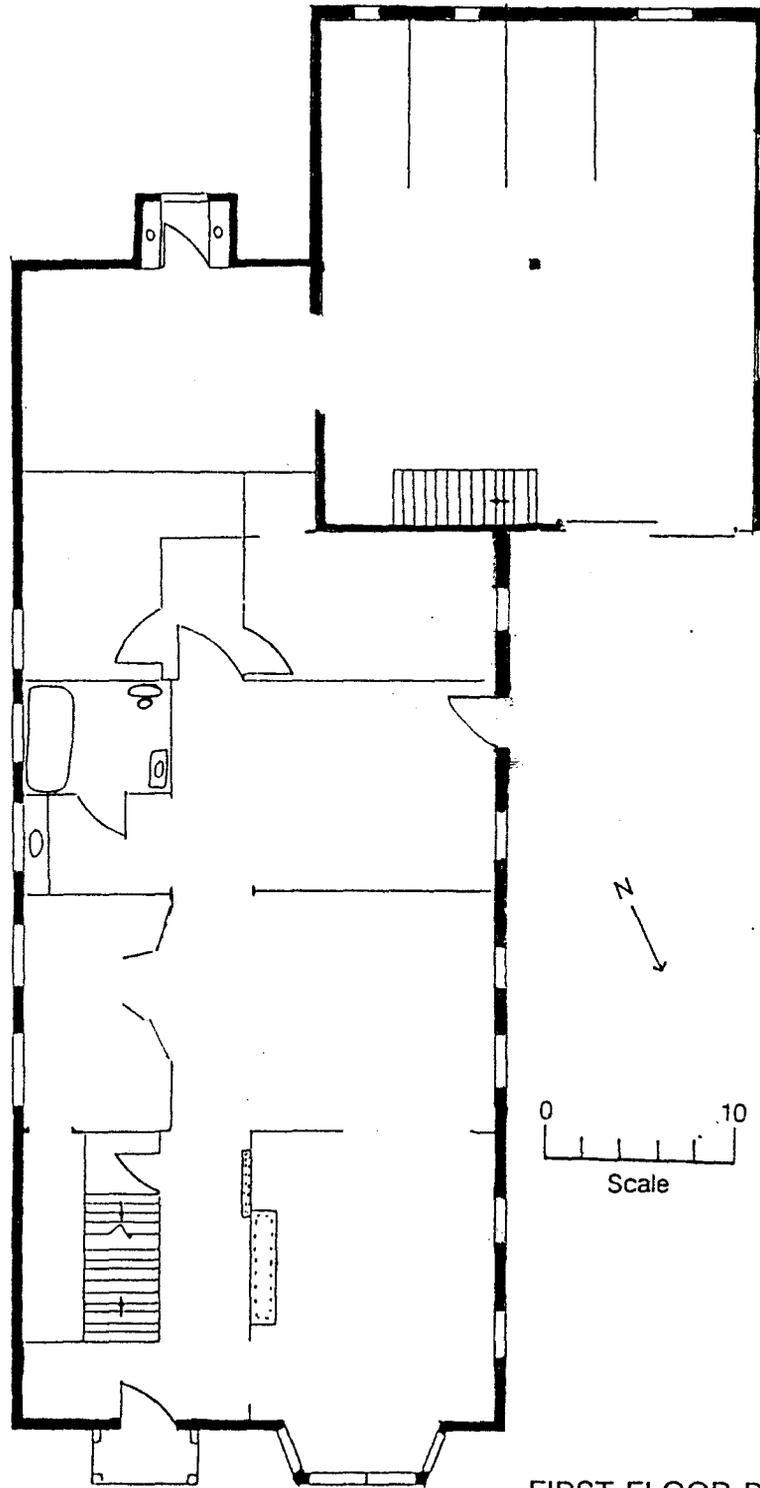
Main Street (U.S. Route 3). The project team included Martha H. Bowers, Project Coordinator; Elizabeth Rosin, Architectural Historian; and Rob Tucher, Photographer.

WILLIAM THOMPSON HOUSE
HABS NO. NH-223 (PAGE 14)

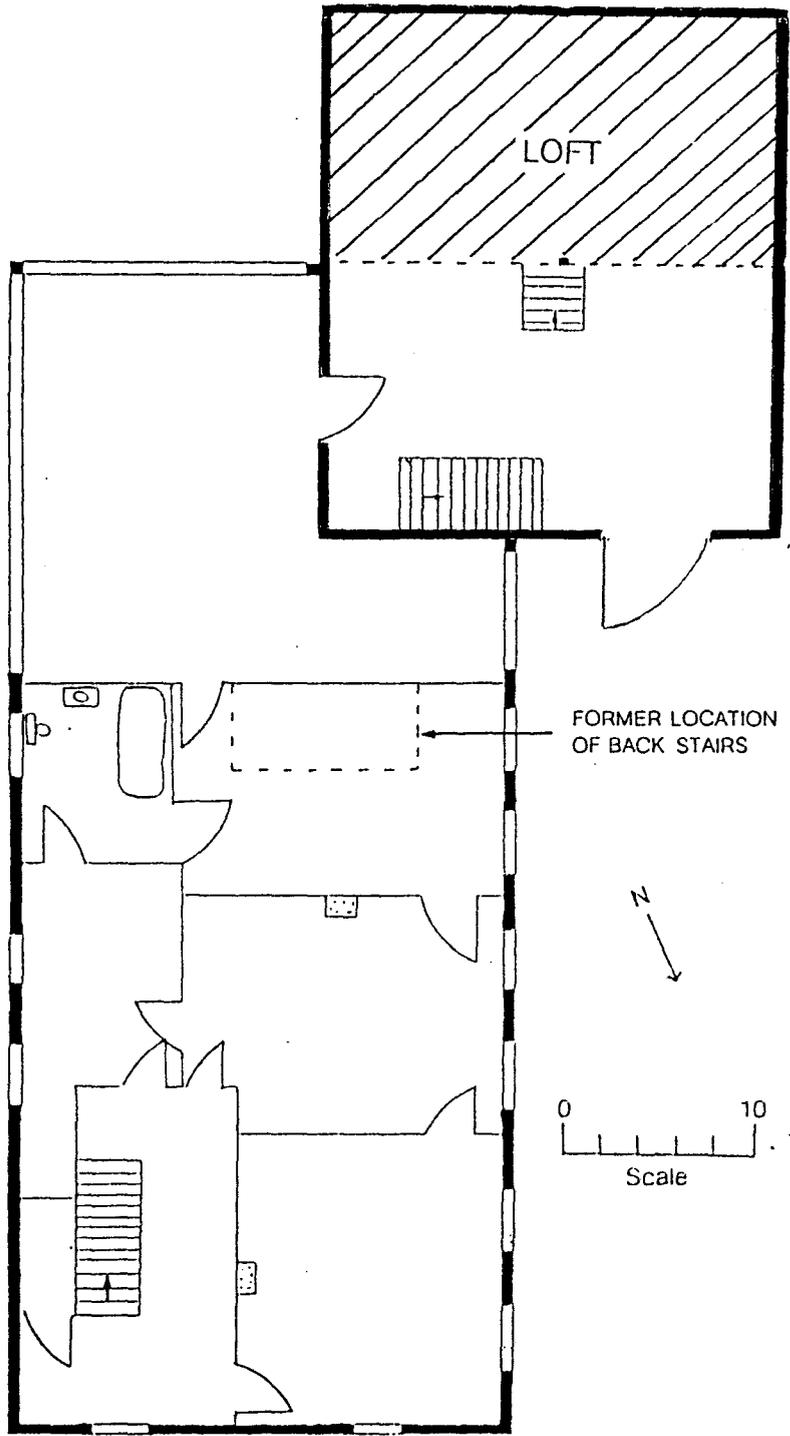


SOURCE: USGS 7.5 Minute Series Franklin, N.H. Quadrangle
(Preliminary Edition 1987)

WILLIAM THOMPSON HOUSE
HABS NO. NH-223 (PAGE 15)



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



SECOND FLOOR PLAN