

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Esten-Bowen House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

address 299 Iron Mine Road _____ not for publication

city/town Burrillville _____ vicinity

state Rhode Island code RI county Providence code 007 zip code 02830

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Edward Anderson
Signature of certifying official

11/8/2011
Date

SHPO / Executive Director RIHPHC
Title

RI Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<u> </u> entered in the National Register <u> </u> see continuation sheet	_____	_____
<u> </u> determined eligible for the National Register <u> </u> see continuation sheet	_____	_____
<u> </u> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<u> </u> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<u> </u> other (explain below)	_____	_____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3		buildings
3		sites
1		structures
		objects
7		Total

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

N/A

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/agricultural outbuilding
-
-
-
-

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

- DOMESTIC/single dwelling
- DOMESTIC/secondary structure
-
-
-
-

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

EARLY REPUBLIC

OTHER: Early American

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: STONE/Granite

walls: WOOD/weatherboard

roof: ASPHALT

other: BRICK

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing elements if necessary. Begin with a summary paragraph that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Esten-Bowen House is a late 18th – or early 19th-century wood frame, center chimney, double-pile, 1½ story Cape Cod-type farmhouse with a flank kitchen ell in a formerly agrarian rural setting in northeast Burrillville. It was restored and updated in a free interpretation of the Colonial style in the 1940s by an amateur historian with American Colonial antiquarian and genealogical interests. Recently the house has been structurally stabilized and interior finishes have been refreshed while maintaining the mid-20th-century restoration work. The farmhouse presently occupies a 32-acre parcel that was the heart of the original farm. The house sits within the former farmyard, which contains two surviving outbuildings and the ruins of several others. Drylaid stone walls divide the rest of the land into a pattern of lanes, fields (now grown over) and woodlots.

Narrative continued

Esten-Bowen House

The house in its present form largely retains its original features, with c. 1946 additions in a number of locations. Historic photographs from the late 1930s indicate that the farmhouse had had only minor changes by that time, including two-over-two window sash, a Victorian front door and wood stoves.

Five bays wide and two bays deep with a flank-gable roof, the house has a hewn and sawn timber frame, vertical plank sheathing and clapboard siding. It rests on a stone foundation of coursed rubble capped with dressed granite blocks with the large central brick chimney supported by a massive rubblestone base. The kitchen ell, which appears to be an early addition, is set back on the south elevation and has an exposed basement on the east end with an at-grade entry. It contains an internal end brick chimney with a stone base.

The exterior features a central entry on the front (south) elevation. The six-panel front door and the five-light transom in the doorway are products of the c. 1946 restoration; the original doorway had been remodeled in the late 19th century with a full-height Victorian door. The windows on the south elevation have their original plank frames and molded caps that are broken out from the main cornice molding. On the rear (north elevation), the center doorway is a restoration that matches the front entry. The original doorway had been sided over by the late 1930s. Here the original plank window frames are set below the cornice molding and feature c. 1946 plain caps, as do the windows on the side elevations. The majority of the windows contain c. 1946 double hung wood sash with twelve-over-twelve lights on the first floor and six-over-six in the garret; they replaced two-over-two sash from the late 19th century. At several locations there are wider windows added c. 1946; they have double

hung wood sash with eighteen-over-eighteen lights on the first floor and twelve-over-twelve in the garret window. These replaced original windows on the west elevation and east elevations; in the kitchen ell the window on the south elevation was installed in a new opening.

The interior was originally laid out in a traditional five-room plan, supplemented by the ell, and it survives intact except in the rear, where the west and center rooms have been combined. For the most part, the original hardware and wood trim, including floorboards, four-panel and board and batten doors and simple architrave moldings on the doorways and windows, are original, though the original plaster has been replaced in most rooms. In the c. 1946 restoration the exterior walls were built-out with interior studding to accommodate insulation and plastered to the plane of the window trim and up to the cased corner posts, which remain partially exposed. This is the case with all of the exterior walls of the building.

The small front vestibule contains the narrow, winding, front stairs which are enclosed on the first floor and feature a Federal railing with a turned newel, molded handrail and slender square balusters on the second floor. Under the stairs, a small board door gives access to the interior of the large center chimney stack.

The west parlor retains its original wide board floor and a shallow late 18th-century brick parlor fireplace with brick hearth, a wooden mantel that features rudimentary pilasters, and a chimney cupboard. Side-by-side doors in the north wall provide access to the rear room and to a closet built into the rear room c. 1946.

The east parlor, now used as a dining room, features varnished wide-board floors and a large, shallow, late 18th-century brick fireplace with molded corner bricks, stone slab hearth, varnished wooden mantel, and cupboard above.

The kitchen ell is off the dining room to the east,. The room retains its painted original wide-board floor, lath and plaster interior walls and ceiling, and contains a chimney breast in the east end with a tall, narrow brick fireplace, bake oven, and varnished, extended wooden mantel with chimney cupboard above. The kitchen was remodeled slightly in the 1940s with a breakfast nook, containing a wooden settle bench and table built-in below two large multi-paned windows, created in the southeast corner next to the chimney breast in what was presumably a pantry. Other 1940s era additions in the kitchen include painted wooden kitchen cabinets created from older, chest-of-drawers parts, and a porcelain sink with drain board, typical of mid-20th-century kitchen design.

In the rear, the original central kitchen was enlarged c. 1946 and remodeled in the rustic Early American style popularized in the mid-20th century. The original plaster ceiling was removed to expose the floor joists with the intervening spaces sheathed in Homasote-type wall board. The plaster and lath on the plank walls was replaced with vertical knotty pine sheathing. The fireplace masonry – a stone firebox and brick bake oven and flues – was exposed and a rough timber mantel was installed. The partition that formed the small room in the northwest corner was removed, a large multi-paned wooden window with integral muntins was added in the west wall and a built-in pine book case and cabinet were built into the south partition. The corresponding small storage room or pantry in the east end of the old kitchen was converted to a bathroom. The recent restoration has retained all of the 1940s building fabric and room configuration.

The garret contains two small bedrooms off the upper stair landing. Both bedrooms retain their original wide-board floors, lath and plaster interior walls, and original two-board doors. The east chamber contains a small, shallow brick fireplace with a plain board surround and projecting mantel and stone hearth. Both garret rooms originally had lath and plaster ceilings. These were removed in the 1940s to expose the ridge pole, roof rafters and cross bracing, gaining considerable ceiling height in the process. The roof spaces between the rafters were

insulated and sheathed with Homasote-type wall board. The recent restoration has retained this appearance re-sheathing the Homasote wall boards with plaster imperial board.

Esten-Bowen Farmstead

The farmhouse is set back from Iron Mine Road on a 32-acre lot remaining from a larger farm which in the mid-19th century encompassed approximately 120 acres. The house sits on a slightly raised terrace that is retained by low fieldstone walls. Other landscape features surrounding the house include crabapple trees and perennial beds added in the mid-20th century.

Typical of late 18th- and early 19th-century farmsteads in Burrillville and the rest of Rhode Island, the Esten-Bowen House was formerly accompanied by a number of agricultural outbuildings. Surviving outbuildings include a shed and a privy in poor condition. The stone foundations of a large barn, several sheds, and other outbuildings are located east and west of the house, and some have been used as outdoor rooms.

The farmland has reverted to woodland for the most part, though the patterns of earlier land use are readily discernable in the stone walls that define the farmyard and the former fields, lots and lanes. The walls are typical drylaid structures, built with rounded fieldstones, rising from waist to chest height. Most are only one stone wide but there are some double walls. A lane lined by stone walls extends across the property from Iron Mine Road in front of the house to a spring in the woodlot on the eastern border. Openings into the farmyard and the adjoining fields retain elements of the barways that formerly enclosed them. Roughly rectilinear fields lie to the south, east and north of the house.

Except for the return of forest cover, the farmhouse and related property features continue to express the salient features of the farmstead's late 18th - to mid-20th-century appearance with considerable integrity.

Farm Buildings and Features Inventory

Lean-to shed (early to mid-20th century) and hay barn foundation (early- to mid-19th century):

Located to the west of the farmhouse in proximity to Iron Mine Road is a partially collapsed lean-to shed built on the northwestern corner of the drylaid stone foundations of a large hay barn. The barn was built into the hillside, which allowed for at-grade access at both the upper and lower levels. There may also have been a wheelwright shop at this location.

Shed, (mid-19th century)

Located a short distance east of the farmhouse is a small, single-story, one by two bay, gable-roofed, timber-framed outbuilding sheathed in vertical board and batten. This may have been used as a carpenter's shop or, as indicated by the small ground-level opening on the north wall, a poultry coop. A concrete well cap with the remains of an iron pump stands just east of the shed.

Blacksmith shop site (mid-19th century) Located a short distance east of the farmhouse and adjacent to the shed are the drylaid stone foundation walls of an outbuilding. The presence of a fireplace built into the northwest corner suggests that may have served as a blacksmith shop. The walls were stabilized and a short mortared stone chimney was added to the fireplace when the foundations were used as a small walled terrace area in the mid-20th century.

Privy (late 19th to early 20th century)

Located to the southeast of the farmhouse, this is a deteriorated small, one bay wood-framed single-story shed-roofed building.

Stone walls, stone wall enclosures, laneway, bar way gates (early to mid-19th century)

The land is portioned and enclosed by stone walls into fields and lots linked by a lane or driftway. The walls are drylaid fieldstone structures of both single and double wall configuration and are of mid-height. There are a few remaining bar way gates to these enclosures.

Cemetery (early 19th – 20th century)

A small Esten family cemetery (Burrillville Historical Cemetery #30) is located on Iron Mine Road in the northwest corner of property. Enclosed with low stone walls it contains stone markers and headstones for thirteen Esten family members, including Amasa Esten, his first wife Olive and several children. It is one of two Esten cemeteries in this vicinity.¹

[End of Section 7]

¹ The second one (Burrillville Historical Cemetery #31) is on Iron Mine Road just south of this property. It contains the graves of Amasa Esten's parents and a number of his siblings and other relatives.

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 a 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from NPS instructions)

Agriculture

Architecture

Period of Significance

ca 1790-1961

Significant Dates

1848, transfer from John to Amasa Esten

1941, acquisition by Esther Bowen

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Period of Significance justification

The period of significance extends from the estimated date at which the house was constructed, through the period of its active use as the center of the Esten Farm through to the mid-20th century adaptation for use as Esther Bowen's residence.

Criteria Considerations (If considerations have been checked, explain them here) N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Begin with a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria. Provide at least one additional paragraph for each area of significance. Include additional historic context or developmental history as appropriate).

Summary Paragraph

The Esten-Bowen House is significant under National Register Criterion A for its ability to exemplify the character of Burrillville's rural development from a period of agricultural growth and expansion in the early 19th century through a gradual decline and subsequent transition to exurban residential uses in the 20th century. Built by John Esten c. 1790, the farmhouse was the center of one of the many farmsteads that Esten established for his children on his extensive holdings in the Mount Pleasant District. With its agricultural productivity limited by meager soils, the farm, like many in town, was effectively abandoned in the early 20th century, after which it was acquired by Esther Bowen of Providence, who refurbished the farmhouse to serve as her residence. As it stands, the house is eligible under Criterion C for its distinctive amalgamation of surviving original Early Republican fabric and the enhancements executed in the 1940s in the picturesque mid-century Early American mode.

Narrative continued

The Esten-Bowen House was built by John Esten (1761-1851) by the early 19th century on the large farm he assembled in northeastern Burrillville. For more than a century, it was the homestead at the center of a working farm devoted to the mixed agriculture of pasturage and tillage that characterized Burrillville and much of Rhode Island in the 18th and 19th century. Few such examples survive in their agricultural settings in northern Rhode Island due to the decline in farming, increased suburbanization, and loss through demolition or significant alteration.

John Esten was born in Glocester when its northern half (which would become the town of Burrillville in 1806) had seen little settlement and as a young man he and other members of his family were among the first to establish homesteads there. In addition to farming, Esten acquired sufficient legal training to earn the title "Esquire." He became a member of Burrillville's first Town Council (1806) and later a member of the Rhode Island General Assembly and a Justice of the Peace. Due to his investments in this section of Burrillville and his numerous progeny who settled there, the area was known as the "Esten Neighborhood" in the early and mid-19th century. Esten divided his holdings among his five sons who were interested in farming—Stephen, John Jr., Benjamin, Buffum, and Amasa Esten—after they reached maturity. Each of them obtained tracts more or less similar in value on Iron Mine, Mount Pleasant and Ironstone Roads and established their own farmsteads. Amasa Esten, the youngest of these sons, acquired the then-90-acre Esten-Bowen property in 1848 from his father and remained on the land until his death in 1869. Buffum Esten's farm was to the south, John Jr. and Benjamin's farms were to the north. A cousin, Joseph Esten, had his farm just to the south across Mount Pleasant Road.²

² This Esten farmhouse is included in the RIHP&HC's 1982 report, *Historic and Architectural Resources of Burrillville, Rhode Island*, p. 68.

In the early to mid-19th century, Burrillville still had a dispersed rural population for whom farming was the dominant profession. The town's farmers operated near-subsistence farms such as the Esten-Bowen Farm, growing enough food for their own use and only limited surpluses for trade. This changed beginning with the introduction of water-powered textile manufacturing on the Clear and Branch Rivers in the 1820s, 1830s and 1840s, and the development of small company-owned mill villages nearby such as those at Slatersville, Harrisville, and Pascoag. By the 1840s, the growth of the local manufacturing population prompted farmers to produce dairy, poultry, hay, lumber and other products for sale in nearby mill villages and the urban markets further afield in Worcester and Providence.

According to the 1865 agricultural census of Rhode Island, Burrillville had 904 acres of plowed land, nearly 4,000 acres of mowed fields, some 4,200 acres of pasture lands, and 15,300 acres of unimproved or wood-lot lands. Clearly lumbering, grazing and haymaking took up large portions of Burrillville farm acreage in the mid-19th century. This pattern reflects the quality of the local soils, which are very stony and consequently difficult to cultivate for tilled crops.³ Hence this area was known for its subsistence level "hardscrabble" farming. The principal crops included rye, oats, Indian corn, potatoes, turnips, dry beans and cranberries. Milk, butter, cheese and eggs were part of the diversified farm economy, as well as poultry, beef cattle, sheep, wool and flax. In 1865, Burrillville had a total of 214 farms, of which most were less than 100 acres. There were only 53 farms in Burrillville of the size of the Esten-Bowen Farm. While there were a number of farms larger than the combined acreage (possibly 500 acres) of the Esten brothers' farms, those owned by the Estens were typical of the region and contributed significantly to the local farm economy.

Amasa (1799-1869) married Olive Stone in 1824 and following her death in 1829, married her sister, Lois (Louisa), who died in 1861. He was a trained artisan as well as a farmer, sometimes referring to himself as a "mechanic."⁴ His May 1869 probate record indicates that he was able to supplement a traditional New England mixed farming operation with work in a blacksmith shop, carpentry shop, and wheelwright shop on the farm. A large quantity (4½ tons) of "good" hay remaining in the hay barn and his inventory of hauling equipment (two ox wagons, two horse wagons, and a lumber wagon) indicate he may have been selling hay and wood to a growing urban market for supplemental income. In addition, son William and daughter Olive, who were living at home in 1860, were listed in the census as a carpenter and dressmaker respectively. A third son, Amasa, Jr., is listed as a wheelwright, living separately, but on adjoining property.

A comparison of the probate records of Amasa and his brother Buffum Esten (1797-1843), who was on an adjoining farm, provides a picture of farm use in the mid-19th century, as they adapted farming traditions and practice to the new opportunities made possible by the expanding mill villages nearby and the urban markets of Worcester and Providence. In all likelihood, work and produce were shared, and farm output appears to have been sold non-competitively. While Buffum Esten's farm produced quantities of potatoes (over 200 bushels listed), wool, linen and cheese, Amasa Esten's operation included carpentry, blacksmithing, a wheelwright shop and hay. Both farms had milk cows for home use, some beef cattle, a few pigs, corn, rye, oats, and apple orchards for cider-making.

The Esten family collaborated on building a school house in the early 19th century nearby on Iron Mine Road, known as the Esten Schoolhouse. A mid- to late-19th century school teacher and well-known educator, William A. Mowry, records about thirty students in attendance in 1848, who

³ The soils at the Esten-Bowen farm consist of Paxton very stony fine sandy loam with 0 to 8% slopes according to the USDA Soil Survey of Rhode Island (1981).

⁴ See Burrillville Land Evidence, Book 9, Page 38, April 7, 1848.

were of a very respectable class, generally intelligent, coming from the families of sober, honest, New England yeomanry of the old stock. The descendents of Hon. John Esten, formerly judge of the old time court, formed a majority of the families and the scholars. (Stockwell)

The Esten Schoolhouse was Mowry's second teaching position (at age 19) in a long career in public and private school education. Mowry describes the neighborhood:

Of the children of Hon. John Esten, the following settled on farms, either upon, or adjoining, the old homestead, and there passed their days, died, and were buried, only one of them, I think, being alive at the present time (1876): John Jr., Benjamin, Buffum, and Amasa.... Now nearly all of the children of these four sterling men have gone away, to the east and the west, to the factory villages or the cities, and are engaged in the various callings and professions of life. Among them may be found teachers, doctors, merchants, manufacturers, mechanics, etc., but very few of them are cultivating the land.... (Stockwell)

As Mowry's comments indicate, by the time of the Civil War, the Esten school population was shrinking significantly, as the rising generation sought other opportunities than hardscrabble farming. By winter 1868, there was only a single student, indicating the population shift away from the area, and the School Committee thought it advisable to close the school. Following this trend, in 1879, ten years after Amasa Esten's death, the Esten-Bowen farm property had been reduced to 30 acres. In this year it was sold by Esten's heirs (his daughter Olive Esten Lee, son-in-law Mowry Lee, and youngest son, Alexander Esten), withholding certain rights to the adjoining Esten family cemeteries.

Gardner Ballou (1830-1922), a Civil War veteran and farmer, acquired the farm and lived there until his death in 1922. Upon the death of his second wife and widow, Alice Luella Ballou (1850-c.1935), the farmhouse was apparently left vacant, and physical and documentary evidence indicates that that barn, wheelwright's shop, carpenter's shop and blacksmith's shop were at that point in a state of deterioration. While the farmland appears to have still been used for pasturing sheep, the property's use as a farmstead had ended.

The property entered a new phase in 1941 when Esther H. Bowen (1900-1984) purchased the former farmstead. Ms. Bowen was a professional employee of the Amica Insurance Company. Bowen had interests in the then-popular Early American style, documented in a scrap-book she kept of contemporary shelter magazine articles on Early American interiors and decorating taste. She was also interested in the Bowen family genealogy, dating to the 17th century in America. She had strong ties to North Scituate in rural Providence County, and to her Bowen family's summer home at Oak Bluffs on Martha's Vineyard. Bowen was recently divorced from L. Clifford Leighton of Providence. Following her divorce, she began searching for an old house in a country setting west of Providence, which she could restore for use as a primary residence. Prior to Esther Bowen's ownership, the farmhouse and 30 acres (more or less) were owned briefly by Horace C. Arnold II in 1937 and then Russell L. Scott.

Bowen rescued the farmhouse in a deteriorated condition, but all set for rehab work. Her documentation of the house through floor plans and photographs before, during and after the process shows that the house had not been modernized or altered significantly from its late 18th-century form beyond the Victorian exterior doors and two-over-two window sash presumably installed by the Ballous. It did not have plumbing or central heat and the original floor plan was intact. The farm had continued to be used for sheep grazing, so the fields remained open, though nearly all the agricultural buildings had disappeared or were in ruins. By 1947, the restoration was essentially complete and Bowen took up residence in the house.

Architectural Significance

Architecturally the modest, vernacular, 1½-story, center-chimney farmhouse appears to date from an early period of development for the area, possibly the late 18th century. Stylistically, the farmhouse is typical of late 18th-century and early 19th-century domestic architecture in the region, bridging the Colonial and Federal styles with its timber-framed, plank wall construction, double-pile five-room plan, south-facing door, flank kitchen ell, and garret bedchambers. The manner in which the window caps are broken out from the cornice molding on the front elevation is indicative of late 18th century taste; while the attenuated style of the mantels and the high narrow form of the fireplace in the kitchen ell suggest the later Federal period style. These differences may reflect a blend of conservative and more stylish influences or perhaps a remodeling campaign around the second decade of the 19th century.

Bowen's restoration of the house in the "Early American" taste demonstrates the pervasive influence of this trend in the mid-20th century among middle class enthusiasts. Paired with Bowen's scrapbook of illustrated magazine articles on design in this style, the restoration is a good example of the persuasive influence of popular periodicals on mid-20th-century taste. Included in Bowen's collection were illustrated how-to articles from *Better Homes and Gardens* and *American Home*. The rehab work appears to have been executed by local builders under Bowen's supervision. Professional design services were not employed, yet enough was known about best preservation practices that to a large extent original materials and room features and configurations were retained. Repairs were executed with in-kind replacement. The removal of original fabric was kept to a minimum. New window openings for light were kept to a minimum, and before conditions were documented and records kept. Replacement window sash and doors replicated original configurations. Only one wall was removed to create a large "keeping room" with a focus on the old kitchen fireplace. Minimal plumbing was installed with a single bathroom created from one of the kitchen pantry rooms. Steam heat was introduced with cast iron radiators. The exterior walls of the building were built-out on the interior to create voids for insulation, without removal of door and window casings and trim. Fireplace dampers were installed and the fireplaces made functional. The kitchen ell was modified slightly with a cabinet sink and eating nook. The garret bed chamber ceilings were removed to create more head room. Outbuildings that were salvageable were restored or converted to storage uses, outbuilding foundations were retained and used as garden rooms. Some of the farm fields were allowed to revert to woodlot; others were maintained as hay field. A large vegetable garden was maintained south of the farmhouse. Enough published contemporary information existed to successfully inspire and guide this amateur project. All of this work survives with considerable integrity, refreshed by recent preservation work on the house.

The Esten-Bowen House conveys the nostalgia for the "Early American" era popular in the pre- and post-1940s war years in accordance with such contemporary references as Henry L. and Ottalie Williams' *Old American Houses 1700-1850, How to Restore, Remodel and Reproduce Them* (1946).⁵ Another contemporary influence could have been a pattern book by mid-century architect Royal Barry Wills published in 1941, which describes pine-paneled interiors with built-in furniture—in this case for new capes he designed—but very much in the same taste. Within the latter book, interspersed with the rambling colonial charmers that Wills is so well-known for, are mid-century modern houses, Bauhaus in appearance, with flat roofs, window bands, and no ornament. This juxtaposition presents both style trends that were popular: looking back to stable roots and looking forward to a new age. The build-out of Colonial Williamsburg in the late 1930s as a tourist destination

⁵ Interestingly, the Williams' book (p. 153) features an enlarged window treatment nearly identical to that employed by Esther Bowen.

also coincides with the popularity of the Colonial Revival movement and “Early American” taste in domestic interior design.

In contrast to the refined academic aspects of the Colonial Revival movement, a variant known as Early American, exemplified by the 1940s restoration of the Esten-Bowen House, conveys a less formal, more rustic or country interpretation with smaller-scaled, less formal dwellings; a focus on heavier early colonial, post-medieval furniture designs and utilitarian, rather than high-style pieces; mixed woods including maple, hickory, knotty pine, poplar and chestnut; varnished floors with rag, hooked or braided rugs; cotton, wool and linen fabrics, and wrought iron fastenings and lighting fixtures. The home-made was preferred over the finely crafted: farm cupboards and blanket chests were preferred to Queen Anne tea tables and Newport highboys. The Early American trend allowed for a comfortable, relaxed and livable home more in keeping with mid-20th century and post-World War II lifestyles, hence its sustained popularity in the decades that followed. Spurred by well-illustrated articles in contemporary mid-20th-century shelter magazines such as *Better Homes and Gardens*, and *American Home*, vernacular Colonial-era houses were adapted to modern residential use in this taste.

[End of Section 8]

Esten-Bowen House
Name of Property

Burrillville
City/Town

Providence Co., Rhode Island
County, State

Document page number 13

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record
#

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other — name of repository

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form)

Primary and Secondary Sources

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[End of Section 9]

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property (do not include previously listed acreage) 32.5 acres

UTM References

1	<u>19</u> Zone	<u>281391</u> Easting	<u>4653807</u> Northing
2	<u>19</u> Zone	<u>281798</u> Easting	<u>4653957</u> Northing
3	<u>19</u> Zone	<u>281908</u> Easting	<u>4653380</u> Northing
4	<u>19</u> Zone	<u>281664</u> Easting	<u>4653419</u> Northing
5	<u>19</u> Zone	<u>281463</u> Easting	<u>4653599</u> Northing
6	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
7	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
8	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
9	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
10	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The property boundary is coterminous with the present Map 27, Lot 12, as described (2011) by the Tax Assessor of the Town of Burrillville. These are the same boundaries as described in the conveyance to Esther Bowen as recorded in Land Evidence Book 46, page 355 in the records of the Town of Burrillville.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundary of the nominated property is the same as the premises described and recorded in deeds of conveyance from the descendants of Amasa Esten (Olive Esten Lee, Mowry Lee, and Alexander Esten), to Gardner Ballou, and then through Horace C. Arnold II and Russell L. Scott to Esther Bowen in 1941, including "30 acres more or less," once owned by Amasa Esten and the center of his 19th -century agricultural holdings in Burrillville, Rhode Island.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard C. Youngken, author — Robert O. Jones, editor; Architectural Historian, RIHPHC

organization Youngken Associates date March 21, 2011

street & number 38 Sea View Avenue telephone 410-378-0805

city/town Wakefield state RI zip code 02879

Esten-Bowen House
Name of Property

Burrillville
City/Town

Providence Co., Rhode Island
County, State

Document page number 16

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location. A **map** (to scale or sketch) for historic districts or properties having large acreage and/or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets** (if necessary)
- **Additional items** Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items they require.

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600 x 1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Esten-Bowen House

City: Burrillville

County: Providence State: Rhode Island

Photographer: Richard C. Youngken

Date Photographed: April 14, 2011

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1. View of house looking northeast
2. View of house looking north, shed on far right
3. View of the house looking northwest
4. View of the house looking southeast, water trough and shed on far left
5. View of the front entry and stairway, looking north
6. View of the front hall and the east parlor fireplace, looking southwest
7. View of the west parlor fireplace looking northeast with the doorway into the original kitchen in the center and the c. 1946 closet at left
8. View of the original kitchen fireplace and c. 1946 remodeling of the rear rooms, looking southwest
9. View of the original kitchen fireplace and c. 1946 remodeling of the rear rooms, looking east
10. View of the kitchen ell fireplace, looking northeast
11. View of the c. 1946 breakfast nook, looking east
12. View of the east garret fireplace, looking northwest
13. View of the kitchen ell's cellar fireplace, looking east
14. View of the shop site, looking south
15. View of house looking north from the farm lane
16. View east down the farm lane
17. View of the Amasa Esten family cemetery, looking east

Esten-Bowen House
Name of Property

Burrillville
City/Town

Providence Co., Rhode Island
County, State

Document page number 17

Property Owner: (complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

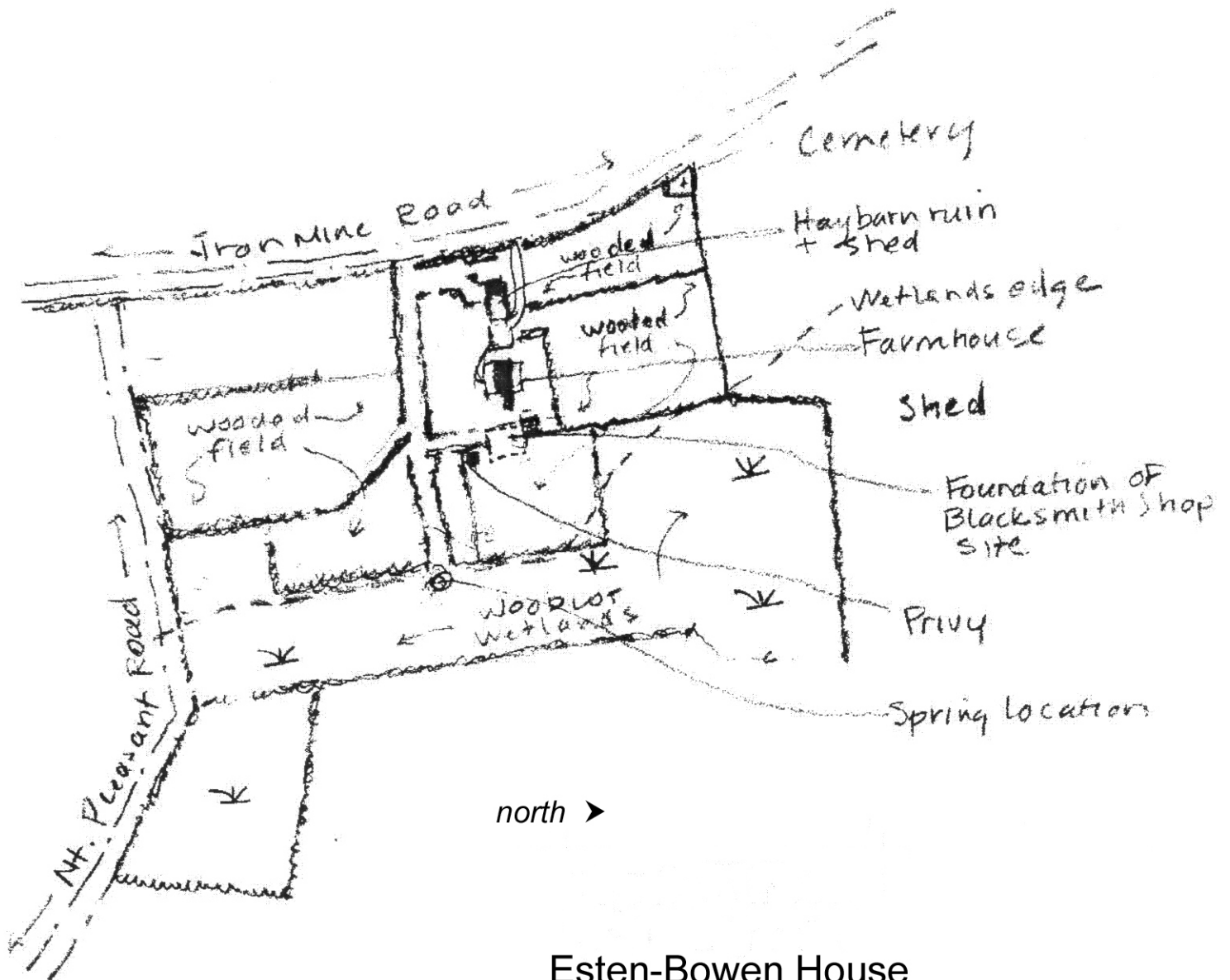
name Linda Steere

street & number 42 North Road telephone 401-783-6740

city or town Peace Dale state RI zip code 02879

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

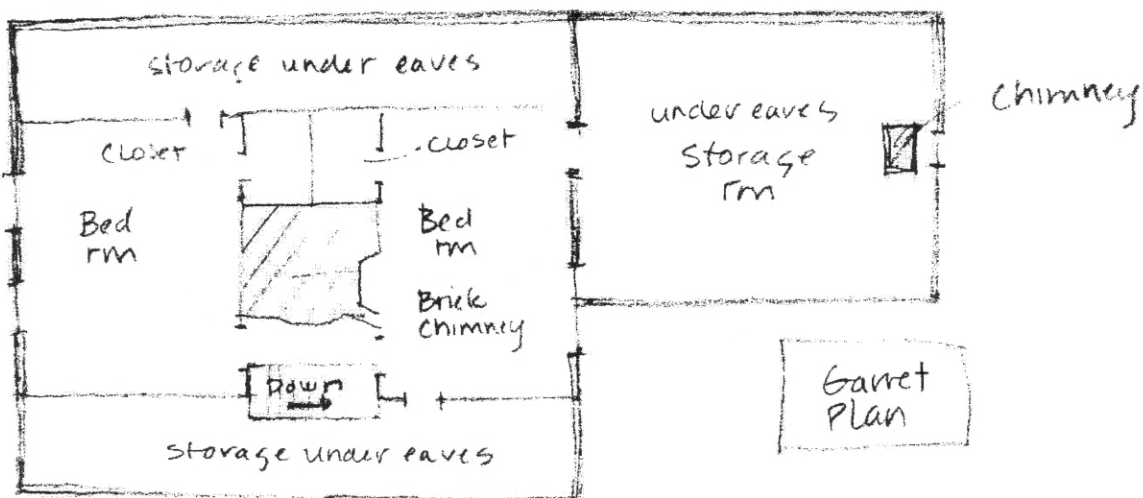
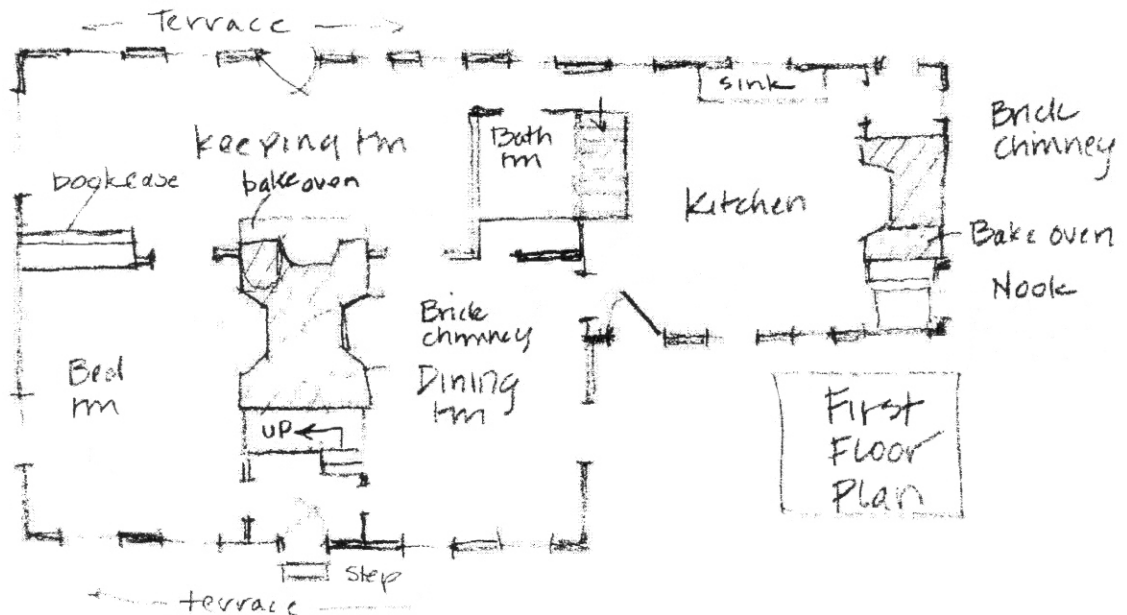
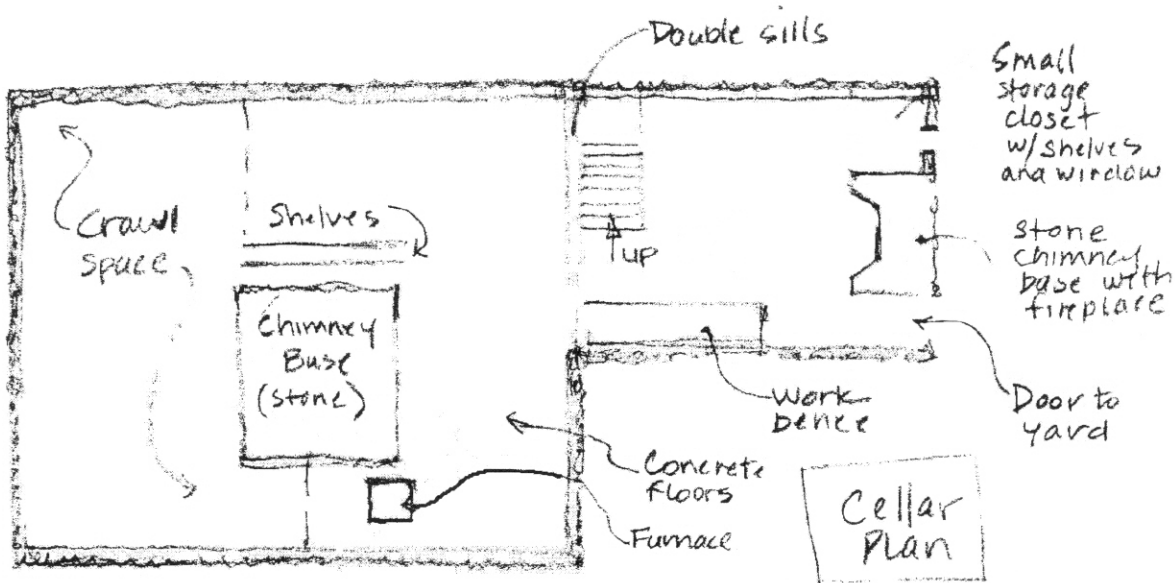


Esten-Bowen House

Burrillville, Providence County, Rhode Island

sketch plan of farm — not to scale

Richard C. Youngken March 2011



Esten-Bowen House Burrillville, Providence County, Rhode Island
 floor plans — sketch not to scale
 Richard C. Youngken March 2011

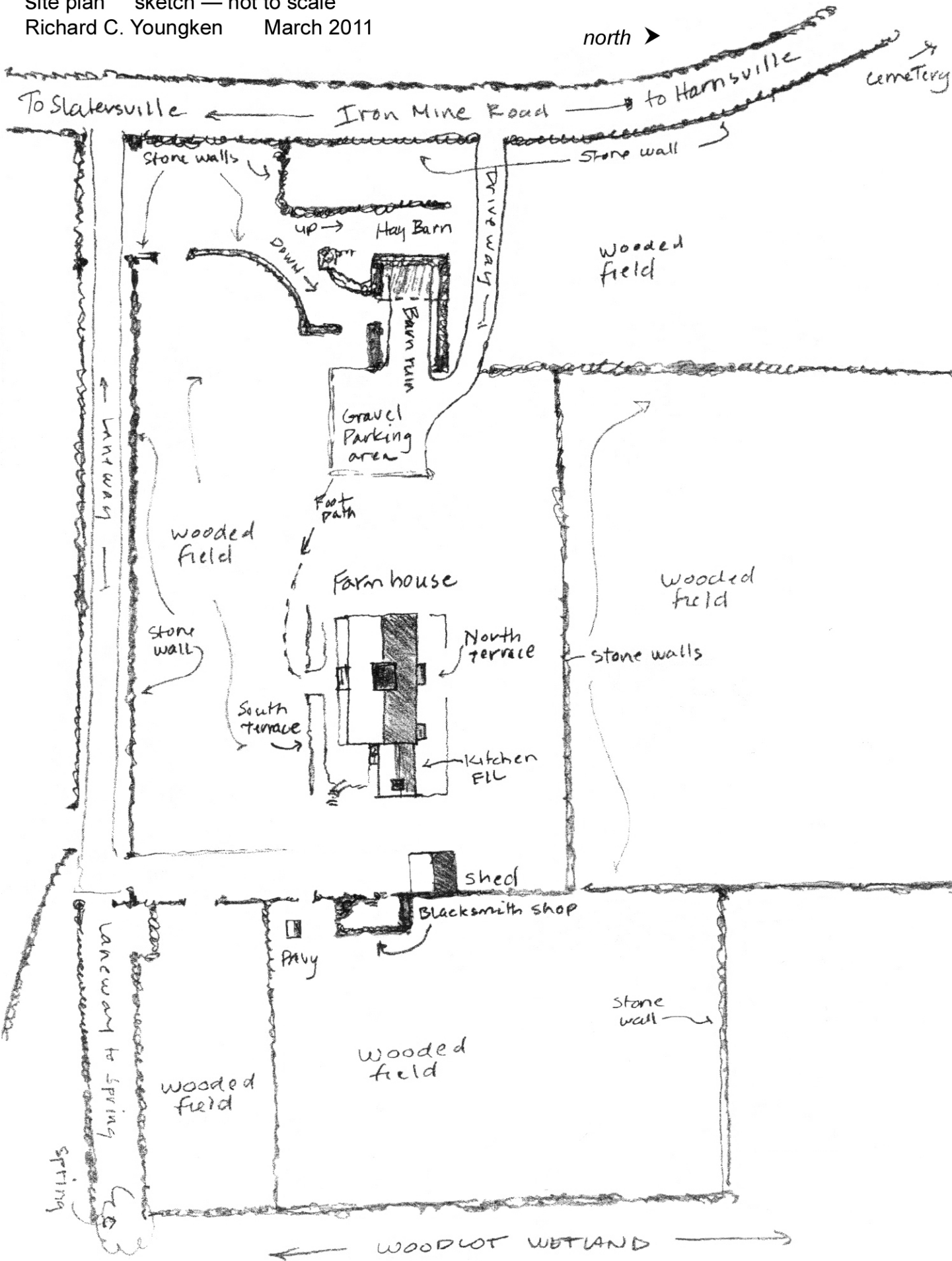
north ➤

Esten-Bowen House Burrillville, Providence County, Rhode Island

Site plan sketch — not to scale

Richard C. Youngken March 2011

north ➤



















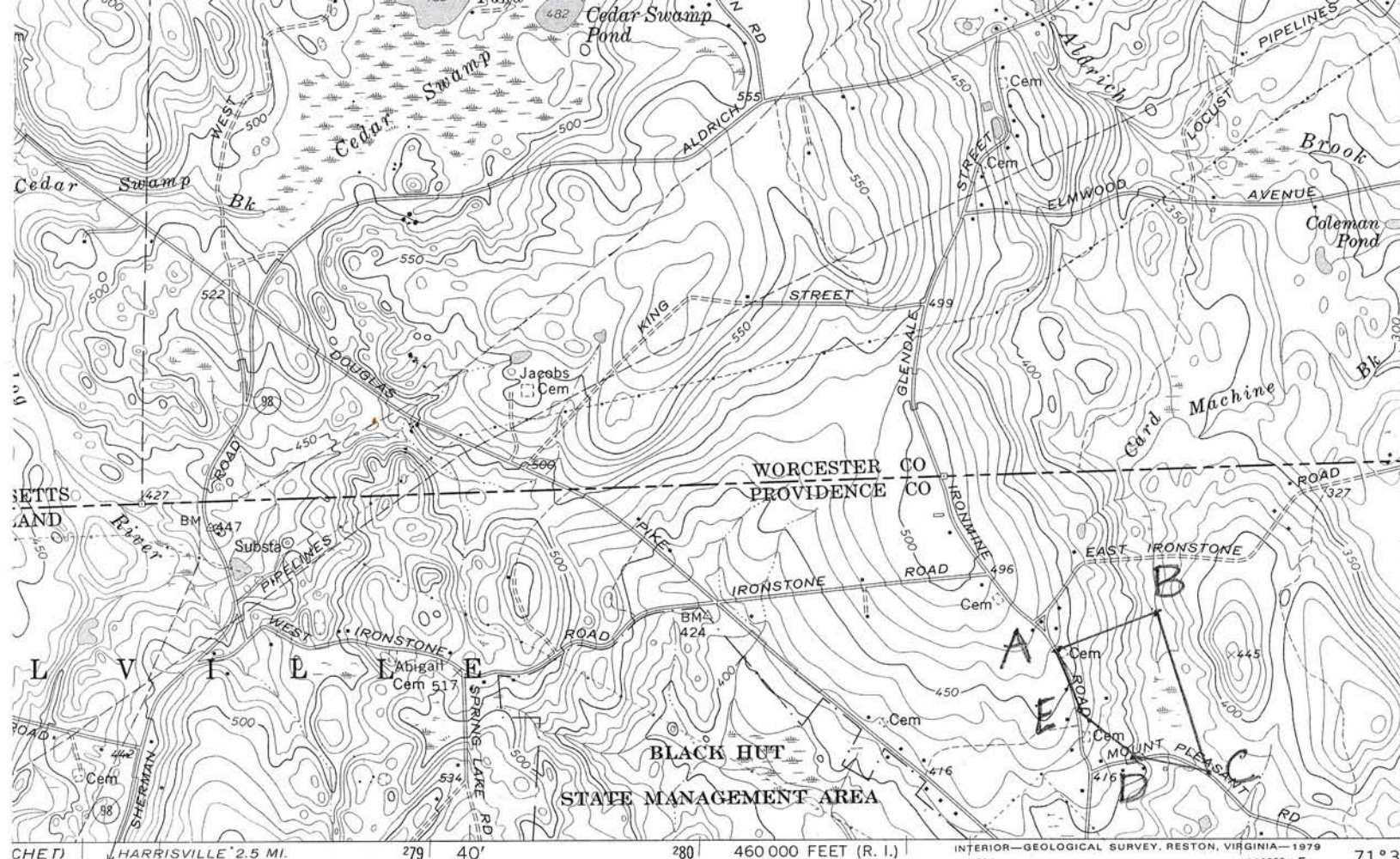






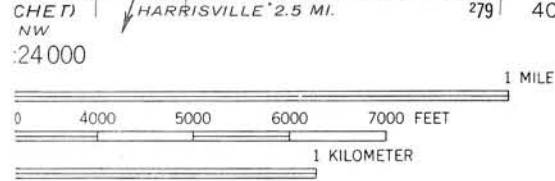


ESTEN-BOWEN
 FARM HOUSE
 BURRILLVILLE
 PROVIDENCE
 COUNTY
 RHODE ISLAND



340 000 FEET
 (R. I.)

- A 19 281391E
46 53807N
- B 19 281798E
46 53957N
- C 19 281908E
46 53380N
- D 19 281664E
46 53419N
- E 19 281463E
46 53599N



VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
 SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
 AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, all weather, hard surface	Light-duty road, all weather, improved surface
Secondary highway, all weather, hard surface	Unimproved road, fair or dry weather

○ State Route

UXBRIDGE, MASS. — R. I.
 N4200—W7137.5/7.5

1969
 PHOTOREVISED 1979
 AMS 6668 II SW—SERIES V814

(GEORGIATVILLE)
 6667 1 NE

