

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Battey-Barden House is a large, two-and-a-half story, center-chimney, frame Federal farmhouse with a small one-and-a-half-story mid or late-nineteenth-century kitchen ell at the rear. The house is typical for the period in both construction and plan.

Five bays wide and two deep (see photo 1) the house is framed with traditional mortise-and-tenon joints and the cornerposts, encased, are exposed on the interior; however, the walls are studded and carry diagonal sheathing to which the clapboards are nailed, an indication* of early nineteenth-century construction. Window frames, filled with reproduction 12/12 sash (even on the front), are of simple pegged heavy plank construction with slightly projecting flat drip caps above. The facade, which faces north (oriented toward Plainfield Pike which passes about twenty feet away), is symmetrical and features a fairly unusual doorway treatment: narrow reeded pilasters framing four-pane sidelights flanking what appears to be the original six-panel door and supporting a semi-elliptical wooden fan above. The fan appears to have been carved from a single piece of wood and is capped with a moulding and a heavy, slightly awkward modillion-like central keystone. Both the fan and the reeding are typical federal motifs, but the solid wooden fan is a treatment not too frequently seen on Rhode Island houses.¹

The plan of the main portion of the house (see plan, continuation sheet 3), is essentially the traditional five-room, center-chimney plan but with two typical Federal modifications: the insertion of a narrow side entry and staircase hall on the east in what otherwise would have been the traditional, almost square corner room off the kitchen, and the enlargement of the proportions of the front entry hall (see photo 2) which are significantly more generous than those of earlier farmhouses. Two alterations to the plan have occurred: the blocking in of one rear

¹Two other houses with similar doorway treatments come to mind: the "Plain Farm" house in Providence, as yet undated, but built in the opening decades of the nineteenth century, which also faces (north to) Plainfield Pike, (although its present address is 108 Webster Avenue) and the Rudolphus B. Johnson House in Warren, built c. 1790-1800 and moved to its present location, 43 Miller Street, about 1823 or 1824. The doorway treatment of "Plain Farm" is almost identical to that of the Battey-Barden House. The treatment of the Johnson House doorway features a similar semi-elliptical carved wooden fan and sidelights, but the fan is visually supported by half-round reeded columns instead of the pilasters and has a bold flat entablature above.

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

*in conjunction with this framing

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window when the rear ell was added overlapping it in the mid or late nineteenth century, and the removal of the south wall of the northwest parlor sometime in the twentieth century. These changes were carefully done and are relatively minor detractions from the house's integrity. Floors throughout are original as are the typically Federal mantels and chair rails.

The prime interest of the Battey-Barden House--other than its good condition and its typicality--is its wall stencilling. Stencilled patterns were a typical decorative treatment for the period, particularly in Rhode Island's rural communities; examples have been documented in Scituate, Foster, Smithfield, Johnston, and Cranston; but each year fewer and fewer examples survive as walls carrying them become dirty, water-damaged, or cracked, and owners tastes change. In the Battey-Barden House most of the original stencils survive in the stair hall (first floor), executed in red and green on a yellow ground (see photo 2). In the two front parlors, the present owner documented the stencils that existed and repainted them. In the northeast parlor (see photos 3 and 4) the pattern has been reproduced almost in toto: the owner left blank the spaces over the mantel, below the chair-rail, and behind the full-width, full-height bookcase on the south wall. In the northwest parlor only the cornice pattern was reproduced and it was extended to include the southwest section of the room, originally a back corner room and stencilled with a different pattern. Mrs. Hibbitt has used varying shades of red and green on a white ground in both parlors, as well as in the kitchen, the first floor bathroom, and one upstairs bedroom. Patterns in the kitchen (see photo #5) were adapted from those in the Willard House in Still River, Massachusetts.² The bathroom and upstairs bedroom bear stencil patterns devised and adapted by Mrs. Hibbitt from a variety of sources.

The rear ell--built apparently some years after the main portion of the house--has been made into a modern kitchen with all that such conversions imply. The present owners plan to make it more in keeping

²Janet Waring, Early American Stencils...Figure 22, ff. p. 32.

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with the rest of the house by rebuilding the kitchen chimney, in its proper location on the south wall, and removing the large multi-paned window installed by earlier owners also on the south wall.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates between 1816 and 1831 Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Battey-Barden House is primarily important as an excellent example of the Federal farmhouses built by prosperous residents of Rhode Island's rural areas between 1810 and 1830. In construction, plan, and detail it is typical of such houses and it is particularly noteworthy for its wall stencilling, both original and reproduction. The house was built between 1816 and 1831 by or for Horace Battey (1793-1881) probably about 1824, the year of his marriage. Horace Battey was a farmer, ran a general store in a nearby building for a time, was a Scituate Justice of the Peace in 1848, and a deacon in the Baptist Church at nearby Battey Corners. The Batteys were among the mid-eighteenth-century settlers in Scituate, a family numerous and influential in civic and religious affairs.

In 1860, for an as yet undiscovered reason, Horace mortgaged his 160-acre farm. Following default on the mortgage in 1867, the property was sold at auction to Job W. Barden. The house, although with increasingly reduced acreage, was owned by various members of the Barden family until 1962. The present owners are the third since the Bardens.

Because of its integrity and typicality and such features as the doorway and the wall stencilling, Battey-Barden House is of architectural significance to the state and eminently worthy of nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

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Eddy, Ruth Story Devereux. The Ancestry and Descendants of Isaac Barden of Middleborough and Attleborough, Mass., and Scituate, R.I. Providence, Rhode Island, January, 1945.

Scituate Land Evidence Records.

Scituate Probate Records

Waring, Janet. Early American Stencils on Walls and Furniture. Dover Publications, Inc., New York, 1968 (reprint of 1937 original), pp 28-32.

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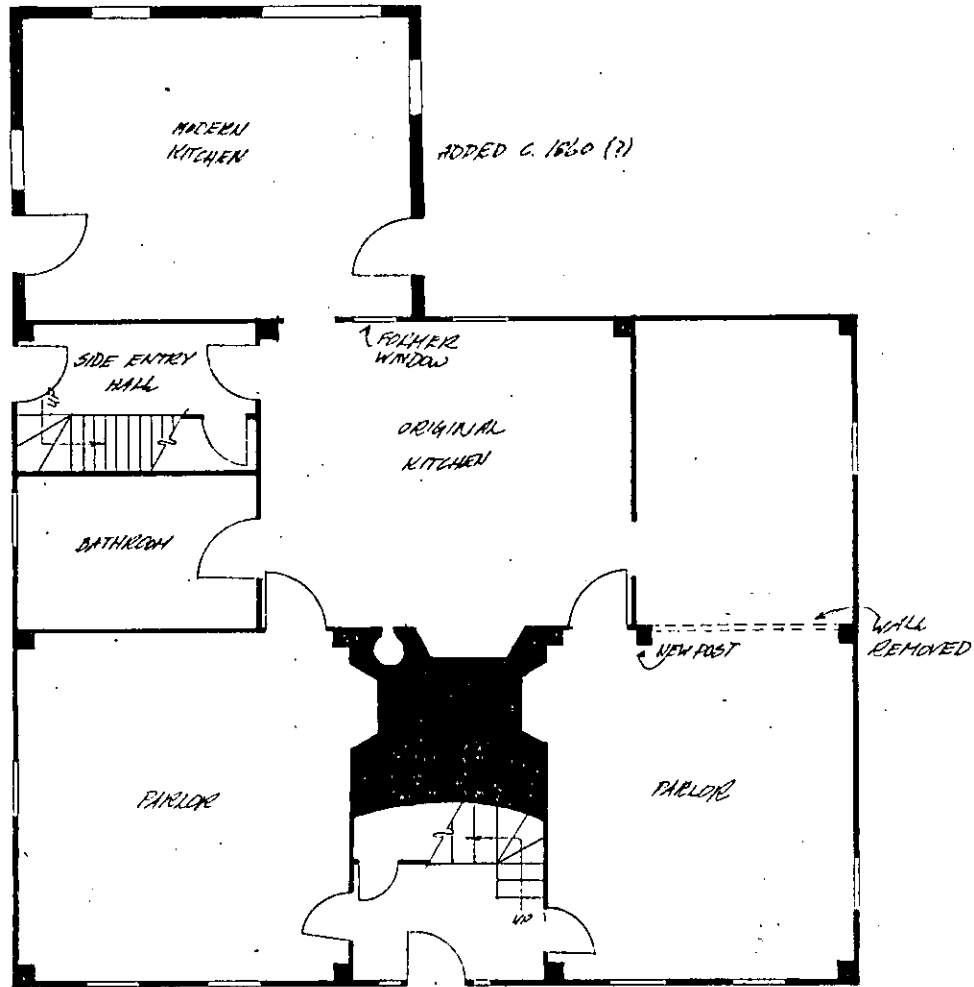
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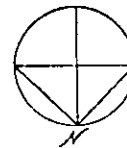
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BATTEY-BARDEN HOUSE
PLAINFIELD PIKE
SCITUATE, RHODE ISLAND



9. Major Bibliographical References

Batthey, H. V. Samson Batthey of Rhode Island, The Immigrant Ancestor and His Descendents. H. V. Batthey, Council Bluffs, Iowa, 1932.

(See Continuation Sheet #4)

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 5.086 acres

Quadrangle name North Scituate

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	9	2	8	2	3	8	0	4	6	2	9	7	6	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

plat 42 lot 80

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ancelin V. Lynch, National Register Coordinator

organization Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

date October, 1979

street & number 150 Benefit Street

telephone (401) 277-2678

city or town Providence

state Rhode Island

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Frederick W. Williamson July 10, 1980

title

date

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	date
Keeper of the National Register	date
Attest	date
Chief of Registration	



Batthey-Barden House
Plainfield Pike, Scituate, Rhode Island

Warren Jagger, photographer October, 1979
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

View of house from north northeast.

Photo #1



Battey-Barden House
Plainfield Pike, Scituate, Rhode Island

Warren Jagger, photographer October, 1979
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

Front stair hall looking east, showing staircase and
remaining original stencil patterns.

Photo #2





Bathey-Barden House
Plainfield Pike, Scituate, Rhode Island

Warren Jagger, photographer
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

October, 1979

Northeast parlor: view northeast, showing fields of
stencil patterns; original patterns repainted.

Photo #4

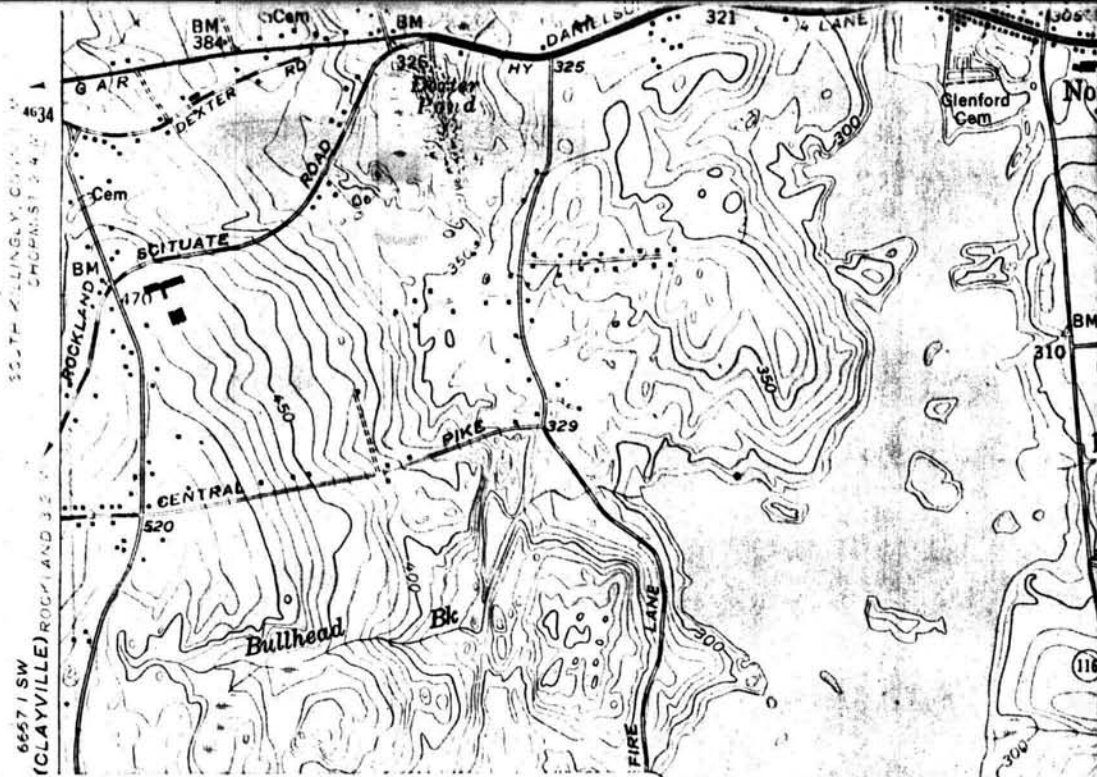


Battey-Barden House
Plainfield Pike, Scituate, Rhode Island

Warren Jagger, photographer October, 1979
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

Kitchen: view east, through to present bathroom.
Stencil pattern adapted from Willard House, Still River,
Massachusetts. Note typical fireplace with cut granite
hearth.

Photo #5



Bathey-Barden House
 Scituate, Rhode Island

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