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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 an 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 Silvernail Homestead

other name/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & town 383 Poole Hill Road  not for publication

city or town Ancram  vicinity

state New York code NY county Columbia code 021 zip code 12502

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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.)

Roger A. Kerpner DBAHO 4/21/10  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of 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 the 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 [Signature] Date of Action 6/11/2010

**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.)

- public-local
- private
- public-State
- public-Federal
- district
- building(s)
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
1	0	sites
0	1	structures
0	0	objects
2	2	Total

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

\_\_\_\_\_

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Function**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Current Function**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC; single dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

DOMESTIC; single dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

MID-19<sup>th</sup> CENTURY: Greek Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

foundation STONE  
walls WOOD  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof WOOD, METAL  
other GLASS  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

See Continuation Sheets-

\_\_\_\_\_

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### **7. Narrative Description**

The Silvernail Homestead is the architectural centerpiece of an approximately 11-acre property located roughly two miles south of Ancram hamlet on both sides of Poole Hill Road in the Town of Ancram, Columbia County, New York. The dwelling is situated in a declivity in the road and surrounding landscape and is located on the east side, a small carriage or wagon barn on the opposite west side. Also on the property, on the west side of the road about one-tenth of a mile to the south of the house, is the foundation and cellar hole of a small dwelling evidently used at times by Silvernail family members and perhaps for a time hired farm laborers. Nearly opposite this foundation to the east across Poole Hill Road, but on an adjacent parcel under separate ownership, is a large 19<sup>th</sup> century barn, converted into a house, it having once been associated with the Silvernail property. From road side the barn retains its essential form and character and as such contributes to the historic agrarian landscape, but nevertheless it is not included within the nomination boundary or resource count; these properties are today divided by a wood fence and orchard above, replacing an earlier vegetable garden. The fence returns northward from this position, and is aligned along the front of the house, between it and the road, before being terminated at a point northwest of the dwelling. Between the house-yard and the barn runs the course of a small stream. The stream and springy ground on the slope between the house and stream were important considerations so far as the choice of the original site of the house. In this hollow are a number of historic trees, more recent decorative gardens, and, to the northeast or rear of the house, a pond that dates to the last third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (non-contributing). The house and foundation remnant comprise the Silvernail Homestead nomination's contributing historic resources.

The Silvernail house features an L-shaped footprint consisting of a front block with rear lean-to and an ell, the main block and ell built on rectangular plans. All are of heavy frame construction of the traditional timber-frame type. The main block is five bays wide by two bays deep, gable-end type, with a centrally located entrance. It is tall and narrow in proportion, two and one-half stories in height with characteristic Greek Revival-style design features, the roof ridge aligned parallel with the facade. The house is oriented with its primary elevation, the west-facing façade of the main block, fronting on— and parallel with— Poole Hill Road.

The arrangement of fenestration on the west-facing façade of the main block is not symmetrical, indicative of this sections multiple-phase construction chronology. A single-story porch with six restored Doric order antae, or piers, spans most of the façade, providing shelter for the main doorway and its four flanking first-story windows. The siding corresponding with the area beneath the porch is not clapboard, but is instead flush-boarded, unlike on most of the remaining areas of the building. The center entrance has an eared surround and is flanked by three-quarter length sidelights. Double-leaf doors, each of a two-paneled type, are fitted in the entrance. The porch's cornice features a deep entablature, austerely handled, the frieze including a moulded architrave and dentil band, terminated above by a moulded cornice. Despite the Greek Revival-inspired entry surround, the double-leaf doors themselves are paneled with rounded mouldings that relate to Italianate style design, as are the mouldings used for the paneled aprons below the first-story windows. Each of the four first-story windows below the porch has an eared surround such as used for the entrance, in addition to a paneled apron. First and second-story windows are fitted with six-over-six wood sash; the frieze band windows are divided vertically into three lights. A linear story-and-half ell projects eastward from the rear of the

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main block, flush with its south elevation. It is four bays deep on the south elevation, providing for an additional range of rooms behind the southwest parlor of the main block. There is additionally a shed-roofed lean-to that abuts the rear elevation of the main block, and which is likewise engaged with the north elevation of the ell.

The gable ends of the main block are fully pedimented with broad cornice mouldings and raking trim. The gable field, or tympanum, is flushboarded. Other characteristic Greek Revival-style design features include the pilasters employed at the house's corners, to further the effect of a classical order, and the trabeated door casings used on the south elevation. Centered on the north gable end is a brick chimney built c. 1970. Abutted to the north side of the ell is a sympathetically designed modern porch.

The ell, developed and finished with Greek Revival-style design features, suggests the studied adaptation of an earlier story-and-a-half dwelling. This elevation is visually and structurally divided into three parts, the first and second parts aligning with the original cellar. The doorway into the main block from the south side, now thoroughly Greek Revival-style in conception, was reinvented from an earlier entrance treatment; sidelights were originally employed in this location, as revealed during recent repair work to the interior wall. The easternmost third of the ell, serviced by its own entrance, is an addition thought to have been added after the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

A field stone cellar exists only under a portion of the house—beneath the center hall and the southwest parlor of the main block, and the length of the ell—including the northerly single-story shed extension from the ell, suggesting an earlier configuration. At the rear and under the kitchen section of the ell, the cellar stone work differs slightly from the portion under the front two rooms, confirming the eastward expansion of the ell. Earth around the present rear cellar entrance has been re-graded, apparently to support the cellar walls at the rear; however, before the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century cellar addition, the original cellar configuration under the two front rooms of the house was likely set in a bank of land with one end of the cellar providing grade-level entry. The reason for the jog at the northeast corner of the east cellar wall seems elusive. Apparently built seamlessly as part of the original cellar, and before the addition of the north side of the house, it would then have supported a side aisle outlet running the length of the earlier two-room structure. Evidence for this survives in the pantry off the kitchen, though the cellar wall is the only evidence for the length. Upstairs evidence was thoroughly removed when the present western main block was created.

The first-floor plan of the Silvernail house is largely given over to the entrance hall and flanking parlors of the main block and the linear range of rooms provided for by the ell, in addition to space provided for by the lean-to extending off the rear of the main block and the bump-out from the north side of the ell. Chambers are situated above, on the second story of the main block, the rear extension, and in the half-story of the ell. In addition to the main stair in the front hall, access to the upper rooms is provided for by a back stair. The attic story, like the partially excavated basement, was left unfinished.

With the exception of north parlor, where some modern changes are evident, original and subsequent historic features survive throughout the interior and speak to the Silvernail house's history and physical and stylistic development. Notable among these are the main stair, of an open-stringer type, the baluster profiles in keeping with Greek Revival-style precedents, the turned newel post however more expressive

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of Italianate precedents. These sustain an oval-profiled handrail. The upper run of the stair, meanwhile, between the second floor and attic level, is of an enclosed type. Greek Revival-period treatments include door and window casings, of both the eared type as employed in the front parlors of the main block, and likewise heavily moulded architraves with corner blocks such as used in the hall. Interior doors are of two, four and six-paneled types, the former being of a distinctive Greek Revival type and consistent in date with the eared trim used for the parlor doors and windows. The eared and battered mantel in the southwest parlor is, like the eared trim and two-panel doors, of a mature Greek Revival type. Other aspects of early finish include wide board flooring, runs of moulded baseboards, and beaded interior posts. In a half story chamber of the ell, above the present-day dining room, is a chimney breast with built-in cupboard; this room likewise has a coved plaster ceiling. Walls are plaster on wood lath, excepting areas where fire-related water damage required reconstruction with more modern treatments. Period hardware includes two and five-finger cast butt hinges; both white and brown clay knobs; and tulip-form escutcheons.

**8. 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 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.)

**Areas of Significance**

(enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

**Period of Significance**

c. 1800- c. 1860

**Significant Dates**

c. 1800; c. 1840; c. 1860

**Significant Persons**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

N/A

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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## 8. Narrative Statement of Significance

### *Overview*

The Silvernail Homestead—occupied by five generations of the Silvernail family, early Palatine German settlers of this region—remains a historically and architecturally significant example of 19<sup>th</sup> century rural domestic architecture in Columbia County, New York. The Silvernail family's connection to this land dates to the time of the American Revolution, if not earlier, at which time they established themselves within Livingston Manor. The physical evolution of the Silvernail house, culminating with Greek Revival and Italianate style design features introduced in the middle decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, mirrors the growth of this Ancram area farming family, one which prospered during the 19<sup>th</sup> century but shared in the decline of regional agriculture in subsequent periods. Working backwards through the lives of the several generations of Silvernails who occupied the nominated dwelling, it is possible to understand how the house was expanded and changed with each evolving generation, with the attendant array of household and agricultural employees who often shared that space with the family. The Silvernail Homestead is being nominated for its architectural merit under Criterion C and likewise for its historic associations with the Silvernail family, and their early settlement and improvement of these lands, under Criterion A.

### *Historical Context*

The historic and architectural significance of the Silvernail Homestead is augmented by its well-preserved rural setting in the Ancram region of Columbia County. Ancram was positioned at the southeastern corner of Livingston Manor, an early, and among the most successful, of the large Colonial land-holdings in New York. Its success was based on its economic diversity—agriculture, manufacturing, and milling operations were sustained here—as well as the settlement of many tenant farm families. New York's first ironworks was established in 1743 at the hamlet of Ancram, giving the somewhat isolated area an unexpected prominence in New York province; some of its first settlers were Scots and Englishmen skilled in iron production. While this economic diversity brought wealth to the Livingston family who owned the manor lands, during the Colonial period it also brought prosperity to many of the tenants.

Despite its successes over three generations of Livingston ownership, the Manor underwent change in the post-Revolutionary era with new civic attitudes and expectations. Across New York new towns formed in existing and new counties, as the cessation of hostilities encouraged new settlement and development. First, Livingston Manor became the town of Livingston, and within a decade and half that large town was reconfigured into smaller towns, these being Livingston, Ancram and Taghkanic in 1803; and then further divided into Livingston, Gallatin, Ancram, Copake, and Taghkanic. For the first time, tenants had direct representation in the county government. Even before the Revolution, the third and last manor proprietor, Robert Livingston, who owned the entire Manor, dispensed with primogeniture and planned the division of Manor lands among his five sons. It was a moment of prescient planning, no doubt based on the contentious assaults by New England people after his father, Philip, had died in 1749.<sup>1</sup> Although ownership of the large tract came to be broken up among numerous Livingston heirs,

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<sup>1</sup> Sung Bok Kim, *Landlord and Tenant in Colonial New York. Manorial Society, 1664-1775* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978).

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the custom of farm tenancies prevailed during most of the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Despite Robert Livingston's apparent desire to avoid this, each time a Livingston land-owner died, tenants were ready to challenge the ownership of their farms by the inheriting Livingston generation through the 1840s<sup>2</sup>.

Livingston Manor tenants were of Dutch, Scots, and English extraction, with a large number of Palatine Germans. These Hudson Valley Germans, who began to arrive in the region beginning around 1710, amounted to the largest mass immigration of Europeans to the Colonial New World. In 1710 about 3,000 immigrants arrived in the New York Colony, having previously fled unstable and dire conditions in their native Rhine Valley. Some of the Palatines lived in a permanent free-held community at Germantown, the 8,000 acres purchased for the immigrants by Queen Anne from Robert Livingston.<sup>3</sup> But over the next decade or two, many more took up farming as tenants on the Manor or at Claverack, or as land-owners at Kinderhook, as well as in Schoharie, Ulster and Greene counties.<sup>4</sup> Among them was Nicholas and Gertruy Silbernagel, or Silvernail.

One of their grandsons, Johannes Silbernagel (1742-1811) married about 1770 Elizabeth Trafford, a daughter of William Trafford, from Middlesex, England, and a resident of Livingston Manor associated with the ironworks at Ancram.<sup>5</sup> This couple lived at Ancram and had five children: Catherine (1771-1845), Elinor (1774-1815), Johann (1779-1843), Peter (1781-1830) and Elizabeth (born c. 1770).<sup>6</sup>

Only two Silvernail family members—Peter and Coenradt—are represented on the Livingston Manor 1766 tax roll.<sup>7</sup> Two others—Nicholas and Wynant—lived at Kinderhook. Inexplicably, other members of the family evident in genealogical data were not taxed at this time, suggesting that they were not yet prosperous enough farmers to pay a tax, or were otherwise living in Dutchess County. This tax list seems loosely organized with respect to where people lived—but that they were listed in close sequence with several men associated with the Ancram iron works suggests that some were established in this southeastern part of the manor.

By 1779, that situation had changed. This tax roll itself is more reliable as “road list,” and the Poole Hill Road neighborhood has family and individual names that are documented there in the future, that is, in the 1790 census, the 1797 Wigram map, and the 1801 survey. Johannes Silvernagel is assessed at £900

<sup>2</sup> Ruth Piwonka, *Portrait of Livingston Manor* (Clermont, NY: Friends of Clermont, 1986).

<sup>3</sup> Walter Allen Knittle, *The Palatine Immigration*, 1939.

<sup>4</sup> Franklin Ellis, *History of Columbia County* (Philadelphia: Everts & Ensign, 1878).

<sup>5</sup> The 13 December 1783 will of Thomas Trafford of Cecil Street, Strand, Middlesex, England, mentions Trafford: “The rest of my personal estate to be sold and the produce invested in the purchase of Four per Cent Bank Annuities or other Gov 1 Securities and held in trust, the interest to be paid to my sister Ann Trafford during her life. After her decease I bequeath the whole of the principal (and accrued interest) to the eldest surviving son of my dear brother William Trafford, late residing at Livingston's Manor in the Province of New York in North America, for his sole use and benefit; but if there should be no son of my said brother surviving at the time of my death then I give the same to the eldest son of any son of my said brother William who should then be living; if no son then to eldest daughter &c.” from Henry F. Waters' *Abstracts of Wills Relating to Early American Families, with Genealogical Notes and Pedigrees Constructed from the Wills and from Other Records* (London, 1907; reprint Baltimore, 1969).

<sup>6</sup> For this and subsequent Silvernail genealogical data, see Silvernail family files at Columbia County Historical Society Library, Kinderhook, New York. Also see church baptismal and marriage records in the same repository.

<sup>7</sup> The colonial Albany County tax rolls for 1766 survive in the Philip John Schuyler Papers, at the New York Public Library and have been transcribed and published in Florence Christoph, *Upstate New York in the 1760s. Tax Lists and Selected Militia Rolls of Old Albany County 1760-1768* (Camden, Maine: Picton Press, 1992), 63, 67, 84, and 88.

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personal property, resulting in a tax of £22:10:-. A cousin or perhaps his brother, Nicholas Silvernail of the Copake area is assessed at £496 and taxed for £10:12:-. On the land tax roll, Nicholas is assessed for £150 (7:10:0 in taxes) and Johannes for £100 (£5 in taxes). No other family members are found on these Livingston Manor tax lists.<sup>8</sup>

The 1790 and 1800 Federal censuses, along with surveyor John Wigram's 1798 map of the Manor, provides information about Silvernail family members living on the Manor. A new generation comes to light at this point with nine family members named as heads of households across the town of Livingston. These early records, combined with earlier tax rolls, make it clear that the Silvernail family had resided on and worked the lands of this farm from at least the time of the Revolution and likely even a decade prior.

The last Manor lord, Robert Livingston (d. 1790) directed in his will that the eastern part be divided into four Great Lots, extending approximately from the Old Post Road or modern-day Route 9 easterly to the New York-Massachusetts border. From west to east, each lot was a quite wide; and from north to south, each was relatively narrow creating roughly rectangular-shaped parcels. Great Lot No. 1 was northernmost, and Great Lot No. 4 at the southern end of the manor.

Great Lot No. 4 was inherited by John Livingston (1750-1822), who in his will specified that the Roeliff Jansen Kill should serve as a natural division between the east and west sections of this Great Lot. The eastern part went to his son Robert LeRoy Livingston (1778-1836). In turn Robert LeRoy's eight children inherited the property and in 1846, divided it among themselves. These children were George D., John L., Edward, William LeRoy, Norah C., Catherine Cornelia (Mrs. Abraham) Pierce, Mary Elizabeth (Mrs. Andrew Pierce), and Anna Maria (Mrs. John) Rutgers. According to James D. Livingston and Sherry Penney, each received about twenty farms in this division.<sup>9</sup> However, more than twenty years before this division occurred, a distinctive land transaction occurred. Given the situation of the Manor land-owners and tenant farmers, the transaction was unusual. On April 22, 1825 Robert LeRoy Livingston sold two farms and a wood lot totaling 208.7 acres at \$17 an acre to John Silvernail of Livingston Manor. This was John Silvernail (1779-1843) and the deed describes the 76.8 acre farm in the occupancy of John and Peter Silvernail; Peter (1781-1830) was John's younger brother.<sup>10</sup> Further review of land transactions shows that Robert LeRoy Livingston made no other sales at this time, suggesting in turn a distinctive relationship between this Silvernail family and the land-owners.

John's will made particular provisions for his wife Barbara who was to have the use and occupancy of their house for her lifetime and to have meat and provisions, 2 cows, firewood, ten pounds of wool, or the value thereof, and one hundred dollars a year. The entire property was bequeathed to his eldest son John (1804-1875). The 1850 Federal census reveals interesting information about their households. Barbara lived in the small house across the road with a neighbor or housekeeper, Jane Finkle, aged 35. In the main house lived John, 45 years old, a prosperous farmer whose property was valued at \$28,000; Elijah Hover, 40 years of age; Emily Snyder, 17 years old; William Hoysradt, 26 years of age; Henry

<sup>8</sup> March 1779 Livingston Manor tax rolls for personal property and for real property, New York State Archives.

<sup>9</sup> James D. Livingston and Sherry H. Penney, "The Breakup of Livingston Manor" in *The Livingston Legacy; Three Centuries of American History*, Richard T. Wiles, ed. (Annandale: Bard College, 1987), 411.

<sup>10</sup> Columbia County Clerk's Office, *Deeds K: 14-16*, 22 April 1825; recorded 25 June 1826.

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Strever, 40 years old; Henry Turpin, a 40 year-old laborer; Esther, age 8; Tammy, age 5; and Henry, 13 years of age—six adults and three children. Except for Henry Turpin and the three children, the people living in the household were either kin or neighbors who must have also worked on the farm. Such a full household appears to have been a pattern suggested in the 1830 census as well.<sup>11</sup>

By 1855, as per the New York State census, the household composition had dramatically altered. Living in the frame house, valued at \$2,000, were John, now 50 years old, his three children Henry, 18 years old, Esther, 13 years of age, and Eliza Strever, a domestic and 43 years old. The little girl Tammy had died the preceding year. In the small frame house across the road, valued at \$500, was residing Barbara Silvernail, now 60 years old, and Jane Finkle. Another nearby house appears to have been occupied by laborers who might have worked on the Silvernail farm. In later censuses, the number of farm laborers in the area suggests that farming was conducted on a large scale. The 1855 census includes detailed information about the farm operation, revealing an enormous operation requiring many hands to carry it off. The data recorded shows John Silvernail heading an ambitious and diverse agricultural enterprise—450 improved acres and 100 unimproved acres. The farm was valued at \$30,000, the stock at \$3,000, and tools at \$750. 83 acres were plowed, none lay fallow, and 50 acres were given over to meadow. Produce in the previous year amounted to 75 tons of hay, 1,600 bushels of oats on 45 acres, 200 bushels of rye on 20 acres, 100 bushels of rye on 6 acres, 300 bushels of corn on 30 acres, 200 bushels of potatoes on 11 acres, and 500 bushels of apples. Livestock consisted of 12 horses, neat cattle consisting of 4 under 1 year and 2 over 1 year, 4 oxen and 14 cows of which 2 were slaughtered, 14 milk cows which produced 2,000 pounds of butter, 56 pigs, and 284 head of sheep that yielded 240 fleeces turned into 200 pounds of wool. The farm likewise sold \$60 worth of eggs.<sup>12</sup> Not only does this make the distinctive household composition comprehensible, but it also gives insight to room use in the house.

By 1860, the composition of the household had changed again. New to the household was Tama Silvernail, a 51-year old woman, perhaps a wife of John's not recorded in family history compilations. Henry B., at 21 years, was involved commerce and merchandizing, and Esther was 17 years. The 21-year old Margaret Redmond, domestic, and 31-year old Owen Burns, farm laborer, were from Ireland, while Jacob Hoysradt, 33 years old, and James Snyder, 19 years of age, also were farm workers and from the Ancram area. In 1870 John is recorded as 65 years of age; Esther, now the housekeeper, is noted as 23 years old; new to the household is Charles aged 12 years. Also new were Catherine Kelly, a 24 year-old Irish domestic servant, and 45-year old James Meekle, a Canadian-born farm laborer. Meekle and Esther Silvernail married in 1871.

When John Silvernail died in 1875, his estate executor Jacob W. Hoysradt indicated that Silvernail's estate owed \$12,356.42. He had mortgaged his farm properties for reasons unknown at this time. Perhaps he had experienced farm failures—crop losses due to bad weather or disease affecting his livestock— or perhaps he had invested in the local railroads that were affected by the Depression of 1873-1879. The properties were put up for sale; Frank Hoysradt purchased the adjoining Schults farm,

<sup>11</sup>1850 Federal Census for Ancram. The 1840 Federal Census for Ancram indicates that John (d 1843) and Barbara Silvernail lived in the small house with little girl (between 5 and 10 years old) and another woman (a housekeeper [?] between 20 and 30 years). In the main house, John (d 1875) and Tammy lived with two girls (between 5-10 and 15-20 respectively) and youths between 10-15 and 15-20, respectively) and a little boy under five years.

<sup>12</sup>1855 New York State census, ms, Columbia County Clerk's Office, Hudson, New York.

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including the \$5,000 mortgage attached to it, for \$50, and the 25-acre woodlot for \$250, while James Meekle purchased the homestead farm for \$2,500, with two mortgages totaling \$6,700 attached to it. Although the records are not clear, Meekle apparently never fully satisfied the mortgages; neighboring families appear to have assisted in ways so the family could continue to stay at the homestead farm.<sup>13</sup>

Clear census documentation in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century censuses is sparse. James Meekle, now married to Esther Silvernail, has not yet been found in these records. However, he received a full entry in the volume *Columbia County at the End of the Century*:

MEEKLE, James, p. o. Ancram Lead Mines, was born in Canada, of Scotch parents, January 16, 1843, the only son of James and Janet (Fallow) Meekle. He attended the schools of Canada, and at the age of fourteen years began working as a farm laborer, locating in Lewis county, N. Y., where he also attended school. In 1862 he removed to Columbia county, and in 1878 purchased the farm he now occupies. In 1871 he was married to Esther, daughter of John and Tammy (Strever) Silvernail. They have two children: Cora, and Grace, wife of Strever Pool. Mr. Meekle has served as assessor three years, and as highway commissioner two terms, and has taken an active interest in school and church matters.<sup>14</sup>

The girl Cora died as a young woman, but her sister Grace (b. 1873) married in 1893 Strever Poole. The 1900 census shows they lived with his father Daniel (76 years) and their son Frank (1 year) at Pine Plains. Since they are also documented on an early 20<sup>th</sup> century map of the county, they must have returned to the farm soon after the turn of the century. The 1920 census documents the Poole family at Ancram where he is a dairy farmer along with his son Frank, and Aldrich Burdick, a hired man. And in 1930, Strever, Grace, and Frank are still at the dairy farm. Grace Poole lived in the house until her death in 1964. She bequeathed the farm to Henry R and Helen Hoysradt. In 1965 the present 11.30 acre parcel was subdivided from the greater farm. Following that time has been a succession of owners who, until the present owners, have had a mixed record of stewardship for the property.

*Architectural Overview*

The Silvernail house followed a pattern not atypical for rural dwellings, modified and expanded as it was a number of times during its history to arrive at its current form and appearance. The west-facing façade of the main block, formed of two distinct sections during separate building episodes, portrays the design precepts of the Greek Revival style, as expressed in its austere and broadly handled decorative treatments, including a deep frieze punctuated by "eyebrow" windows, corresponding corner pilasters, and a nearly full-width porch supported by square Doric piers or antae. The double-leaf doors and paneled aprons below the first-story windows represent minor Italianate-style updates, presumably undertaken slightly later, otherwise this elevation is thoroughly Greek Revival in character and fully expressive of that style's influence. A trabeated frontispiece likewise of Greek Revival conception calls to notice the south entrance into the main block, while the south elevation of the ell likewise employs finish features linking it to the treatments of the main block, such as the deep frieze with "eyebrow" windows and corner pilasters.

<sup>13</sup>Columbia County Clerk's Office, Deeds 62:83. Jacob M Hoysradt executor of the estate of John Silvernail to James Meikle, June 8, 1878

<sup>14</sup>*Columbia County at the End of the Century* (1900), 338.

Property Name *Silvernail Homestead*  
Location *Ancram, Columbia County, New York*

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section Number 8 Page 6

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As with the exterior, interior detailing largely reflects the Greek Revival style, as well. The influence of the builders guides of Benjamin, Lafever, Shaw and others would assist in the dissemination of this style as the 1830s and 1840s unfolded, and prior to the advent of the Picturesque movement. Very little of the original Federal-style finish remains intact, save for perhaps some quantities of moulded trim and six-panel doors. The primary stair is of the open stringer type, the balusters being of a profile typical of the Greek Revival period, the turned newel post however more expressive of Italianate precedents, the handrail being of ovoid profile. The southwest parlor of the main block is the best finished area within the Silvernail dwelling, the woodwork here including shouldered and battered architraves used to dress door and window openings and likewise the firebox opening, along with moulded baseboards and paneled aprons below the windows. Other somewhat typical Greek Revival style treatments include the door and window trim combining moulded architraves and cornerblocks, such as present in the entrance hall.

The Silvernail house's various sections were built using traditional timber frame joinery; the front block was formed with two distinctive framing sections, the southernmost representing the earliest section of the dwelling, these having been butted together to form the front block as presently constituted. The manner in which its footprint was expanded and ornamental treatments developed reflects a response to both circumstance and prevailing tastes as distilled at the folk level by rural builders.

Property Name *Silvernail Homestead*  
Location *Ancram, Columbia County, New York*

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 9 Page 1

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

*Manuscripts & Archival Material*

Deeds, Columbia County Clerk's Office, Hudson, New York: Robert LeRoy Livingston to John Silvernail April 22, 1825 (recorded June 25, 1826). Deeds K: 14; Will of John Silvernail, dated February 3, 1843; recorded August 23, 1845. Wills J: 266; Jacob M Hoysradt executor of the estate of John Silvernail to James Meikle June 8, 1878 (recorded June 8, 1878). Deeds 62: 83; Alvin Killmer and Christina Killmer to James Meikle April, 1895 (recorded April 20, 1895) Deeds 99: 203; Henry R. Hoysradt and Helén J. Hoysradt to Maxwell D. Baker and Arlouine Baker December 16, 1965 (recorded December 23, 1965) Deeds 420: 312; Maxwell D. Baker and Arlouine Baker to Leigh M. Miller and Lynden B. Miller September 13, 1971 (recorded September 21, 1975) Deeds 483: 414; Leigh M. Miller and Lynden B. Miller to Robert Tannenbaum and Susan Tannenbaum December 21, 1976 (recorded January 7, 1977) Deeds 527: 781; Robert Tannenbaum and Susan Tannenbaum to Robert Tannenbaum a/k/a Robert S.Tannenbaum November 16 1987 (recorded December 1, 1987) Deeds 605: 757; Robert Tannenbaum a/k/a Robert S.Tannenbaum to Robert Tannenbaum a/k/a Robert S.Tannenbaum and Joanne M. Badagliacco October 10 1989 (recorded October 26, 1989) Deeds 637: 225; Joanne M. Badagliacco and Robert S. Tannenbaum to Jonathan N Hallam and Thomas M. Swope November 1, 1996 (recorded November 6, 1996) Deeds 284: 1643; Jonathan N Hallam and Thomas M. Swope to Gregory Log June 22, 1998 (recorded June 22, 1998) Cartridge 314: frame 2431.

Federal Census 1790, 1800, 1810, 1820, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1900, 1910, and 1920. New York State 1855, 1865 & 1875.

Silvernail family files. Columbia County Historical Society Library, Kinderhook, New York.

*Published Sources*

Christopher, Florence. *Upstate New York in the 1760s: Tax Lists and Selected Militia Rolls of Old Albany County 1760-1768.*

Camden, Maine: Picton Press, 1992), 63, 67, 84, and 88.

Ellis, Franklin. *History of Columbia County.* Philadelphia: Everts & Ensign, 1878.

Kim, Sung Bok. *Landlord and Tenant in Colonial New York. Manorial Society, 1664-1775.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978.

Knittle, Walter Allen. *The Palatine Immigration,* 1939.

Piwonka, Ruth. *Portrait of Livingston Manor.* Clermont: Friends of Clermont, 1986.

Waters, Henry F. *Abstracts of Wills Relating to Early American Families, with Genealogical Notes and Pedigrees Constructed from the Wills and from Other Records* London, 1907; reprint Baltimore, 1969.

Wiles, Richard, ed. T. *The Livingston Legacy; Three Centuries of American History.* Annandale: Bard College, 1987.

Silvennial House  
Name of Property

Columbia County, New York  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 11.39 acres

### UTM References

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 18	614161	4653960	2 18	614221	4653792	3 18	614118	4653680
Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
4 18	613996	4653650	5 18	613904	4653897			
Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing			

### 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 Ruth Piwonka; contact William E. Krattinger, NYS OPRHP  
organization NYS OPRHP, Field Services Bureau date January 2010  
street & number Peebles Island State Park telephone (518) 237-8643  
city or town Waterford state NY zip code 12866

### 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 & 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 SHPO or FPO.)

name/title Gregory Long  
street & number P.O. Box 211 telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Ancram state NY zip code 12502

**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 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Property Name *Silvernail Homestead*  
Location *Ancram, Columbia County, New York*

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 10 Page 1

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**10. Geographical Data**

*Verbal Boundary Description*

The boundary for the National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Silvernail Homestead is shown on the enclosed map, entitled "Silvernail Homestead, Ancram vicinity, Columbia County, New York."

*Boundary Justification*

The boundary for the Silvernail Homestead has been drawn to correspond with the current legal tax boundary for the nominated property. All of this land, 11.39 acres in extent, is historically associated with the cited period of significance for the nomination, c. 1800- c. 1860.

Property Name *Silvernail Homestead*  
Location *Ancram, Columbia County, New York*

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

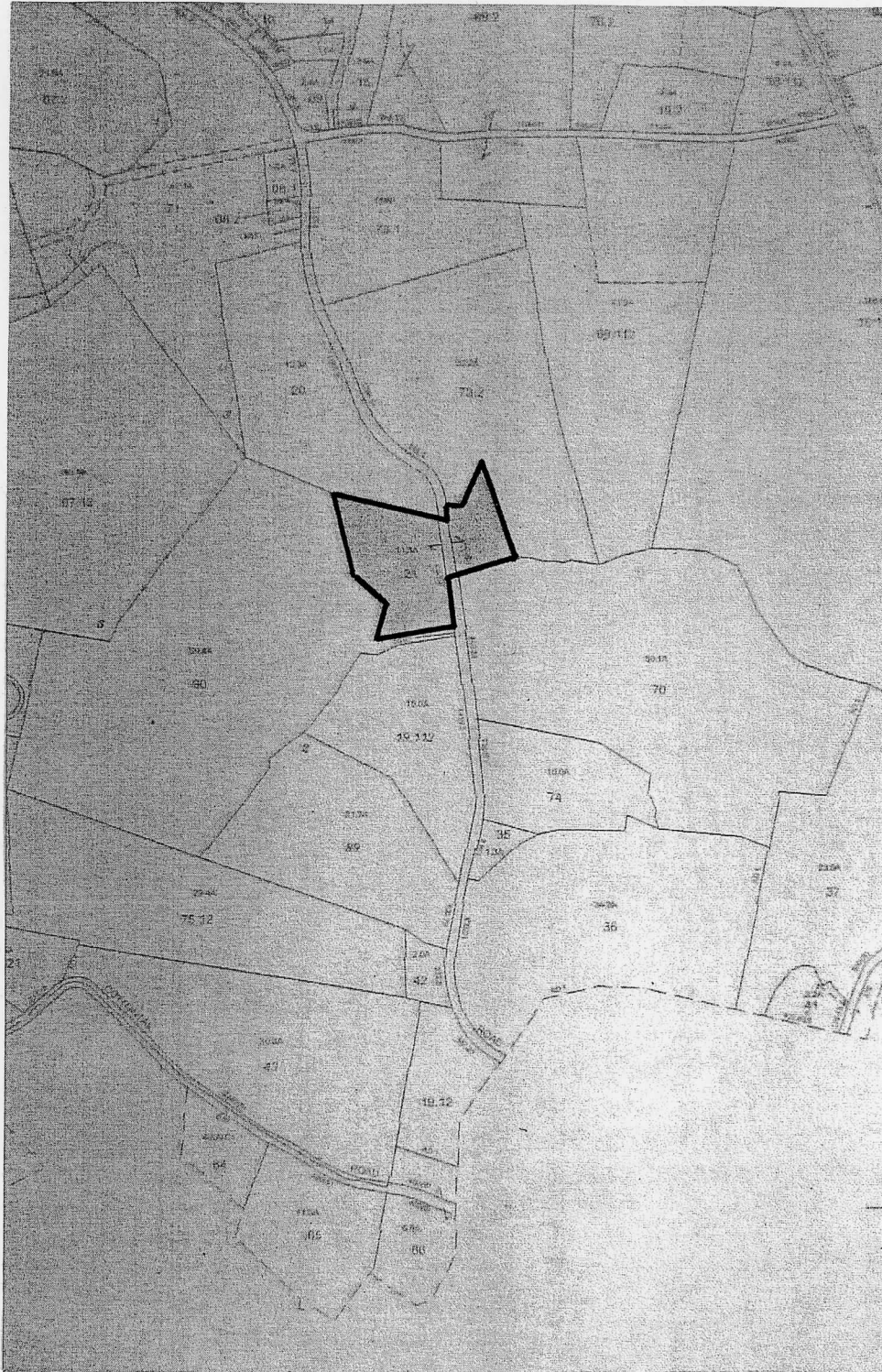
**Photographs**

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**Photographs**

Photographs by William E. Krattinger  
January 2010

1. Exterior, view eastward, showing primary west-facing elevation
2. Exterior, view roughly northward, showing south elevation of main block and ell
3. Exterior, detail, double-leaf front doors and shouldered architrave
4. Interior, staircase, entrance hall of main block
5. Interior, staircase, second floor hall
6. Interior, south parlor main block, view showing fireplace against south wall
7. Interior, north parlor, view back towards entrance hall
8. Interior, ell, view back into south parlor of main block, showing Greek Revival door and trim



Silvernail Homestead, Ancram vicinity, Columbia County, New York

Boundary shown as solid black outline  
Scale: 1" is equal to approximately 950'

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Silvernail Homestead

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Columbia

DATE RECEIVED: 4/28/10      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/25/10  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/09/10      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/12/10  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 10000332

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: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: Y NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    4/11/10 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*A good local example of original multi-generational family homestead. The house shows the changes and impact of each generation also a good local example of genuine settlers to the area*

RECOM./CRITERIA Ag & R

REVIEWER [Signature] 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.



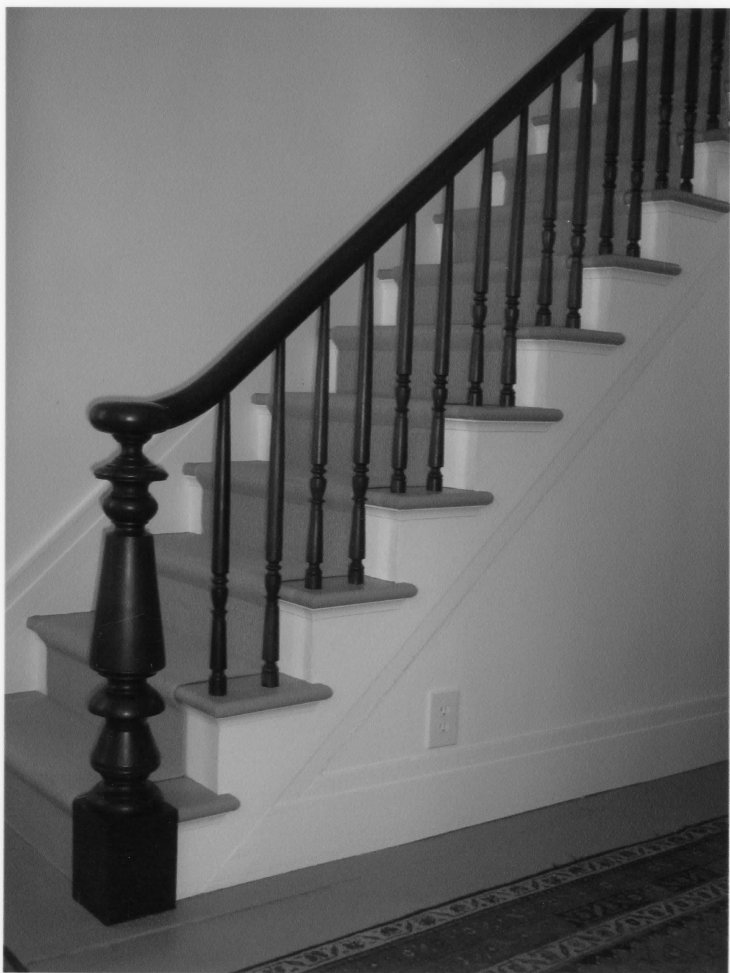
SILVERNAIL HOMESTEAD  
ANCRAM, NY #1



SILVERNAIL HOMESTEAD  
ANCRAAM, NY #2



SILVERNAIL HOMESTEAD  
ANCRAM, NY #3



SILVERNAIL HOMESTEAD  
ANCRAM, NY #4



SILVERDALE HOMESTEAD  
ANCRAM, NY #5

EPSON

EPSON

EPSON

EPSON



SILVERNAIL HOMESTEAD  
ANDRAM, NY #6



SILVERMAIL HOMESTEAD  
ANCHAM, NY #7



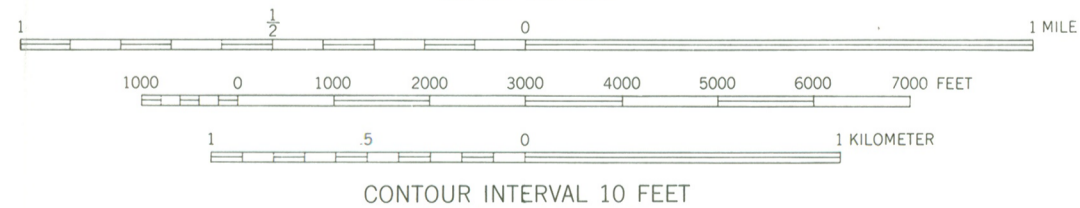
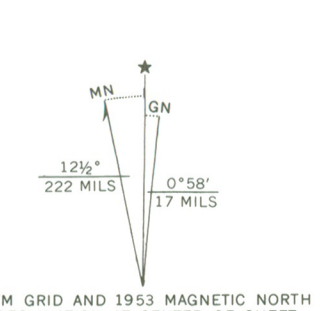
SILVERNAIL HOMESTEAD  
ANCRAM, NY #8



SILVERMAN HOMESTEAD  
POOLE HILL ROAD  
ANGRAM VIC. COLUMBIA  
COUNTY, NEW YORK  
COPAQUE QUAD. 1:24000

ZONE 18  
1) 614161 4653740  
2) 614221 4653772  
3) 614118 4653680  
4) 613916 4653650  
5) 613704 4653877

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and USC&GS  
Topography in Massachusetts by plane-table surveys 1946  
Topography in New York from aerial photographs by multiplex methods  
Aerial photographs taken 1949. Field check 1953  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grids based on New York coordinate system,  
east zone, and Massachusetts (Mainland) coordinate system  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 18, shown in blue  
State Park boundaries shown represent proposed  
limits and not state ownership



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
U.S. Route	State Route

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

COPAQUE, N.Y.-MASS.  
SE/4 COPAQUE 15' QUADRANGLE  
N4200-W7330/7.5  
1953  
AMS 6268 II SE-SERIES V821



**New York State Office of Parks,  
Recreation and Historic Preservation**

Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau • Peebles Island, PO Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189

518-237-8643

www.nysparks.com



**David A. Paterson**

Governor

**Carol Ash**

Commissioner

April 28, 2010

Ms. Alexis Abernathy  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 Eye St. NW  
8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: Transmittal of National Register  
Nominations

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to transmit four new National Register nominations to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register as follows:

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Buffalo, Erie Co., NY

Forth House, Livingston, Columbia Co., NY

Silvernail Homestead, Ancram, Columbia Co., NY

Walter's Hot Dog Stand, Mamaroneck, Westchester Co., NY

A replacement CD is also enclosed for the Meaker Warehouse nomination, Syracuse, Onondaga Co., NY as discussed.

Thank you for your assistance in processing these proposals. Please feel free to call on me at 518-237-8643 ext. 3258 if any questions arise.

Sincerely,

Mark L. Peckham  
National Register  
Program Coordinator

enclosures