

Homer Noble Farm (Robert Frost Farm (1940-1963))

Location: One mile north of Vermont 125, three miles east of Ripton, Vermont

Ownership: Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont, Mr. James I. Armstrong, President

Statement of Significance

In the fall of 1940, Robert Frost purchased a farm in the Green Mountains of Vermont, three miles east of the small community of Ripton. Living and writing there during the summer and fall months until his death in 1963, Frost produced five volumes of poetry, one of which, A Witness Tree, earned him his fourth Pulitzer Prize. Now owned by Middlebury College, the Frost cabin stands in excellent condition and contains many of the poet's furnishings. The farm is not open to the general public but may be seen by scholars, students, and writers by appointment.

History

Tragedy accompanied Frost's rise in stature. As honorary degrees, prizes, and encomiums from learned societies proliferated, the poet privately grieved as death touched his family. The worst blow came on March 20, 1938, with the death of Elinor. The following month he resigned from Amherst.

In the summer of 1938, Frost loaned The Gully to a friend but ended up spending most of his time there as a visitor. The hay fever

season found him safely ensconced in the house at Concord Corners near St. Johnsbury.

The following May, Frost accepted an appointment at Harvard. As the Ralph Waldo Emerson Fellow in Poetry, he was required to teach one seminar a week during one semester. He continued to hold a position at the university until the spring of 1942. In the beginning, Frost occupied a small apartment at 88 Mt. Vernon Street in Cambridge but in 1941 purchased a half double house on Brewster Street, which he retained many years after his connection with Harvard ended.

In the fall of 1940, the Frost family experienced another tragedy. The poet's only son Carol committed suicide. It was later in the year that Frost bought a new farm, free from painful memories of the past, in Rippon, Vermont.

Frost chose a site eight miles from Middlebury College and two miles from the Bread Loaf Inn, where each summer the college sponsored the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference. Frost knew the area well. He had been influential in establishing the Bread Loaf Writer's Conference, and he had delivered an annual lecture at the Bread Loaf School of English since 1921.

Nestled in the Green Mountains, the 300-acre tract was really a complex of farms fitted together by Frost to form his retreat.

Principal among the components was the Homer Noble farm with its old farmhouse and rustic cabin. Two other houses stood on the property, so Frost had a variety of residences to choose from. The cabin proved to be the best suited to his needs.

Frost "rented" the Homer Noble farmhouse to his private secretary and her husband, Kathleen and Dr. Theodore Morrison. The dwelling was a simple one, two stories in height, with living room on either side of the entry, a kitchen and pantry wing in the rear, and a number of bedrooms above.

The Frost cabin stood on a hillside above the Noble farmhouse. Unpainted log siding covered the small structure. A sturdy but clumsily built porch added to its ramshackle appearance. Although small, the cabin was large enough to comfortably house one person. The living room extended the length of the south side of the building. Behind it on the left were the kitchen, bath, and pantry. To the right were two bedrooms. Attached to the rear of the structure was a woodshed. A large attic provided plenty of storage space. In the beginning Frost refused to have a telephone installed in the cabin, since there was one in the Noble farmhouse. A bell attached to a clothesline strung between the house and the cabin let him know when dinner was ready or when visitors had arrived.

Frost lived very simply at Ripton. He cooked many of his meals, made his own bed, and chopped all the wood for his fireplace. He grew vegetables for himself and the Morrisons. Frost normally

rose late in the day and wrote, read, or conversed with friends far into the night. He continued his habit of taking long walks, especially at night in the company of his dog Gullie.

Frost spent most of the period from May to November of each year at the Ripton farm until his death in 1963. He usually wintered in Florida. From 1943 to 1949 he held the George Tricker Fellowship at Dartmouth and then renewed his association with Amherst College, when in 1949 he was appointed the Simson Fellow for life. His duties at Amherst were few; he usually fulfilled responsibility by lecturing on campus for a week or two each year. In 1953 he served as Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress.

The older Frost grew, the more honored he became. In 1961 President-elect John F. Kennedy invited him to participate in the inauguration, and on March 26, 1962, Congress awarded him a medal on his eighty-eighth birthday.

Both honors and public attention gratified Frost but not to the detriment of his art. Never just a regional poet, his poetry continued to contemplate life's meaning. A Witness Tree, which appeared in 1942, earned him his fourth Pulitzer Prize. A Masque of Reason was published in 1945, followed two years later by A Masque of Mercy and Steeple Bush. His final volume, In the Clearing, appeared in 1962. He died on January 27, 1963.

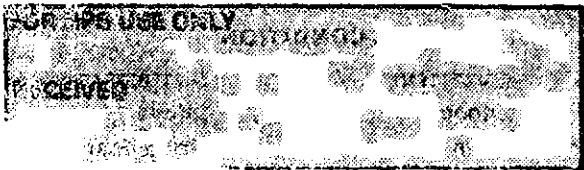
Before his death, Frost made arrangements to divide his Ripton property. To his friends the Morrises, he gave about 150 acres with the Homer Noble farmhouse and cabin. To Stafford Dragon, his friend and caretaker, he left an adjoining tract. Earlier he had sold the so-called Eubar place to the Donald Gordons of Miami, parents of the wife of his only grandson, Prescott.

Condition

Middlebury College bought the Homer Noble farmhouse and cabin from the Morrises in 1966. As a part of the agreement, the couple retained the right to occupy the house during the summer months for a 10-year period. In consequence the house and cabin are not open to the general public and may be seen only by arrangement with Middlebury College.

The Robert Frost cabin stands in excellent condition. Recent minor repairs have been made, including replacement of the original roofing material. The cabin is furnished for use by the Morrises, and although most of the items have Frost provenience no attempt has been made to keep things exactly as they were when Frost lived there. The college recently acquired the Frost library, consisting mostly of Modern Library editions given to the poet by Bennett Corf, which it plans to return to the now empty bookshelves found in the living room. The buildings and grounds are well maintained. Rich in natural beauty, the property is located far enough away from main-traveled roads so that quietude prevails.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Robert Frost Farm (Homer Noble Farm)

AND/OR COMMON Robert Frost Farm (Homer Noble Farm)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 1/2 mile north of Vermont Route 125,
about 3 miles east of Ripton

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN Ripton

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT At Large

STATE Vermont

CODE 050

COUNTY Addison

CODE 001

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME President and Fellows of Middlebury College

(Contact: Mr. James D. Ross,
Business Manager)

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Middlebury

VICINITY OF

STATE Vermont

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Town Clerk's Office

(Book 17, Page 1)

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Ripton

STATE Vermont

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE "Sites Associated with Robert Frost, New Hampshire and Vermont"

DATE 1968

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service

CITY, TOWN Washington

STATE D. C.

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input 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 Homer Noble Farm is located about three miles east of the small community of Ripton and about 1/2 mile north of Vermont Route 125 in the Green Mountains. An unimproved town road leads from Route 125 up a gentle slope to the farm buildings, which stand in rolling meadows on the western portion of the 150-acre property; the remaining--and larger--portion of the farm now appears to be heavily wooded. Extant buildings on the Noble property include the farmhouse, a wooden storage shed, a cabin, and a hay shed (specific dates not known) all appear to be in excellent condition, except the hay shed, and relatively unaltered in character. The barn which originally stood near the hay shed had deteriorated badly and was demolished in 1971.

The original Noble farmhouse stands to the west of the driveway which extends north from the town road. A simple frame and clapboard building on a low foundation, it consists of a 1-1/2-story main block with a 1-story and 1-1/2 story ells on the rear (west), all with gabled roofs. A screened porch covers the main entrance; additional entrances on the south elevation of the main block and the east elevation of the second ell are covered by hoods supported on plain wooden brackets. The first floor contains two living rooms in the main block and a dining room, kitchen, and pantry in the ells; a number of bedrooms are located on the second floor.

The cabin which Robert Frost occupied stands above the farmhouse (north) at the edge of the woods. A roughly square 1-story building, it is covered with log siding and has a gabled roof. On the west elevation is a screened porch, on the north a gable-roofed woodshed covered with vertical plank siding. The living room extends across the south side of the cabin. Behind it on the left (west) are the kitchen, pantry, and bath; on the right are two small bedrooms. In his early years at the cabin, Frost refused to have a telephone installed since there was one at the farmhouse; a bell attached to a clothesline strung between the house and the cabin let him know when dinner was ready or when visitors had arrived. Although most of the furnishings of the cabin have Frost provenience, they have not been kept exactly as they were when Frost lived there. Middlebury College has acquired Frost's library, consisting mostly of Modern Library editions given to the poet by Bennett Cerf, and plans to return it to the empty bookshelves in the living room.

In the meadow between the cabin and the house is the small apple orchard which Frost planted and the site of the vegetable garden which he tended each summer. To the southwest of the house is a wooden storage shed, 1-story with gabled roof. To the southeast of the house, on the opposite side of the driveway, is an open hay shed, now in deteriorated condition, and the site of the original Nobel barn, where Frost frequently kept a horse and a few cows.

There have been no major intrusions on the historic setting of the Homer Noble Farm. The property is bounded directly on the east, north, and west by the Green Mountain National Forest. On the south are largely undeveloped private lands with additional sections of the national forest beyond.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1940-1963 (Frost ownership) BUILDER/ARCHITECT not known

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The author of 11 volumes of poetry, Robert Frost has been one of the few 20th century poets to command both critical respect and wide readership. During his lifetime he reaped more honors than any other American poet before him. On four occasions he received the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry: in 1924 for New Hampshire, in 1931 for Collected Poems, in 1937 for A Further Range, and in 1943 for A Witness Tree.

In the fall of 1940, Frost purchased the Homer Noble Farm, located about three miles east of the small community of Ripton in the Green Mountains of Vermont. Associated with the 150-acre property were a 1-1/2-story frame and clapboard farmhouse, a wooden barn and hay shed, and a 1-story log-walled cabin. Living and writing there during the summer and fall months until his death in 1963, Frost produced five volumes of poetry including his fourth Pulitzer Prize-winner

The Homer Noble Farm is now owned by Middlebury College. The barn has been demolished but the farmhouse and cabin are in excellent condition and relatively unaltered. The property is not open to the general public but scholars, students, and writers may visit by appointment.

Historical Background

Robert Frost was born on March 26, 1874, in San Francisco, California. He was the son of William Prescott Frost, Jr., a newspaper reporter from Lawrence, Massachusetts, and Isabelle Woodie Frost, a former teacher who had been born in Edinburgh, Scotland. Robert was 11 years old when his father died of tuberculosis. Honoring a last request, the family took the body back to Lawrence for burial. No funds were available for the return trip and Mrs. Frost settled with her children--Robert and his younger sister Jeanie--in Salem, New Hampshire, where she earned a living for several years by teaching school.

Frost entered Dartmouth College in the fall of 1892 but disliked formal study so intensely that he left after only two months. During the next two years, he earned a living in miscellaneous ways while sending poems to uninterested editors. In 1894, to celebrate his first sale of a poem--"My Butterfly: An Elegy," published by the New York Independent--he privately printed six of his poems in a booklet entitled Twilight an edition limited to two copies, one for his affianced, Elinor White, and one for himself.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

Robert Frost Farm (Homer Noble Farm)

CONTINUATION SHEET

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After his marriage in 1895, Robert Frost taught for two years at his mother's private school in Lawrence and then spent the next two years as a special student at Harvard. In 1900, for reasons of health, he moved to a small farm in Derry, New Hampshire, and conducted a small poultry business there until 1905. Failing as a farmer, he taught various subjects in the Pinkerton Academy at Derry from 1905 to 1911 and then moved to Plymouth, New Hampshire, where he taught psychology for a year in the New Hampshire State Normal School.

By 1912 Frost had decided to devote his main efforts to poetry, and fortified with the money obtained from the sale of the Derry farm and an annuity of \$800 left him by his grandfather, Frost set sail for England with his family. Settling first in Buckinghamshire and then in Herefordshire, he cultivated the friendship of a number of English poets. Composing a few new poems and selecting others written at Derry and elsewhere, Frost prepared a volume for publication. Mrs. Alfred Nutt of London brought out the first book, A Boy's Will in 1913. A second, North of Boston, appeared the following year. The cordial praise given those poems by British men of letters won him lasting friendships in England and attracted the surprised attention of critics and editors in his native land. When he returned to the United States in 1915, his first two books had been reissued in New York and North of Boston soon became a best seller. A third volume, Mountain Interval was published in 1916.

After his return from England, Frost purchased a farm two miles west of Franconia in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. In 1917 he accepted a position as Professor of English at Amherst College. During the rest of his life, Frost spent a part of almost every year teaching and working in a college atmosphere. As his reputation grew, the demands made upon him as a teacher decreased, and he held a number of Fellowships at various colleges, all of which gave him a great deal of freedom to pursue his art. His major appointments were at Amherst (1917-1920, 1923-1925, 1926-1938, 1949-1963), the University of Michigan (1921-1923, 1925-1926), Harvard (1939-1942), and Dartmouth (1943-1949).

Throughout his life, Frost continued to return to the New England countryside when the weather was good and his schedule permitted. In 1920 he bought the Peleg Cole Farm in South Shaftsbury, Vermont. In December of 1923 he purchased a second farm in the area, "The Gully," which he kept until after the death of his wife 10 years later. In 1940 Frost purchased the 150-acre Homer Noble Farm near Ripton, Vermont, located eight miles from Middlebury College and two miles from the Bread Loaf Inn, where each summer the college sponsored the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference. Frost knew the area well. He had been influential in establishing the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference, and he had delivered an annual lecture at the Middlebury School of English since 1921.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

Robert Frost Farm (Homer Noble Farm)

CONTINUATION SHEET

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From 1940 until his death in 1963, Frost spent the summer and fall months of each year at Ripton (springs were spent at Cambridge, Massachusetts, and winters at the New England style bungalow that he built on rural land near Coral Gables, Florida) Frost lived simply at the Noble Farm, occupying the log-walled cabin on the hillside above the farmhouse, which he "rented" to his private secretary and her husband, Kathleen and Theodore Morrison. He cooked many of his own meals when not eating at the farmhouse, made his own bed, cut all the wood for his fireplace, and grew vegetables for the Morrises and himself Frost normally rose late in the day and wrote, read, or talked with friends far into the night He continued his habit of taking long walks, especially at night, in the company of his dog Gullie.

Robert Frost reaped more honors during his lifetime than any other American poet before him. On four occasions he received the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1924 for New Hampshire, in 1931 for Collected Poems, in 1937 for A Further Range, and in 1943 for A Witness Tree. In 1939 he became the third poet in history to receive the coveted gold medal of the National Institute of Arts and Letters In 1958 he was appointed Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress Frost became such a national institution that he was asked to read a poem at the inauguration of President John F Kennedy on January 20, 1961 Perhaps the most eloquent tribute paid to him after his death was made by a fellow poet, John Ciardi, who said simply "He was our best "

Before his death, Frost made arrangements for the transfer of the Homer Noble Farm to the Morrises Adjoining parcels of land that he had acquired were left to his friend and caretaker, Stafford Dragon, and sold to the Donald Gordons, parents of the wife of his only grandson, Prescott Middlebury College bought the Homer Noble Farm from the Morrises in 1966. As part of the purchase agreement, the couple retained the right to occupy the house during the summer months for a 10-year period. In consequence the farmhouse and cabin are not open to the general public; however, scholars, students, and writers may visit them by arrangement with the College.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Frost, Robert, Complete Poems of Robert Frost, (New York, 1964)
 Gould, Jean, Robert Frost. The Aim Was Song, (New York, 1964)
 Munson, Gorham B., Robert Frost, (Chicago, 1962)
 Spiller, Robert E., et. al. Literary History of the United States, rev. ed.,
 (new York, 1960)
 Thompson, Lawrence, Fire and Ice: the Art and Thought of Robert Frost, (New York, 1942)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 150 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 8	6 6 1 6 4 0	4 8 7 0 2 8 0	B	1 8	6 6 1 6 6 0	4 8 6 9 6 9 0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	1 8	6 5 9 7 6 0	4 8 6 9 9 4 0	D	1 8	6 5 9 7 6 0	4 8 7 0 6 6 0

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries of the national historic landmark designation for the Robert Frost Farm (Homer Noble Farm), shown in red on the accompanying sketch map, are those of the 150-acre property as acquired by the President and Fellows of Middlebury College from Theodore and Kathleen J. Morrison by deed recorded in the Ripton Land Records on December 29, 1966 (Book 17, page 1) bounded easterly, northerly, and westerly by lands of the United States Government (Green Mountain National Forest administered by the United States Forest Service) and southerly by lands of William H. Upson, lands of

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

Original Form prepared by: John D. McDermott, 1968
 NAME/TITLE Polly M. Rettig, Historian

ORGANIZATION Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service

DATE 12/3/75

STREET & NUMBER 1100 L Street, N.W.

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN Washington

523-5484

Landmark Designated: March 23, 1968

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE

date Mar 24, 1978
 Boundary Certified: [Signature]
 State Historic Preservation Officer

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 3-31-78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

Robert Frost Farm (Homer Noble Farm)

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

Thompson, Lawrance, ed. Selected Letters of Robert Frost (New York, 1964)
Untermeyer, Louis Robert Frost. A Backward Look (Washington, D. C., 1964)

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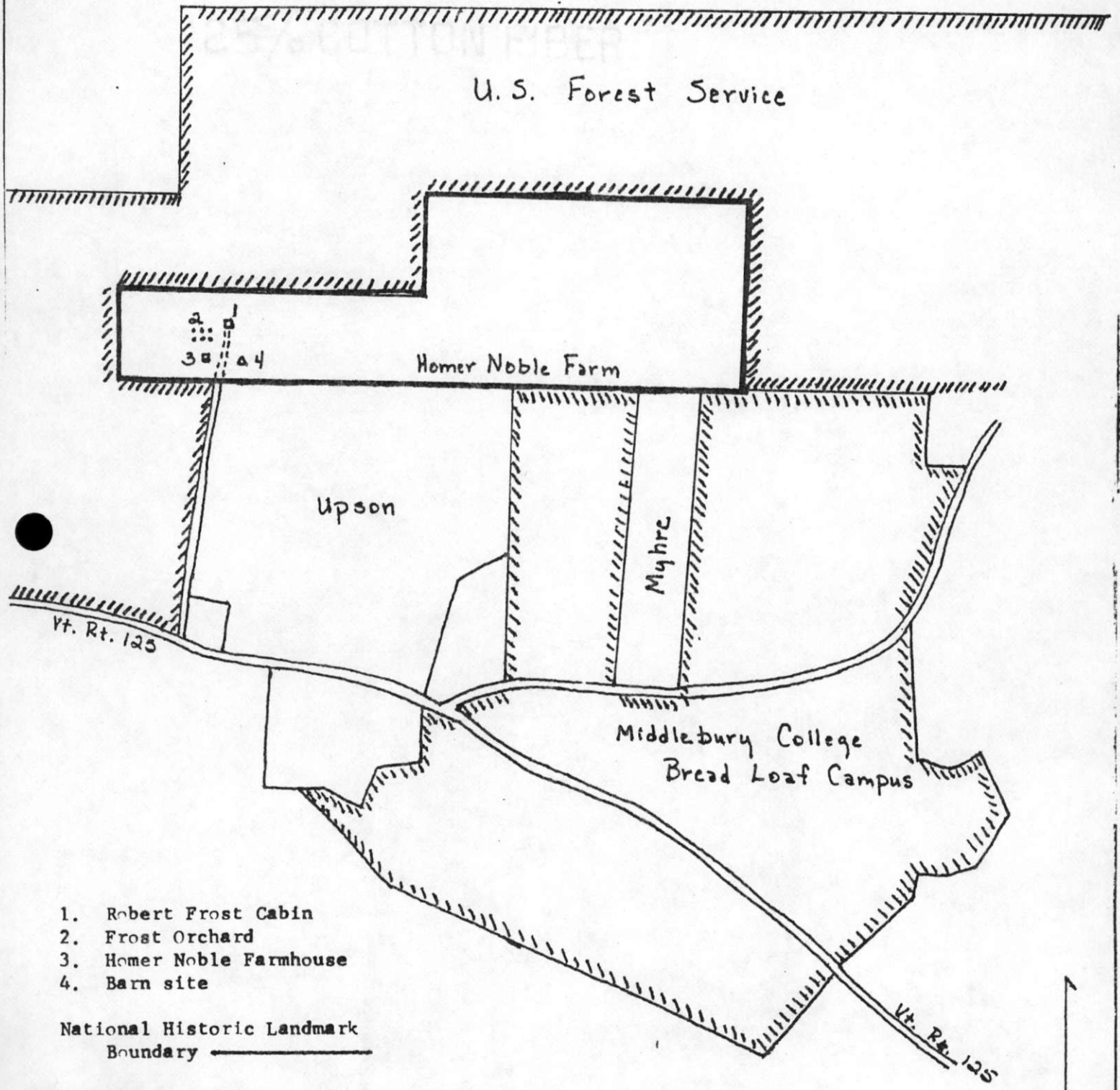
Robert Frost Farm (Homer Noble Farm)

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 2

Middlebury College (Bread Loaf Campus; in 2 sections), and lands of one Myhre.

ROBERT FROST FARM
(HOMER NOBLE FARM)
vic. Ripton, Vermont



- 1. Robert Frost Cabin
- 2. Frost Orchard
- 3. Homer Noble Farmhouse
- 4. Barn site

National Historic Landmark
Boundary —————

sketch map - not to scale

NORTH

POOR QUALITY
ORIGINAL cp ①

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

NAME

HISTORIC

Robert Frost Farm (Homer Noble Farm)

AND/OR COMMON

Robert Frost Farm (Homer Noble Farm)

LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

Ripton

VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Addison

STATE

Vermont

MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE photocopy of survey prepared for Middlebury College

SCALE sketch map-not to scale DATE original c 1972

REQUIREMENTS

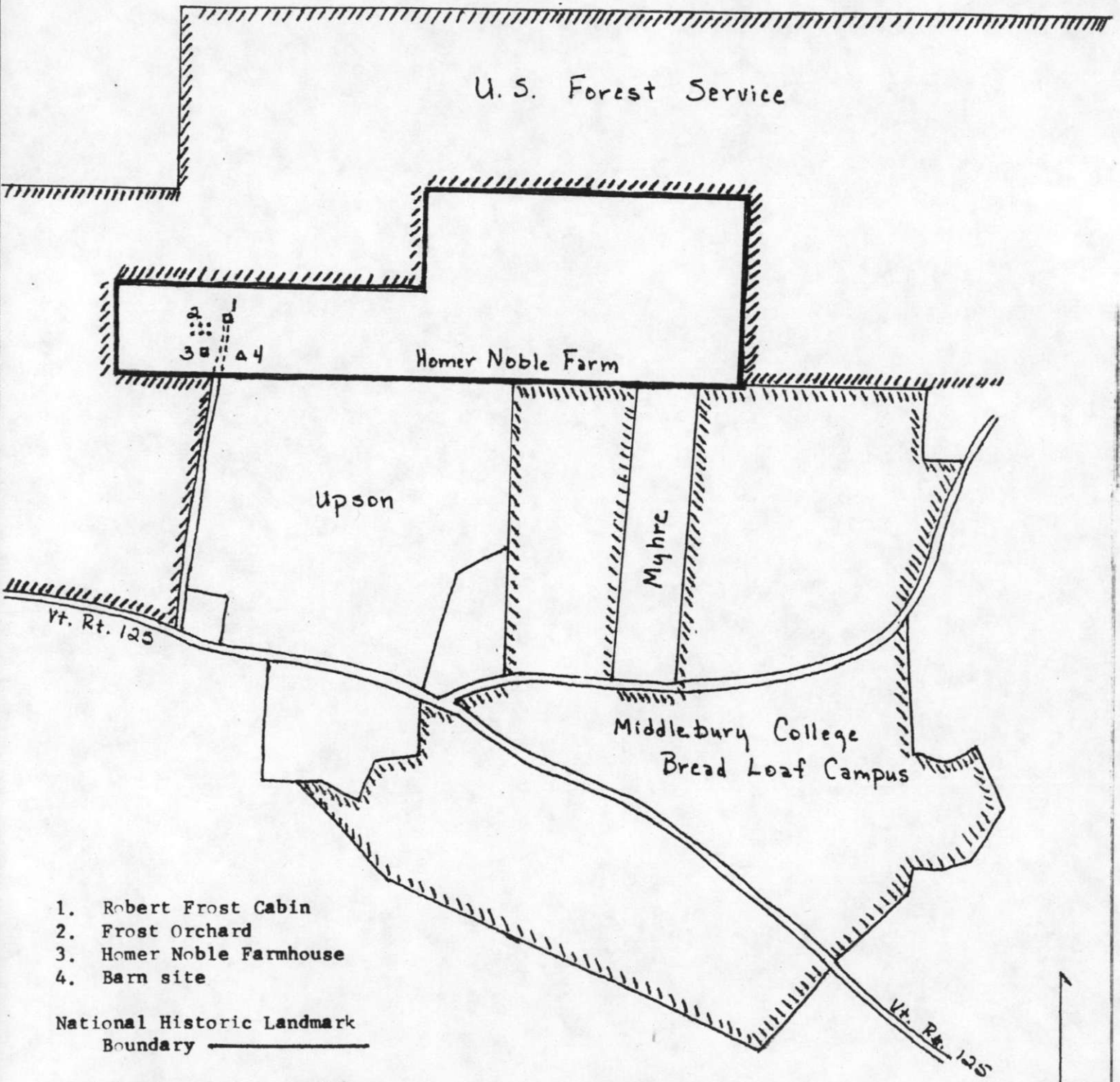
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES

INT: 2986-75



ROBERT FROST FARM
(HOMER NOBLE FARM)
vic. Ripton, Vermont



1. Robert Frost Cabin
2. Frost Orchard
3. Homer Noble Farmhouse
4. Barn site

National Historic Landmark
Boundary

sketch map - not to scale

NORTH

Robert Frost:

Vermont's most famous poet attracts admirers to former Ripton home

By FRANK COCO

RIPTON — For more than three hours on Labor Day, the crowds squeezed into the small living room of the cabin where Robert Frost spent his summers and sat back to watch two films - "Robert Frost's New England" and "A Lover's Quarrel With The World" - and learn a little bit



DR. MARY CLARK, part-time professor at the University of Utah, introduced the two films shown as part of the Robert Frost open house.

more about one of this country's most famous poets. The visitors were treated to a little lagniappe in the presence of Dr. Mary Clark, a summer resident of Ripton, a part-time professor at the University of Utah, and a former student of Robert Frost.

Dr. Clark introduced the films by recounting some incidents that stood out in her mind stemming from her seminars with Frost. One in particular typified what some have called Frost's "bizarre" behavior.

"One day as Mr. Frost stood before his class, he picked up a glass of water and started to drink it," Dr. Clark said. "But he stopped, looked at the class and then turned the glass upside down. That was one of his ways of getting a class's attention."

Dr. Clark said Frost was a teacher as well as a poet. "He wanted to help people who wanted to be teachers express themselves in writing," she said.

Just about any incident could be a source of inspiration for the reknowned poet, Dr. Clark said. She recalled a time when an insect crawled across a page of paper on which Frost was writing prompting him to consider whether to drown it with a drop of ink or let it live. He let it live and wrote the following: "No one knows how glad I am to find on any sheet

the least display of mind."

Dr. Clark said Frost found much amusement in the attempts of people to read special meanings into his poetry - meanings he never intended. He did not tolerate critics very well and was particularly irritated by one who questioned the ability of a horse to think as Frost suggests in "Stopped By Woods on a Snowy Evening."

"A critic might think it unusual - anthropomorphic - attributing humanness to an animal," Dr. Clark said, "but a farmer would certainly not think it unusual."

Dr. Clark's anecdotes and insights into some of the more private aspects of Frost pleased the large crowds throughout the afternoon.

When they weren't watching the films, the visitors had a chance to view the rest of the cabin where Frost lived including the library containing some personal copies of Frost's books.

Leslie Noble and Marie Peck stayed on the screened front porch while the films were showing and greeted newcomers who arrived too late for a particular showing. Noble had Frost as an instructor when he was a sophomore at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor and has devoted the last 15 years of his life to fostering

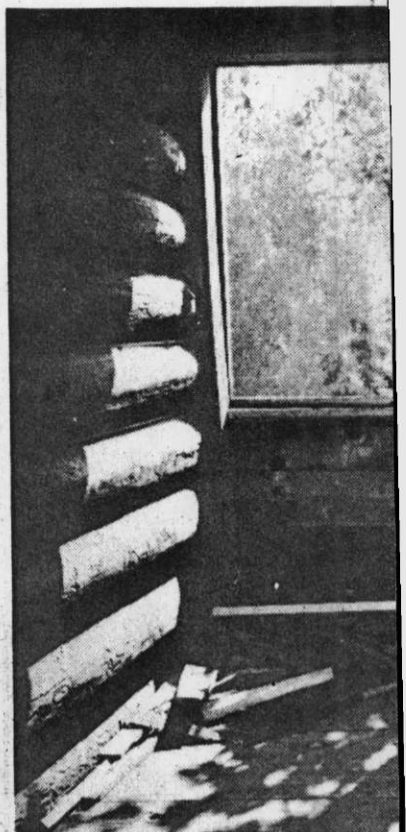
the memory of Robert Frost.

Through Noble's efforts many sites in Ripton have been dedicated to the memory of Frost. He devotes much of his time preparing for each year's open house with much help from Marie Peck and others.



MARIE PECK, who describes herself as Les Noble's public relations person, assisted throughout the afternoon at whatever tasks needed to be done.

Independent photo/Frank Coco



LESLIE NOBLE greets visitors on the porch of the Robert Frost Cabin during an open house this past weekend. Noble is organizing the activities for about



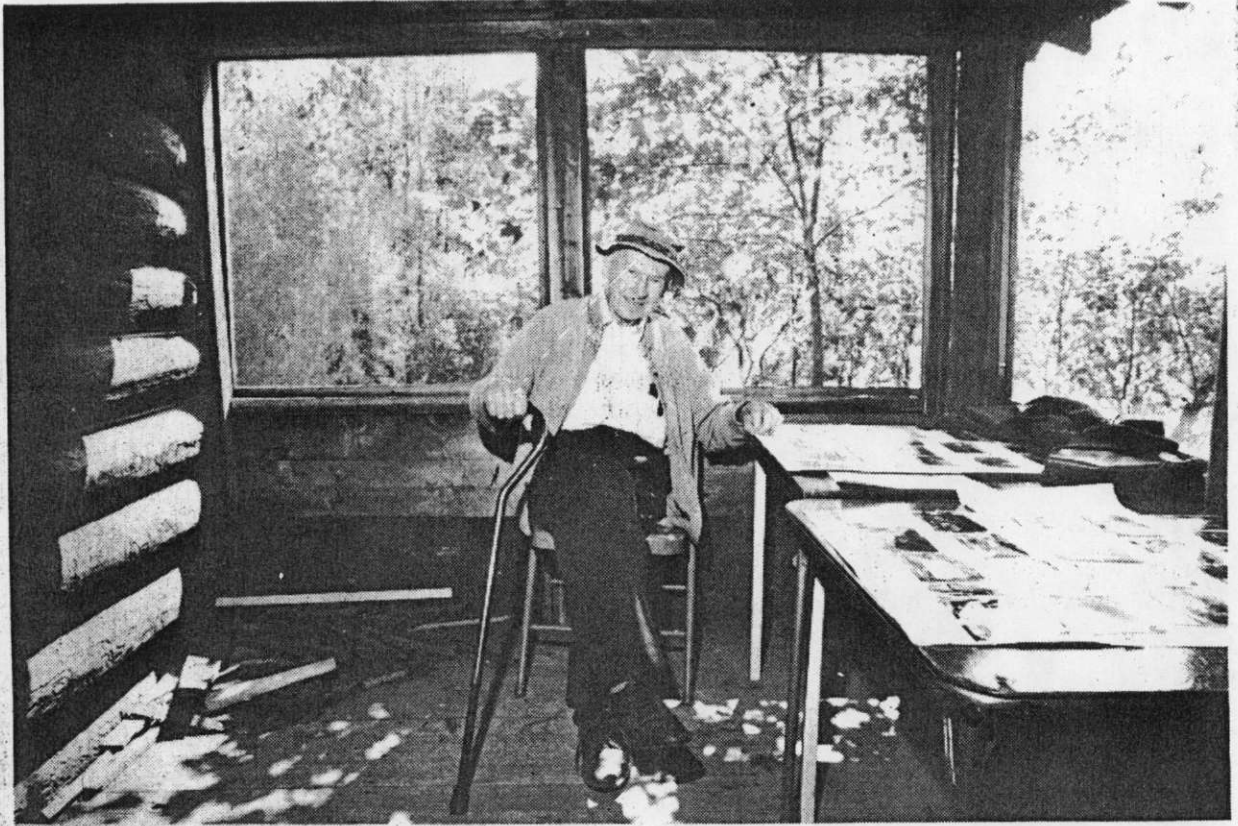
TREES AND SHRUBS surround and caress the cabin in Ripton where Robert Frost spent the last 24 summers of his life reflecting

and writing about his beloved New England.

Independent photo/Frank Coco

ts

Robert Frost.
his efforts many
n have been
e memory of
s much of his
or each year's
much help from
others.



LESLIE NOBLE greets visitors on the screened porch of the Robert Frost Cabin during the annual open house this past weekend. Noble has been organizing the activities for about 15 years and

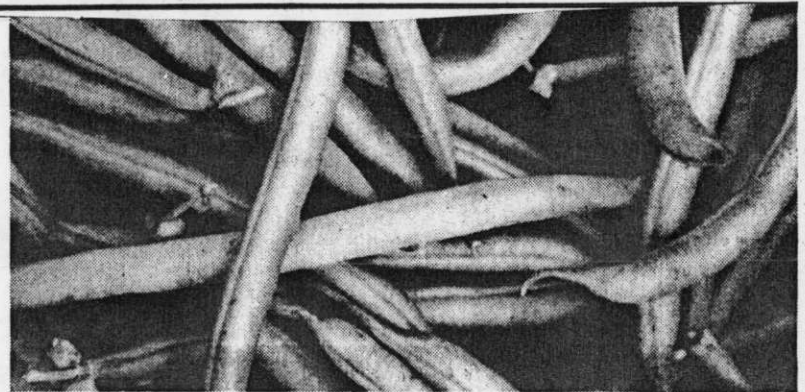
has many pictures showing the numerous tributes to New England's most famous poet.

Independent photo/Frank Coco



to be held weanedays, but will
up at Middlebury Union High
al more Saturdays through Oc-

Independent photo/Frank Coco



BEANS, TOMATOES, peppers and lots more fresh-from-the-farm produce was to be found at the farmer's market just waiting to be someone's salad or side dish. Ummm-ummmmm.

Independent photos/Frank Coco

who describes
Noble's public
son, assisted
afternoon at
needed to be

nt photo/Frank Coco



Fresh produce abounds

Extended



INSIGHT INTO

Colman, Devin

From: Boone, Nancy
Sent: Tuesday, February 03, 2009 8:45 AM
To: Ehrlich, Judith; Colman, Devin; Dillon, Scott; Peebles, Giovanna; Newman, Scott; 'duncan.wilkie@statet.vt.us'
Subject: FW: Section 106 Consultation

FYI

Nancy E. Boone
Acting State Historic Preservation Officer
Vermont Division for Historic Preservation
802-828-3045
www.historicvermont.org

From: Craig, Lisa [mailto:LisaCraig@forestcity.net]
Sent: Monday, February 02, 2009 4:58 PM
To: Boone, Nancy
Subject: Section 106 Consultation

Ms. Boone,

Please accept this email as notification that the National Historic Landmark Stewards Association, a 501c3 nonprofit organization, 'dedicated to the protection, preservation, and promotion of historic resources that possess national significance' requests that we be considered an interested party in any Section 106 consultation dealing with National Historic Landmarks in the State of Vermont.

I'm including a link to the NHLSA website so that you can learn a little more about our organization. While we are a volunteer organization made up of NHL Stewards from around the country, a number of our members have been involved with 106 consultations as either professional preservationists or community activists and would appreciate the opportunity to contribute our knowledge and experience to any consultation involving a Federal undertaking affecting an NHL property.

As a former SHPO (Washington, DC) I understand the importance of the 106 process in the preservation of our nation's historic places and hope that you will consider our engagement in any future 106 consultation as something that will potentially benefit NHL properties in the state. Many thanks for taking a moment to read this email. If you have any questions or need to forward my email to the appropriate compliance reviewer for their consideration, please feel free to contact me at the address or phone/email listed below. I've provided a link to our organization's website, below.

<http://nationalhistoriclandmarks.org>

Lisa M. Craig
President, National Historic Landmark Stewards Association
c/o 1836 Shore Dr.
Edgewater, MD 21037
202-262-2008 (cell)
lcraig@nationalhistoriclandmarks.org

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

The National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings

Special Report

Sites Associated with Robert Frost, New Hampshire and Vermont

Prepared by
John D. McDermott
Historian
Division of History
March 1, 1963

REGISTERED NATIONAL
HISTORIC LANDMARKS

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Robert Frost (1874-1963)

Statement of Significance

The author of 11 volumes of poetry, Robert Frost has been one of the few 20th-century poets to command both critical respect and wide readership. During his lifetime he reaped more honors than any other American poet before him. On four occasions he received the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1924 for New Hampshire, in 1931 for Collected Poems, in 1937 for A Further Range, and in 1943 for A Witness Tree. The current assessment of Robert Frost is that he will stand as one of our greatest American poets.

Career

Robert Frost was born on March 26, 1874, in San Francisco, California. He was the son of William Prescott Frost Jr., a newspaper reporter from Lawrence, Massachusetts, and Isabelle Moodie Frost, a former teacher who had been born in Edinburgh, Scotland. Robert was 11 years old when his father died of tuberculosis. Honoring a last request, the family took the body back to Lawrence for burial. To support her son and 9-year-old daughter, Mrs. Frost obtained a teaching position in nearby Salem, New Hampshire.

In 1888 Frost entered Lawrence High School. The school newspaper printed his first poem when he was 16. Frost eventually became editor of the Bulletin and earned the honor of co-valedictorian with Miriam White, whom he married in 1895. Following graduation, Frost entered Dartmouth but returned home after only two months.

During the next few years, he worked at various occupations. Among other things, he tried teaching, writing a newspaper column, and managing a Shakespearian actor. In 1894 his first "professional" poem, "My Butterfly An Elegy," appeared in the New York Independent.

Two years after his marriage, Frost returned to college--this time to Harvard--but quit in the spring of his second year. Because of poor health, his doctor recommended farming as an occupation. Obtaining a loan from his grandfather, Frost rented a place at 67 Prospect Street, in Methuen, about three miles from the center of Lawrence, and began raising chickens.

In 1900 Frost's grandfather purchased a farm for him, about two miles southeast of Derry Village, New Hampshire. A year later his grandfather died, and by the terms of the will, Frost could assume title to the property if he maintained it for a decade. Frost fulfilled the contract, although he did not make the farm prosper and after 1906 taught at Pinkerton Academy in Derry Village. The years spent on the farm were marked in the beginning by self-doubt but ended in renewal and resolve. It was here that he began writing poetry in earnest and developed the style that would bring him fame.

In 1911 Frost sold the Derry farm and moved to Plymouth to teach psychology at New Hampshire Normal School. By 1912 he had decided to devote his main efforts to poetry, and fortified with the money

obtained from the sale of the farm and an annuity of \$800 left him by his grandfather, Frost set sail for England with his family. Settling first in Buckinghamshire and then in Herefordshire, he cultivated the friendship of a number of English poets. Composing a few new poems and selecting others written at Derry and elsewhere, Frost prepared a volume for publication. Mrs. Alfred Nutt of London brought out the first book, A Boy's Will in 1913. A second, North of Boston appeared the following year. Both volumes won him critical acclaim.

Frost returned to the United States in the spring of 1915 to find himself famous in certain literary circles. Publication of his poems in American editions later in the year widened his following, and in 1916 a third volume, Mountain Interval, enhanced his reputation.

After his return from England, Frost purchased a farm two miles west of Franconia in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. In 1917 he accepted a position as Professor of English at Amherst College. During the rest of his life, Frost spent a part of almost every year teaching and working in a college atmosphere. As his reputation grew, the demands made upon him as a teacher decreased, and he held a number of Fellowships at various colleges, all of which gave him a great deal of freedom to pursue his art. His

major appointments were at Amherst (1917-1920, 1923-1925, 1926-1933, 1949-1963), the University of Michigan (1921-1923, 1925-1926), Harvard (1939-1942), and Dartmouth (1943-1949)

Throughout his life, Frost continued to return to the New England countryside when the weather was good and his schedule permitted. In 1920 he bought the Peleg Cole farm in South Shaftsbury, Vermont. In December of 1923 he purchased a second farm in the area, The Gully, which he kept until after the death of his wife 10 years later. In 1940 he acquired the Homer Noble Farm in Ripton, Vermont, and added other farms to it as the years passed.

After 1936 he usually spent his winters in Florida and in 1940 purchased a rural acre outside Coral Gables, Florida, and built a typical New England bungalow on that semitropical farm, which he retained until his death on January 29, 1963

During his long life, Robert Frost produced 11 volumes of poetry, and his publisher offered numerous volumes of collected poems to an eager public. He is one of the few poets who has been widely read and admired by specialists and laymen alike. He achieved wide popularity because he did not regard explicit statement as an artistic blemish, and the reader is not faced with an overwhelming obscurity to begin with. Each poem has an elemental meaning that can be easily grasped. At the same time, each has a deeper meaning that becomes apparent after the reader has been familiar with it

for years. It is because of his duplicity that Frost has such a devoted critical following. In the same vein, his poetry is regional in experience but universal in application.

Robert Frost reaped more honors during his lifetime than any other American poet before him. On four occasions he received the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1924 for New Hampshire, in 1931 for Collected Poems, in 1937 for A Further Range, and in 1943 for A Witness Tree. In 1939 he became the third poet in history to receive the coveted gold medal of the National Institute of Arts and Letters. In 1958 he was appointed Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress. Frost became such a national institution that he was asked to read a poem at the inauguration of President John F. Kennedy on January 20, 1961. Perhaps the most eloquent tribute paid to him shortly after his death was made by a fellow poet, John Ciardi, who said simply "He was our best "

In the few years since his death, there have been many efforts to reappraise the place of Robert Frost in American literature. None of them has altered his stature as a poet or the value of his poetry.

Robert Frost is buried in the Old Bennington Cemetery in North Bennington, Vermont.

Robert Frost Homestead (1900-1911)

Location: Two miles southeast of Derry, New Hampshire, on New Hampshire Route 28 (Formerly Londonderry Turnpike)

Ownership: State of New Hampshire, Mr. Russell B. Tobey, Director of Parks, Department of Resources and Development, State House Annex, Concord, New Hampshire.

Statement of Significance

Between 1900 and 1909 Robert Frost resided continuously on a farm two miles southeast of Derry, New Hampshire. It was there that Frost developed his style and strength as a poet and composed many of the poems found in his first two books, A Boy's Will (1913) and North of Boston (1914). Now owned by the State of New Hampshire, the house remains virtually unchanged. Pending restoration, the Frost Homestead is not open to the public.

History

In the summer of 1900, William Prescott Frost, Sr., purchased a 20-acre farm for his grandson about two miles southeast of Derry Village, New Hampshire. Known locally as the Magoon place, the property sold for \$1,700. In 1901 the elder Frost died, and by the terms of the will, Robert could assume title to the property if he maintained it for 10 years.

Developments on the farm consisted of a house, shed, and barn, all connected. The house faced west and overlooked two pastures and the Londonderry Turnpike. Behind the barn was a long hayfield and beyond it a grove of hardwood trees. To the north was an apple

orchard and a protective row of hills. Another ridge sheltered the farm on the south. Between it and the house was a west-running brook that flowed under the turnpike through a culvert. The house was a two-story, frame structure with a gable roof, white clapboard siding, and green blinds. A porch ran along part of the house on the south side. On the ground floor were a parlor, a dining room, a bedroom, and an ell containing the kitchen, pantry, grain shed, and privy. Upstairs were three bedrooms.

The Frosts moved to their new home around October 1. One of the first improvements made was the construction of new coops for the chickens. In the beginning, Frost was serious about farming and worked hard to make a success of the venture. Plagued by insecurity and self-doubt, he was eager to prove himself. At the same time, he began writing poetry in earnest. By 1906 he had lost his enthusiasm for farming and took a temporary position teaching English literature to sophomores at Pinkerton Academy. Later he obtained permanent employment.

In 1909 Frost left the farm and moved to Derry, renting the upper story of a house on Thornton Street. By this time he had developed his powers as a poet and gained the self-confidence he had been searching for. In November of 1911 he sold the farm and moved to Plymouth, where he had accepted a teaching position at New Hampshire Normal School.

Frost would always remember the Derry farm as the place where he was reborn. He once remarked that, "the core of all my writing was probably the free years I had there." Many of the poems that were collected in his first two books were written or rewritten at Derry farm, including "Death of a Hired Man" and "Trial by Existence." Some poems like "The Mending Wall" were based on specific farm happenings. Robert Frost would continue to write poetry for the rest of his life in which he used his Derry experience if not explicitly then implicitly. It was there that he became acquainted with the land, and it was there that he became a poet.

The distinguished Frost scholar, Lawrence Thompson feels strongly that the Derry farm is the most significant Frost site. In an article in the same, 1967, issue of Historical New Hampshire, Thompson declared: "The value of this real estate (the Derry farm), if estimated in terms of its significance to the life and poetry of Robert Frost--and, thereby, to the world--is unique no other property in New Hampshire, or in Vermont or anywhere else, could better serve as a memorial to him."

Condition

The State of New Hampshire acquired the Frost home and 12.10 acres of land from Edward Lee in June of 1965. Mr. Lee had been engaged in a used car parts business, and, in consequence, the property had

become an automobile graveyard. As a part of the agreement, Lee tore down the cement block garage that he had constructed near the house, removed the junk cars, and generally policed the area.

To protect the property from vandalism, the State rented the house in the fall of 1965, and it is currently occupied. The house stands in fairly good condition. The State plans a careful restoration of the house and connecting buildings as soon as funds can be obtained for the purpose.

The exterior of the building remains virtually the same as it was during the Frost occupancy. Asphalt shingles have replaced the original roofing material. The interior of the house has been modernized, but only superficially so that restoration will not be difficult. Minor interior alterations since 1911 have included the removal of a wall between the original kitchen and pantry and the partitioning of part of the entrance hall to permit installation of a sanitary facility.

In addition to restoring and refurnishing the buildings, the State plans to acquire an additional 63 acres primarily for development purposes. A visitor center, parking lot, and caretaker's residence are contemplated. Plans also call for restoration of the original contours of the land (altered in part by Edward Lee to accommodate his business) and the operation of the Frost Homestead as a "living-farm."

To assist State officials in planning, the Governor has appointed a board of trustees for the Frost Homestead. Included on the board are Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall; Mrs. Leslie Frost Ballentine, daughter of the poet; Mrs. Theodore Morrison, Frost's private secretary in later years; and Dr. Lawrence Thompson, noted Frost biographer.

Robert Frost Farm (1915-1920)

Location: Ridge Road, two miles west of Franconia, New Hampshire

Ownership: Mrs. Robert Neill, Franconia, New Hampshire

Statement of Significance

Robert Frost had a farm two miles west of Franconia, New Hampshire, from 1915 to 1920. During the last three years of his ownership, Frost lived there only during vacation periods. While at Franconia Frost wrote most of the poems that appeared in Mountain Interval (1910) and some of those collected in New Hampshire, which won the Pulitzer Prize in 1924. Privately owned, the house appears substantially the same as it did during the Frost occupancy.

History

After his return from England in 1915, Robert Frost bought a farm two miles west of Franconia, on the side of Sugar Hill, overlooking the Lafayette range and the Pemigewasset River. Although his poetry had brought him limited fame, he was by no means able to support his family by writing, and farming promised the self-sufficiency he required. The Franconia countryside was not new to the Frosts. They had vacationed there in the past, and the poet had found it a comforting refuge during hay fever season.

Frost could not find a farm for sale in the area that he liked, so he selected one that was not on the market and made an offer. The owner, Willis Herbert, accepted. In his long poem "New Hampshire," Frost described the transaction

Not even New Hampshire farms are much for sale.
The farm I made my home on in the mountains
I had to take by force rather than buy.
I caught the owner outdoors by himself
Raking up after winter, and I said,
'I'm going to put you off this farm: I want it.'
'Where are you going to put me? In the road?'
'I'm going to put you on the farm next to it.'
'Why won't the farm next to it do for you?'
'I like this better.' It was really better.

The original agreement was for \$1,000. Later, however, Herbert said he had heard Robert Frost was "somebody" and asked if the poet would not pay an extra hundred. Frost agreed. By mid-May the Frosts were settled in their new home.

The Franconia farmhouse was similar to the one at Derry but smaller. A shingle-roofed, white frame structure, it was one story in height with an attic, two chimneys, and a porch. There were three rooms on the ground floor with an ell and shed behind. Above the porch was a bedroom that Frost made into a study. The view from the farmhouse was magnificent. Snow-peaked Mounts Lafayette, Liberty, and Cannon glittered in the distance, and beyond them was hulking Mount Washington.

For the next two-and-half years, Frost farmed at Franconia. The children, now numbering four, helped him work the fields. In the

summer there were leisurely climbing trips in the White Mountains. In mid-December of 1916, Frost contracted to teach English at Amherst College, and the family returned to Franconia only during vacation periods until March 1920, when the poet resigned. The Frosts remained another six months on the Franconia farm, but things were not the same. Frost had become a celebrity, and the local people resented some of his city friends. But more importantly, Frost's son Carol was showing interest in becoming a full-time farmer, and the poet wanted a place with a longer growing season. One morning in September Frost piled his wife and children in the family automobile, and by night they had a new roof over their heads: an entrancing stone house they had admired in South Shaftsbury, Vermont.

Substantial achievement marked the period Frost spent on the Franconia farm. In 1916 his third volume of poetry, Mountain Interval, appeared. After his return from Amherst in the spring of 1920, Frost wrote many of the poems contained in his fourth book, New Hampshire, published in 1923, which brought him the Pulitzer Prize in 1924. The Frosts always remembered the Franconia farm with a special poignancy, because their youngest daughter Majorie, who died prematurely, was so fond of it.

Condition

The Franconia farm is now owned by Mrs. Robert Neill, who uses it for a summer retreat. The house is maintained in good condition. Apparently the only exterior change in the farmhouse has been a modification of the front porch. (Not visited)

Peleg Cole House (Frost Home 1920-1928)

Location: On Vermont Route 7, one mile south of South Shaftsbury, Vermont

Ownership: Mrs. Harry W. Rand, South Shaftsbury, Vermont

Statement of Significance

Robert Frost resided intermittently in a handsome stone house near South Shaftsbury, Vermont, between 1920 and 1928. In this house he composed most of the poems contained in New Hampshire, which won him his first Pulitzer Prize in 1924, and in West-Running Brook, published in 1923. The original contours of the house have been altered in the rear by the addition of a clerestory, and three interior walls have been removed. The building is privately owned and not open to the public.

History

Robert Frost bought his first farm near South Shaftsbury, Vermont, in September of 1920. Closer to Amherst than Franconia, it was easily accessible by rail to New York and his publisher. The winters were less severe, the growing season longer and it was still isolated enough to serve as a quiet refuge in times of stress.

The central feature of the farm was a stone house with a long sloping roof built in about 1783. Commonly referred to as the Peleg Cole House, it stood on the top of a hill. The gray stone had been quarried nearby and left rough. Dark red clapboards

covered the upper third of the building. There were four comfortable rooms downstairs and the same number above.

During the years that Frost called the Peleg Cole House home, he lived there only during the summers or on weekends. In 1921-1923 and in 1925-1926, he held positions at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and from 1923-1925 and 1926-1928, he taught English at Amherst College. During the August hay fever season, Frost continued to find relief in New Hampshire, usually spending the month in a guest cottage owned by Joseph Fobes of Franconia.

In 1923 Frost's son Carol married Lillian LaBatt, and the newlyweds made their home on the farm. Carol had shown an interest in becoming a full-time farmer, and, as Frost had anticipated, the South Shaftsbury property became a genuine commercial enterprise for the young couple and merely a vacation retreat for Elmer and him. Eventually the older Frosts secured a hinged cottage (now owned by Bennington College) near the town of North Bennington.

Around Christmas in 1928, the poet purchased a second farm near South Shaftsbury, known as The Gully, and made it his official residence. Carol Frost committed suicide in 1940, and Lillian continued to live in the Peleg Cole House until 1956, when she sold it to Arthur Lyons.

Robert Frost wrote some of his finest poetry at the Peleg Cole House between 1920 and 1928. During the summer of 1922, he wrote the long "New Hampshire" and one of his most famous pieces, "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening." In 1923 he published his fourth volume of poetry, New Hampshire, which received the Pulitzer Prize the next year. In 1928 he followed with his fifth book of poems, West-Running Brook.

Condition

The Frost residence near South Shaftsbury appears much like it did in the 1920s. The only major alteration is in the rear of the building. A later owner raised the lower half of the back slope of the roof to create more head space in one of the bedrooms. The house has been thoroughly modernized inside. Doors and plaster are new. Apparently a wall was removed to enlarge the present living room. Part of the central hall to the right of the staircase has been enclosed to create a closet. Upstairs there were originally four bedrooms; now there are two. The house is in very good condition.

The Frost house and accompanying 73 acres of land are currently being offered for sale.

The Gully (Robert Frost Farm 1929-1938)

Location: One-quarter mile east of Vermont Route 7 on Buck Hill Road, South Shaftsbury, Vermont

Ownership: Mr. Kenneth Noland, South Shaftsbury, Vermont

Statement of Significance

Robert Frost purchased a farm on Buck Hill Road, South Shaftsbury, Vermont, in 1929, and spent his summers there until the death of his wife in 1938. During the period Frost considered the farm his official residence, he earned two Pulitzer Prizes: one for Collected Poems in 1931 and the other for A Further Range in 1937. Known as The Gully, the farm remains intact. The house stands almost exactly as it was during the Frost occupancy. The barn has been altered considerably and now serves as an artist's studio. The farm is privately owned and not open to the public.

History

In late December of 1928, Robert Frost purchased a second farm in South Shaftsbury, Vermont, known locally as "The Gully." There were 153 acres in all, 50 of them in woods. Built in about 1790, the farmhouse was a one-and-one-half-story Cape Cod with three fireplaces. Downstairs were a large living room, two bedrooms, a dining room, a kitchen and a pantry. Upstairs were a large attic and three bedrooms. Facing north to the mountains, the house rested on a drumlin well back from Buck Hill Road.

In the spring of 1929, Frost hired Wade Van Dore to help remodel and renovate the house for occupancy. The Frosts stayed in the cottage near North Bennington while the work progressed. The family probably did not actually settle there until the summer of 1930, after the poet had completed his teaching duties at Amherst. The Frosts continued to live at the farm only during vacation and weekend periods.

After he bought The Gully, Frost had some other small buildings moved onto the property. A one-story, one-room frame structure between the house and the barn became a writing studio in nice weather as did a one-and-one-half-story frame building farther west.

After 1934 the Frosts spent less and less of their free time at The Gully. In 1935 the poet began buying a group of farms north of St. Johnsbury, Vermont, as a retreat during hay fever season, and after 1936 the family usually wintered in Florida. Following the death of Elinor Frost in 1938, the poet spent very little time there, and in 1944 he conveyed the property to his daughter-in-law and his grandson and wife. They, in turn, sold it to the present owner, the artist Kenneth Noland, in 1963.

During the period that The Gully served as his official residence (1929-1938), Frost held a position at Amherst College. The Agreement, however was a very elastic one, and Frost was free to lecture and even teach at other institutions. In 1931, 1933, and 1935, for example, he taught for short periods at the New York School

for Social Research, and in the spring of 1936, he gave the Charles Eliot Norton lectures at Harvard University.

During the 1930s Frost continued to produce great poetry. Both his Collected Poems (1930) and A Further Range (1936) were honored by the Pulitzer Prize. Frost wrote many of the poems found in the latter volume at The Gully. "Built-Soil" was conceived and partially written there, and the farm directly inspired "A Record Stride" and "A Drumlin Woodchuck," as it did a later humorous poem, "To a Young Wretch."

Condition

The Robert Frost farm on Buck Hill Road survives intact from the 1930s. The house is especially noteworthy from the standpoint of integrity. The house has been repainted on the outside, and the main chimney has been rebuilt, otherwise it apparently stands exactly as it was three decades ago. Inside the house is similarly well preserved. The only ascertainable alteration on the first floor is the boarding-up of part of the entrance vestibule to permit the installation of a bathroom. There is one minor change in the room arrangement on the second floor. Very little interior painting has been done. The presence of another creative person in the house is attested to by the simplicity and taste of the furnishings, and the considered attempt to keep things as they were.

The two smaller houses used by Frost for writing studios are both in good condition and unaltered. Only the barn lacks true integrity. Mr. Noland has adapted it for his working studio. Large windows have been installed on three sides, and the building has been extensively remodeled inside. Behind the barn is a small swimming pool.

The Gully stands far back from Buck Hill Road in a very pleasant rural setting. At one time the State planned a rerouting of Vermont Highway No. 7 that would have brought the road very close to the house and barn on the east side. Although the issue is not resolved, it appears that an alternate route eventually may be chosen.

The farm is not open to the public.

Homer Noble Farm (Robert Frost Farm (1940-1963))

Location: One mile north of Vermont 125, three miles east of Ripton, Vermont.

Ownership: Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont, Mr. James I. Armstrong, President

Statement of Significance

In the fall of 1940, Robert Frost purchased a farm in the Green Mountains of Vermont, three miles east of the small community of Ripton. Living and writing there during the summer and fall months until his death in 1963, Frost produced five volumes of poetry, one of which, A Witness Tree, earned him his fourth Pulitzer Prize. Now owned by Middlebury College, the Frost cabin stands in excellent condition and contains many of the poet's furnishings. The farm is not open to the general public but may be seen by scholars, students, and writers by appointment.

History

Tragedy accompanied Frost's rise in stature. As honorary degrees, prizes, and encomiums from learned societies proliferated, the poet privately grieved as death touched his family. The worst blow came on March 20, 1938, with the death of Elinor. The following month he resigned from Amherst.

In the summer of 1938, Frost loaned The Gully to a friend but ended up spending most of his time there as a visitor. The hay fever

season found him safely ensconced in the house at Concord Corners near St. Johnsbury.

The following May, Frost accepted an appointment at Harvard. As the Ralph Waldo Emerson Fellow in Poetry, he was required to teach one seminar a week during one semester. He continued to hold a position at the university until the spring of 1942. In the beginning, Frost occupied a small apartment at 88 Mt. Vernon Street in Cambridge but in 1941 purchased a half double house on Brewster Street, which he retained many years after his connection with Harvard ended.

In the fall of 1940, the Frost family experienced another tragedy. The poet's only son Carol committed suicide. It was later in the year that Frost bought a new farm, free from painful memories of the past, in Ripton, Vermont.

Frost chose a site eight miles from Middlebury College and two miles from the Bread Loaf Inn, where each summer the college sponsored the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference. Frost knew the area well. He had been influential in establishing the Bread Loaf Writer's Conference, and he had delivered an annual lecture at the Bread Loaf School of English since 1921.

Nestled in the Green Mountains, the 300-acre tract was really a complex of farms fitted together by Frost to form his retreat.

Principal among the components was the Homer Noble farm with its old farmhouse and rustic cabin. Two other houses stood on the property, so Frost had a variety of residences to choose from. The cabin proved to be the best suited to his needs.

Frost "rented" the Homer Noble farmhouse to his private secretary and her husband, Kathleen and Dr. Theodore Morrison. The dwelling was a simple one, two stories in height, with living room on either side of the entry, a kitchen and pantry wing in the rear, and a number of bedrooms above.

The Frost cabin stood on a hillside above the Noble farmhouse. Unpainted log siding covered the small structure. A sturdy but clumsily built porch added to its ramshackle appearance. Although small, the cabin was large enough to comfortably house one person. The living room extended the length of the south side of the building. Behind it on the left were the kitchen, bath, and pantry. To the right were two bedrooms. Attached to the rear of the structure was a woodshed. A large attic provided plenty of storage space. In the beginning Frost refused to have a telephone installed in the cabin, since there was one in the Noble farmhouse. A bell attached to a clothesline strung between the house and the cabin let him know when dinner was ready or when visitors had arrived.

Frost lived very simply at Ripton. He cooked many of his meals, made his own bed, and chopped all the wood for his fireplace. He grew vegetables for himself and the Morrisons. Frost normally

rose late in the day and wrote, read, or conversed with friends far into the night. He continued his habit of taking long walks, especially at night in the company of his dog Gullie.

Frost spent most of the period from May to November of each year at the Ripton farm until his death in 1963. He usually wintered in Florida. From 1943 to 1949 he held the George Tricknor Fellowship at Dartmouth and then renewed his association with Amherst College, when in 1949 he was appointed the Simson Fellow for life. His duties at Amherst were few; he usually fulfilled responsibility by lecturing on campus for a week or two each year. In 1958 he served as Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress.

The older Frost grew, the more honored he became. In 1961 President-elect John F. Kennedy invited him to participate in the inauguration, and on March 26, 1962, Congress awarded him a medal on his eighty-eighth birthday.

Both honors and public attention gratified Frost but not to the detriment of his art. Never just a regional poet, his poetry continued to contemplate life's meaning. A Witeness Tree, which appeared in 1942, earned him his fourth Pulitzer Prize. A Masque of Reason was published in 1945, followed two years later by A Masque of Mercy and Steeple Bush. His final volume, In the Clearing, appeared in 1962. He died on January 27, 1963.

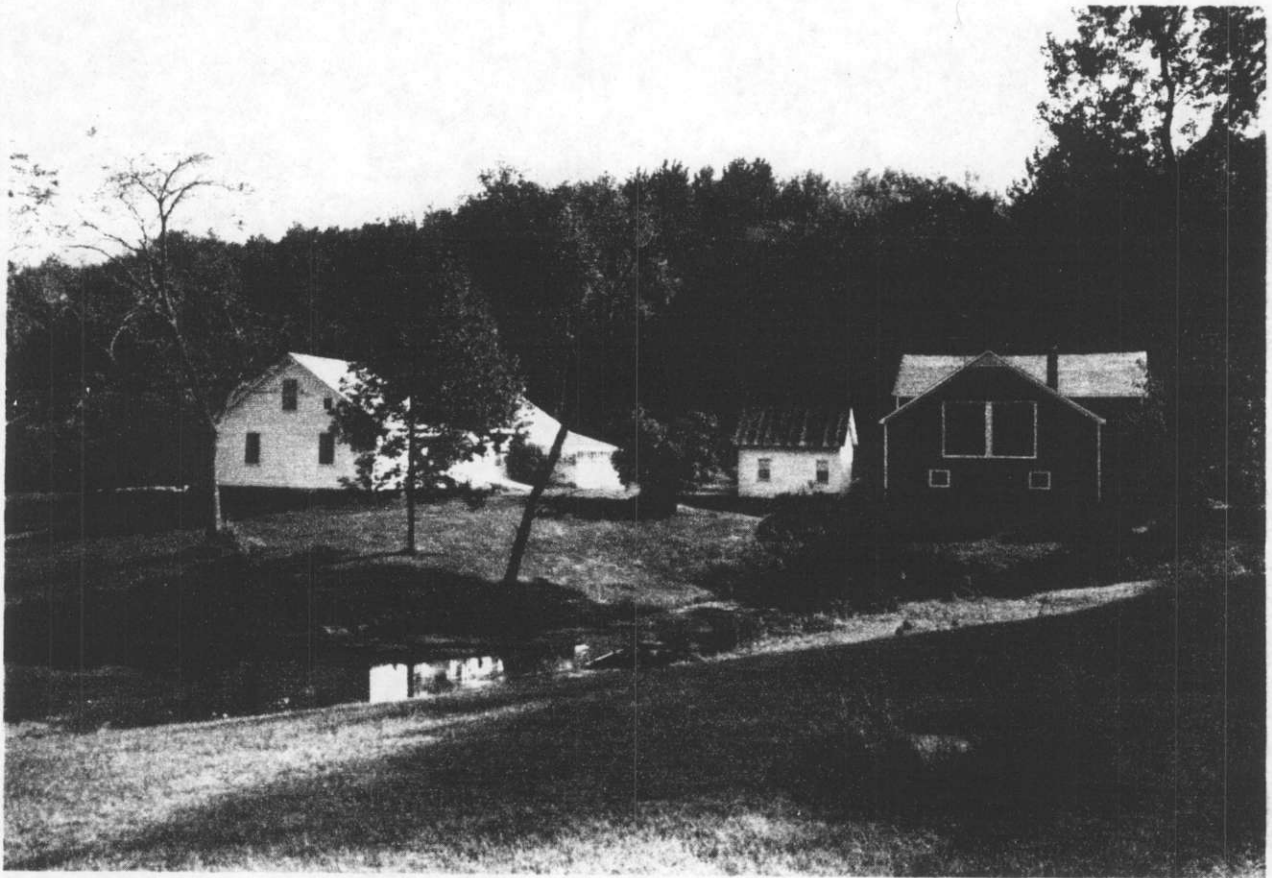
Before his death, Frost made arrangements to divide his Ripton property. To his friends the Morrises, he gave about 150 acres with the Homer Noble farmhouse and cabin. To Stafford Dragon, his friend and caretaker, he left an adjoining tract. Earlier he had sold the so-called Euber place to the Donald Gordons of Miami, parents of the wife of his only grandson, Prescott.

Condition

Middlebury College bought the Homer Noble farmhouse and cabin from the Morrises in 1966. As a part of the agreement, the couple retained the right to occupy the house during the summer months for a 10-year period. In consequence the house and cabin are not open to the general public and may be seen only by arrangement with Middlebury College.

The Robert Frost cabin stands in excellent condition. Recent minor repairs have been made, including replacement of the original roofing material. The cabin is furnished for use by the Morrises, and although most of the items have Frost provenience no attempt has been made to keep things exactly as they were when Frost lived there. The college recently acquired the Frost library, consisting mostly of Modern Library editions given to the poet by Bennett Cerf, which it plans to return to the now empty bookshelves found in the living room. The buildings and grounds are well maintained. Rich in natural beauty, the property is located far enough away from main-traveled roads so that quietude prevails.

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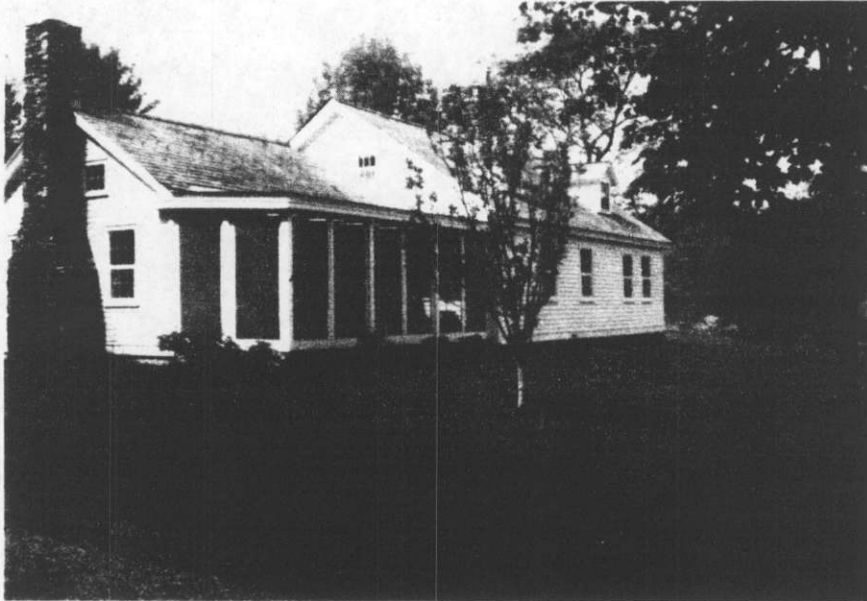


Robert Frost Farm, "The Gully," view from west, farmhouse at left, barn/studio at right, 1974 (before recent remodeling)
NPS photo

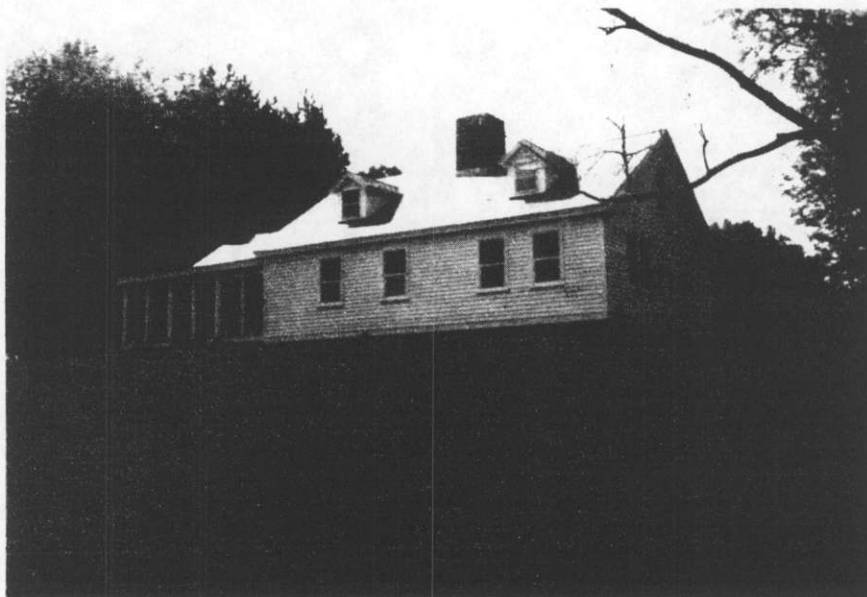


Robert Frost Farm, "The Gully," farmhouse viewed from the north, 1974 (before recent remodeling)
NPS photo

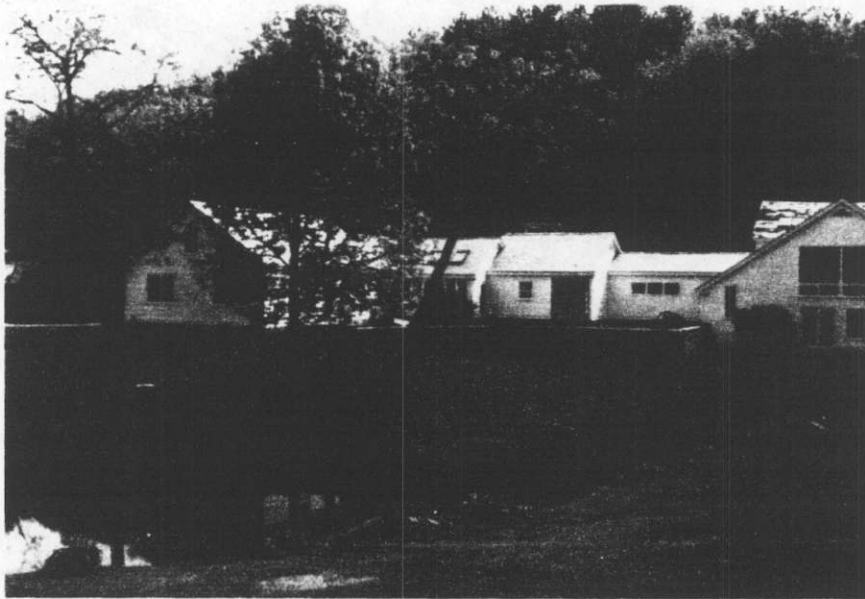
"THE GULLY"



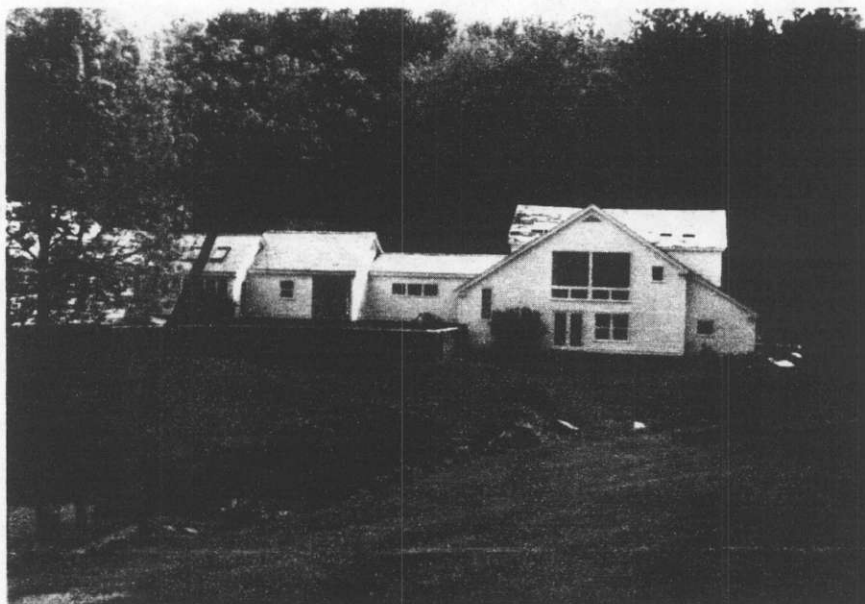
#1 From the northeast, showing screened porch and dining room stone chimney. The interior attic above this room has been removed.



#2 From the northwest. The front porch has been replaced by a window. A retaining wall had held back the hillside during the Frost period.

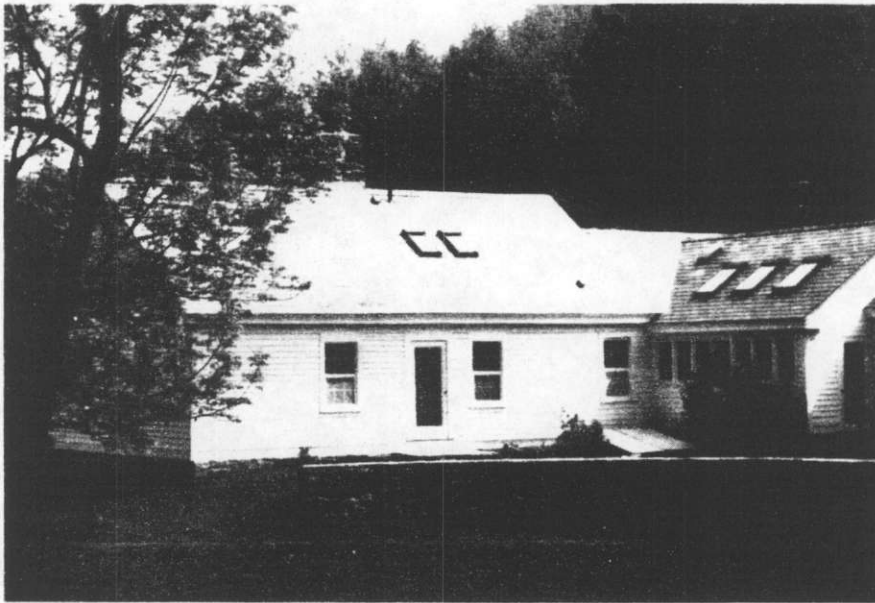


#3 From the west. The Frost home is on the left and the barn on the right. In between are the kitchen which connects with the home and the wide hall leading from the kitchen to the barn.

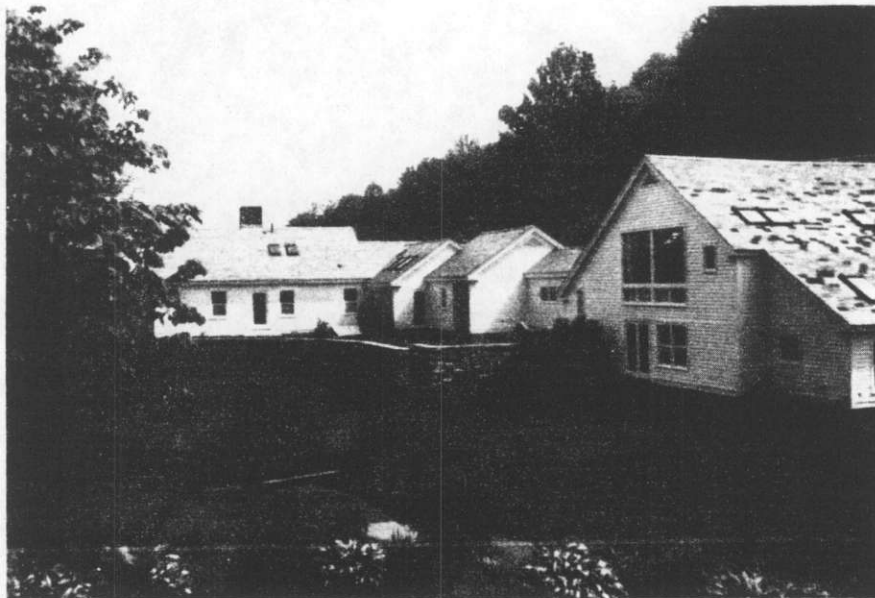


#4 Same as #3.

1984 POST-REMODELING PHOTOGRAPHS
NPS photos



#5 From the southwest. The Frost home showing the two skylights cut into the roof during the Lear remodeling. The kitchen is on the right.



#6 From the southwest. The Frost home is on the left and the barn is on the right. The master bedroom is on the second floor of the barn, behind the large windows. All the skylights are new.