

## 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response

The National Park Service is modifying its operations on a park-by-park basis in accordance with the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state and local public health authorities. While most facilities and events are closed or canceled, outdoor spaces in some parks remain accessible to the public. Before visiting, please check with **individual parks** regarding changes to park operations. If you choose to visit a national park, please ensure that you follow CDC and state and local guidelines to prevent the spread of infectious diseases and practice **Leave No Trace principles**. Updates about the NPS response, including safety information, are posted on [www.nps.gov/coronavirus](http://www.nps.gov/coronavirus).

### National Park Service

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# National Register of Historic Places

## Weekly List 20200320

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WEEKLY LIST OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON PROPERTIES: 3/12/2020 THROUGH 3/20/2020

KEY: State, County, Property Name, Address/Boundary, City, Vicinity, Reference Number, NHL, Action, Date, Multiple Name

### FLORIDA

African American Architects in Segregated Jacksonville, 1865-1965 MPS,  
MC100005086,  
COVER DOCUMENTATION APPROVED, 3/16/2020

FLORIDA, DUVAL COUNTY,

Mt. Calvary Baptist Church,

301 Spruce St.,

Jacksonville, MP100005087,

LISTED, 3/16/2020

(African American Architects in Segregated Jacksonville, 1865-1965 MPS)

FLORIDA, DUVAL COUNTY,

Durkee Gardens Historic District,

Bound by Myrtle Ave., 13th St. West, Payne Ave, Wilcox St. and 8th St. West,  
Jacksonville, MP100005088,  
LISTED, 3/16/2020  
(African American Architects in Segregated Jacksonville, 1865-1965 MPS)

ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY,  
Gage Park Bungalow Historic District,  
Roughly bounded by West 55th St., South Washtenaw Ave., West 59th St. & South Sacramento Ave.,  
Chicago, RS100004852,  
LISTED, 3/13/2020  
(Chicago Bungalows MPS)

ILLINOIS, MCHENRY COUNTY,  
Colby-Petersen Farm,  
4112 McCullom Lake Rd.,  
McHenry, RS100004853,  
LISTED, 3/13/2020

ILLINOIS, ROCK ISLAND COUNTY,  
Downtown Rock Island Historic District,  
Roughly bound by Iowa terminus of the Centennial Bridge a West 2nd St. Davenport, IA, 21st St., 15th St., and 5th Ave.,  
Rock Island, RS100004433,  
LISTED, 3/13/2020

KANSAS, RENO COUNTY,  
Houston Whiteside Historic District (Additional Documentation),  
Roughly bounded by BNSF RR, Pershing, Ave. B and Ave. A, Plum and Elm Sts.,  
Hutchinson, AD04000738,  
ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION APPROVED, 3/18/2020

KANSAS, RENO COUNTY,  
Kansas Sugar Refining Company Mill,  
600 East 1st Ave.,  
Hutchinson, OT85000013,  
REMOVED, 3/18/2020

LOUISIANA, EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH,  
Borden Dairy,  
4743 Florida Blvd.,

Baton Rouge, SG100005100,  
LISTED, 3/17/2020

LOUISIANA, SABINE PARISH,  
Sabine High School,  
850 Highland Ave.,  
Many, SG100005099,  
LISTED, 3/17/2020

MASSACHUSETTS, HAMPDEN COUNTY,  
Thompson, Jacob, House,  
7 Main St.,  
Monson, SG100005078,  
LISTED, 3/13/2020

MICHIGAN, WAYNE COUNTY,  
Great Lakes Manor,  
457 East Kirby St.,  
Detroit, SG100005085,  
LISTED, 3/16/2020

MICHIGAN, WAYNE COUNTY,  
Warren Motor Car Company Building,  
1331 Holden St.,  
Detroit, SG100005108,  
LISTED, 3/20/2020

MONTANA, DEER LODGE COUNTY,  
Glenn's Dam Historic District,  
North Cable Rd., less than 1/4 mi. north of northwest end of town,  
Anaconda vicinity, SG100005107,  
LISTED, 3/16/2020

MONTANA, JEFFERSON COUNTY,  
Whitetail Airway Beacon,  
16 miles north of Whitehall,  
Whitehall vicinity, MP100005094,  
LISTED, 3/13/2020

(Sentinels of the Airways: Montana's Airway Beacon System, 1934-1979 MPS)

NEBRASKA, CASS COUNTY,  
Plattsmouth High School,  
814 Main St.,  
Plattsmouth, MP100005052,  
LISTED, 3/13/2020  
(School Buildings in Nebraska MPS)

NEBRASKA, CUSTER COUNTY,  
Sargent Bridge,  
Dawson St. over the Middle Loup R., 1 mi. south of Sargent,  
Sargent vicinity, OT92000740,  
REMOVED, 3/13/2020  
(Highway Bridges in Nebraska MPS)

NEBRASKA, FRANKLIN COUNTY,  
Franklin Bridge,  
NE 10 over the Republican R., 1 mi. south of Franklin,  
Franklin vicinity, OT92000764,  
REMOVED, 3/13/2020  
(Highway Bridges in Nebraska MPS)

NEBRASKA, KNOX COUNTY,  
Winnetoon Public School,  
308 Jones St.,  
Winnetoon, MP100005053,  
LISTED, 3/13/2020  
(School Buildings in Nebraska MPS)

NEBRASKA, LANCASTER COUNTY,  
Robbers' Cave,  
925 Robbers Cave Rd.,  
Lincoln, SG100005055,  
LISTED, 3/13/2020

NEBRASKA, SARPY COUNTY,  
McCarty-Lilley House,  
West of Bellevue on Quail Dr.,  
Bellevue vicinity, OT78001712,  
REMOVED, 3/13/2020

NEBRASKA, VALLEY COUNTY,  
Arcadia Township Carnegie Library,  
100 South Reynolds St.,  
Arcadia, MP100005056,  
LISTED, 3/13/2020  
(Carnegie Libraries in Nebraska MPS AD)

NEW YORK, NEW YORK COUNTY,  
Church of the Holy Apostles (Additional Documentation),  
296-300 9th Ave.,  
New York, AD72000867,  
ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION APPROVED, 3/12/2020

OKLAHOMA, MUSKOGEE COUNTY,  
Founders' Place Historic District,  
Bounded by West Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., east side of North 12th St., Court St. and east side of North 17th St.,  
Muskogee, SG100005081,  
LISTED, 3/13/2020

OKLAHOMA, OKLAHOMA COUNTY,  
Capitol Hill General Hospital,  
2400 South Harvey Ave.,  
Oklahoma City, SG100005082,  
LISTED, 3/13/2020

OKLAHOMA, POTTAWATOMIE COUNTY,  
State National Bank Building,  
2 East Main St.,  
Shawnee, SG100005083,  
LISTED, 3/13/2020

OKLAHOMA, TULSA COUNTY,  
Fire Station No. 13,  
3924 Charles Page Blvd.,  
Tulsa, SG100005084,  
LISTED, 3/13/2020

SOUTH CAROLINA, GREENVILLE COUNTY,  
Piedmont Mill Stores Building,

2-8 Main St.,  
Piedmont, SG100005071,  
LISTED, 3/16/2020

SOUTH CAROLINA, LAURENS COUNTY,  
Clinton Commercial Historic District (Boundary Increase and Decrease),  
209-225 West Main St.,  
Clinton, BC100005072,  
BOUNDARY REVISION APPROVED, 3/16/2020

TENNESSEE, GREENE COUNTY,  
Crescent School,  
615 West Main St.,  
Greeneville, SG100005134,  
LISTED, 3/16/2020

VERMONT, WINDSOR COUNTY,  
Meeting House Farm,  
128 Union Village Rd.,  
Norwich, MP100005061,  
LISTED, 3/16/2020  
(Agricultural Resources of Vermont MPS)

VERMONT, WINDSOR COUNTY,  
Maple Hill Farm,  
65 Maple Hill Rd.,  
Norwich, MP100005062,  
LISTED, 3/16/2020  
(Agricultural Resources of Vermont MPS)

VERMONT, WINDSOR COUNTY,  
Fire District No. 2 Firehouse,  
716 Depot St.,  
Chester, MP100005063,  
LISTED, 3/16/2020  
(Fire Stations of Vermont MPS)

VIRGINIA, ALBEMARLE COUNTY,  
Gardner House,  
3137 Shiffletts Mill Rd.,

Crozet vicinity, SG100005103,  
LISTED, 3/18/2020

VIRGINIA, HENRICO COUNTY,  
Dabbs House,  
3812 Nine Mile Rd.,  
Henrico, SG100005104,  
LISTED, 3/18/2020

VIRGINIA, SOUTHAMPTON COUNTY,  
Courtland Historic District,  
Roughly bounded by North and South Main, Rochelle, Linden, Aurora, and Bateman Sts., and Woodland Park Cir.,  
Courtland, SG100005105,  
LISTED, 3/19/2020

WEST VIRGINIA, LEWIS COUNTY,  
Lewis County War Memorial and Louis Bennett Library,  
Court Ave.,  
Weston, AD78002804,  
ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION APPROVED, 3/16/2020

Last updated: March 24, 2020

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Meeting House FarmOther names/site number: Murdock-Pierce HouseName of related multiple property listing: Agricultural Resources of Vermont  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

Street & number: 128 Union Village RoadCity or town: Norwich State: Vermont County: WindsorNot For Publication  Vicinity: 

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination    request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

   national    statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A    B X C    D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Vermont State Historic Preservation Office

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government



Meeting House Farm  
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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register  
☐ determined eligible for the National Register  
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register  
☐ removed from the National Register  
☐ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private: ☒
- Public – Local ☐
- Public – State ☐
- Public – Federal ☐

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s) ☒
- District ☐

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Site ☐

Structure ☐

Object ☐

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	buildings
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>8</u>	<u>6</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Agriculture/Agricultural Outbuilding

Agriculture/storage

Agriculture/Animal Facility

Agriculture/Agriculture field

Domestic/Dwelling

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Agriculture/Agricultural Outbuilding

Agriculture/storage

Agriculture/Animal Facility

Agriculture/Agriculture field

Domestic/Dwelling

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EARLY REPUBLIC/ Georgian

### Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: stone

Roof: Standing seam

Walls: clapboard

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

Located in Vermont's Connecticut River Valley, Meeting House Farm encompasses approximately 90 acres in the town of Norwich in Windsor County, Vermont. The farmstead is situated on a large rolling hillside less than a mile north of the Norwich town center. The historic integrity and physical character of the land, with its mixture of hilly and open land, provides a vista of primarily unspoiled farmland. Cultural features such as tree lines, field patterns, and stonewalls complement the natural landscape elements.

The house is a finely detailed, wood-frame, Georgian-style house dating from the late eighteenth century. There are also several detached agricultural outbuildings. The house retains exterior Georgian features such as a hipped roof, Palladian windows, and an overhanging boxed eave with crown molding, fascia, and fine dentil course and fluted corner boards. The interior first floor retains Georgian features such as two relatively equal size parlors flanking a center stair hall. There are two chimney stacks symmetrically positioned on either side of the center stair hall between the flanking rooms.

Meeting House Farm retains integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, design,

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feeling and association.

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## Narrative Description

Norwich is located on the western bank of the Connecticut River. It is bounded to the north by Thetford; to the east by the Connecticut River and Hanover, New Hampshire; to the south by the town of Hartford; and to the west by the town of Sharon. The Ompompanoosuc River flows through Norwich, draining into the Connecticut River. Being a rural, agricultural area, the landscape surrounding Meeting House Farm is sparsely settled; all of the houses are spread out, and most sit on large parcels.

### 1. Farmhouse, c.1788, c.1950, contributing building

This is a two story, wood frame, Georgian style house. The house has a square footprint with a one-story addition projecting from the east(rear) elevation. Resting on a stone foundation, the house has wood clapboards and a standing seam roof. It has a hip roof, symmetrically paired interior chimneys, and a double dentilicated modillion cornice. The fenestration is a mix of 2/2 windows and 1/1 replacement windows with applied muntins. All of the windows have fixed shutters.

Centered on the symmetrical west elevation is a panel door entrance with a four-pane transom light and a full entablature supported by Doric pilasters. There are two evenly spaced, 2/2 windows with dentilicated cornices to the north of the entrance and a single 2/2 window with dentilicated cornices to the south of the entrance. Centered on the second story is a 1/1 replacement window with applied muntins. Two closely arranged 1/1 windows flank the center window on each side.

Centered on the symmetrical south elevation is an entry door with a six -pane transom light and a full entablature supported by Doric pilasters. Two evenly spaced 2/2 windows with dentilicated cornices flank the first story entrance. Centered above the south entrance is a Palladian window with a dentilicated cornice supported by Doric pilasters. A pair of tightly arranged replacement windows with applied muntins flank the second story Palladian window.

The east elevation has a 1/1 window with applied muntins on the first story. There are three evenly spaced 1/1 windows with applied muntins on the second story. Projecting from the east elevation is a one-story, c.1950, hipped roof addition. Clad in wood clapboards and a standing seam metal roof, there is a replacement door and

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two 1/1 windows with simple wood trim on the east elevation of the addition. There is a single 1/1 window on the north and south elevation of the addition.

The north elevation features four 6/6 windows with applied muntins and dentiliculated cornices on the first story and four 6/6 windows with applied muntins and simple wood trim on the second story. Three of the windows are closely arranged on the west end of the elevation on each story while a single window occupies the northwest bay of each story.

### *Interior*

Meeting House Farm has a Georgian plan with two relatively equal size rooms flanking each side of a central stair hall. There are two chimney stacks symmetrically positioned on either side of the center stair hall between the flanking rooms. Details in the first story rooms include wide board flooring, wide architrave window surrounds, and door surrounds trim. The panel doors composition includes cross rails tenoned into vertical stiles, which enclosed bevel-edged panels.

The central hall extends from the main entrance to the rear (north) wall where a door opening leads to the kitchen. A stairway along the west wall of the central hall ascends to the second floor.

The southwest room on the first floor has wood-paneled wainscoting. The wall panels are composed of a series of rectangular panels, secured by rails and stiles. There is a closed-in brick fireplace along the interior north wall. The southeast room has window seats, paneled wainscoting, and a built-in bookcase against the east wall. The bookcase has wood trim and mantel. The wood window trim touches the ceiling. There is a fireplace on the north wall that projects into the room. There is a wood mantel and wood paneling above the fireplace. The recessed space to the left of the fireplace (east) has full-length wood paneling. The wall panels are composed of a series of rectangular panels, secured by rails and stiles. There is a walk-through pantry with built-in shelving connecting the southeast room and kitchen. The pantry leads to a bathroom and laundry room to the east. This space extends into the closed-in porch on the east elevation. The northwest room is accessed via the kitchen or hallway/closet that connects the northwest and southwest rooms.

The central staircase accesses a second-floor landing. The southwest and southeast rooms mirror the first floor rooms. The northwest room has a fireplace with wood trim. There is a nineteenth-century overmantel painting depicting a seaport, townhouses, an avenue of trees, and a domed building. The 42-inch by 64-inch

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image is oil applied directly to the plaster wall and is framed with wood paneling. Known as marbledizing, there is also a band of greenish-gray painting simulating marble" above the painting.<sup>1</sup> The fireplace is flanked by a wood panel door on each side. The southwest room has window seats and wood panel wainscoting. The wall panels are composed of a series of rectangular panels, secured by rails and stiles. The north wall is paneled from floor to ceiling with a center fireplace. There is an overmantel painting depicting a nineteenth-century farmstead. This 33-foot by 39-foot image is painted directly on to the wood panel. The northwest and southwest rooms share a common room, serving as a closet or reading room. There are two smaller rooms on the north side. The kitchen stairs bisect the two north rooms. The second floor, flared posts beams are clad in wood.

The kitchen has 22-inch wide wall boards. There is a closed-in rear stairs that access the back rooms on the second floor. The wood lining the stair hall consists of wide 22-inch boards.

All the fireplaces were enclosed in the nineteenth-century and replaced with woodstoves. There is a wood stove in the kitchen today. A coal furnace was installed in the 1940s. The chimneys remain and were rebuilt in 1951.

There was an outhouse and smokehouse located to the north of the main house. To the south of the house, there was a garage used for storing fuel.

## **2. Guesthouse/Garage, c.1987, non-contributing building due to age**

This 1½ story building is oriented east-west and is near the northeast corner of the main house. Projecting from the west gable end is a one-bay attached garage. Resting on a cement foundation, it is clad in wood clapboards and a standing seam metal roof. The north elevation has two evenly spaced 1/1 windows on the first story and a shed dormer with three evenly spaced 1/1 windows on the north and south elevations. Projecting from the west elevation is an open porch connecting to a one-car garage.

This replaced a c.1890 horse barn, garage, and woodshed.

## **3. Barn, c. 1817, c.1865, c.1963, c.1974, contributing building**

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<sup>1</sup> McGrath, Robert L, *Early Vermont Wall Paintings, 1790-1850*. University Press of New England: Hanover, New Hampshire, 1972.

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This 1 ½ story, rectangular, vernacular barn consisting of several components: – a c. 1817, a post and beam English Barn; a c.1865, post and beam barn; a c.1963 milk room; and a c.1974 shed roof addition. Oriented east-west, it is perpendicular to Union Village Road. Located to the northeast of the farmhouse, it has vertical barn board and a standing seam metal roof. The c.1817, hand-hewn post and beam frame barn has dropped tie beams and a sliding door on the north elevation. The interior consists of a drive and haymow. The c.1865 barn directly abuts the east elevation of the c.1817 barn. With the siding removed, the framing timbers of the two end walls directly abut each other.

The c. 1865 post and beam barn has three six-light, fixed-sash windows along the first story of the north elevation. It originally had openings for a hay drive passing through the north and south elevations that were covered over c. 1974. There is a hayloft door on the east gable end. There are solar panels on the south side of the roof.

Projecting from the southwest corner, perpendicular to the main barn, is a c. 1963 milk room with a gable roof. Clad with clapboards, the milk room has a pedestrian door and a modern bay window on the south elevation. A c. 1974, one-story shed roof addition projects from the entire south elevation. There are seven bays on the south elevation with six evenly spaced eight pane casement windows and a pedestrian door. There are sliding barn doors on the west elevation.

The timbers for the c.1817 barn are believed to have been salvaged from the first meeting house in Norwich Center. After the last service was held in the Meeting House, the meeting house was “purchased December 24, 1817, by Constant Murdock for one hundred dollars at auction.”<sup>2</sup> The remaining timbers from the meeting house are believed to be part of Peter Olcott’s farmstead, Maple Hill Farm, immediately adjacent to the north.

There was a wing on the east end of the barn, extending to the south. It contained a sawdust room that also served as an ice room. The wing was taken down in the mid-1970s.

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<sup>2</sup> Aldrich, Lewis Cass, and Frank Holmes, *History of Windsor County, Vermont*, With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of some of its Prominent Men and Pioneers. Syracuse, New York: D. Mason and Company Publishers, 1891.

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**4. Silo, c.1975, non-contributing structure due to age**

This is a vertical silo with concrete staves consisting of pre-cast blocks of concrete with a series of metal bands.

**5. Hay Wagon Barn, c.1998, non-contributing building due to age.**

This is a 60-foot by 30-foot barn. It is oriented north-south and is perpendicular to Union Village Road. Resting on square wood posts, it has vertical wood board siding and a standing seam metal roof. It has three open vehicular bays on the south elevation. Abutting the north elevation is an open hay barn addition. The west elevation is open.

**6. Equipment Shed, c.1998, non-contributing building due to age.**

This is a 1½ story, 30-foot by 80-foot barn. Resting on square wood posts, it has vertical siding and a standing seam metal roof. It is oriented north-south and is perpendicular to Union Village Road. There are five open vehicular bays on the west elevation.

**7. Garage, c.1998, non-contributing building due to age.**

This is a one-story, 25-foot by 20-foot garage with a saltbox roof configuration. It has board and batten siding and a standing seam metal roof. It is oriented north-south and is perpendicular to Union Village Road. There are two evenly spaced eight pane fixed windows on the west elevation and a vehicular garage door and pedestrian door on the south elevation.

**8. Cattle Barn, c.1998, non-contributing building due to age.**

This is a one-story, 40-foot by 60-foot barn with square wood posts, vertical siding and a standing seam metal roof. It is oriented north-south and is parallel to Union Village Road. The entire east elevation is open and the west elevation has three large window openings. There is a hayloft door in the north gable peak.

**9. Heifer Barn, c.1900, contributing building.**

This is a one-story, 45-foot by 20-foot barn with a corrugated metal roof. It has vertical wood siding on the elevations and horizontal boards in the gable peaks. It is oriented east-west and is perpendicular to Union Village Road. The north elevation has a door on the west side and a fixed pane window in the center bay. A shed roof addition projects from the east end of the south elevation.



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**10. Fireplace, c.1951, contributing structure.**

This is an outdoor fireplace made of fieldstone.

**11. South Pasture, contributing site**

Located to the south of the Main House and outbuildings, this is a hillside agricultural field measuring approximately seven acres. The field was used for growing crops and mowing grasses and grains. It is gently sloping cropland and rolling landscape of pastureland with moderate slopes. Today this is a productive hayfield. Stonewalls, hedgerows, and fencing mark the perimeter. This field remains open today and is historically related to farming activities on Meeting House Farm. There was a springhouse located in the field.

**12. East Pasture, contributing site**

Located to the east of the Main House and outbuildings, this is a steep hillside agricultural field measuring approximately nine acres. It was used for pasture and hayfields. It is gently sloping cropland and rolling landscape of pastureland with moderate slopes. Today this is a productive hayfield. Stonewalls, hedgerows, and fencing mark the perimeter. This field remains open today and is historically related to farming activities on Meeting House Farm.

**13. North Pasture, contributing site**

Located to the north of the Main House and outbuildings, this agricultural field measures approximately nine acres. It runs along the west side of Union Village Road. It was used animal grazing and/or mowing grasses. Today this is a productive hayfield. Stonewalls, hedgerows, and fencing mark the perimeter. This field remains open today and is historically related to farming activities on Meeting House Farm.

**14. Woodlots, contributing site**

There are approximately 43 acres of woodland containing a wide variety of coniferous and deciduous trees. This woodlot is historically related to activities on Meeting House Farm, providing wood for heating and construction.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Agriculture

Exploration/Settlement

Art

**Period of Significance**

1788-1971

**Significant Dates**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Murdock, Constant

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Meeting House Farm encompasses approximately 90 acres of pristine agricultural land in Norwich in Windsor County, Vermont. It retains a high level of both physical and visual integrity that conveys the story of its growth and development from the late eighteenth

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century to 1968. Thomas Murdock, an early settler, Revolutionary War veteran, and active member in early Vermont politics, built the house.

Meeting House Farm qualifies for National Register listing under Criterion A, as it is associated with the early settlement and agricultural history of Norwich. With the well-preserved farmhouse and other ancillary agricultural structures, the property features well-delineated fields and tree lines that date to the early nineteenth century. The collection of agricultural buildings comprising the farmstead portrays the evolution of Vermont agriculture over the past two hundred and twenty years.

Meeting House Farm meets National Register Criterion C, for it contains two pieces of early overmantel art. Painted c. 1800 and depicting landscape scenes, the two pieces are early examples of American landscape painting. The painting in the northwest room employed the techniques of using paint on plaster and marbleizing. It is the only known Vermont example of the marbleizing method and maybe one of the earliest known early American examples of using oil on plaster.

Meeting House Farm meets National Register Criterion C as an intact historic farmstead. The farmstead retains distinctive characteristics of a traditional Vermont farmstead and is significant for the architectural value of its buildings, notably the farmhouse and barn. As an intact historic farmstead, it has maintained its essential character. The farmhouse retains exterior architectural features such as hip roof, wood clapboard siding, stone foundation, Palladian windows, and original details such as overhanging boxed eaves, corner boards and crown molding, fascia and fine dentil courses. The interior first floor retains a Georgian style floor plan with two relatively equal size rooms flanking each side of a center stair hall. The barn possesses simple, functional designs reflecting the agricultural practices of the time. The farm's general-purpose barns were for basic animal shelter and storage purposes, housing livestock, and hay on the first floor.

The diversified nature of farming in Vermont is visible in the layout of the fields and woodlands. Farmers used the fields to grow produce and to raise sheep and dairy cattle, and the farmers harvested the forests for maple sugar, fuel, and for a lumber needed on the farm.

The site retains the agricultural features such as farmhouse, dooryard, and several outbuildings. The farmstead meets the registration requirements for the "Farmstead" property type as defined in the *Agricultural Resources of Vermont* Multiple Property Form. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction and contributes to Vermont's agricultural, settlement, and education history. The period of significance begins c. 1788, the date of construction of the earliest contributing resource,

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and concludes in 1971, the year that owner Charles "Bub" Pierce died and ownership transferred to Jay and Deb Van Arman, the current owners.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

**Criterion A: Early Settlement**

Meeting House Farm qualifies for National Register listing under Criterion A, as it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The farmstead is significant for its contributions to the early settlement of Norwich.

Benning Wentworth, the royal governor of the province of New Hampshire, granted the land of Norwich July 4, 1761, to a group of investors from Connecticut. The original name was Norwhich "but common consent dropped the first 'h' in the name."<sup>3</sup> The thirty-six square mile parcel was "located on the West bank of the Connecticut River forty miles north of Charlestown (number four), then the farthest outpost of civilization in the upper valley of that river."<sup>4</sup>

Norwich is laid out similarly to a range township. The land was granted to private proprietors before settlement began, with the town laid out in a grid of uniform-sized farmsteads. When New Hampshire Governor Benning Wentworth distributed the speculative townships, he followed a European approach, in which he created six-mile square townships. Wentworth awarded 500 acres to himself in each New Hampshire Grant town he chartered on both sides of the Connecticut River. His practice was to make each 500-acre grant in the corner of each town so that as the four corners came together, except along the river, the plot of land would equal 2000 contiguous acres.

The initial Norwich town plan followed the approach adopted by Masonian proprietors in New Hampshire in 1748. They

Established the model of the range township, in which land within the 36-square mile town was divided into rows and ranges of lots of approximately 100 acres each. So, that

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<sup>3</sup> Aldrich, Lewis Cass, and Frank Holmes, *History of Windsor County, Vermont*, With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of some of its Prominent Men and Pioneers. Syracuse, New York: D. Mason and Company Publishers, 1891.

<sup>4</sup> Goddard, M.E. & Henry V. Partridge, *A History of Norwich Vermont*. Hanover, N.H.: The Dartmouth Press, 1905.

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the quality of land received was more or less equitable, each proprietor received two 100-acre lots in different ranges to make things equitable and a smaller, long, and narrow lot along the Connecticut River.<sup>5</sup>

The original Norwich charter consisted of sixty-three names. A month after Wentworth's charter, the Norwich proprietors gathered at the Waterman tavern in Mansfield, Connecticut. A relevant provision in Wentworth's charter was that each proprietor had to plant and cultivate five acres for every fifty acres of land within five years. Additional requirements including preserving pine trees for masts in the Royal Navy and an annual tax consisting of one ear of Indian corn.<sup>6</sup> The charter also called for the proprietors to lay out a central village.

The following is a description of how the proprietors distributed lots in the neighboring town of Pomfret. The proprietors gathered at their first town meeting on September 7, 1761.

To determine each proprietor's lot, a number corresponding with each lot was written on a slip of paper in the presence of the meeting, and it was then 'voted that the lots [papers] all be put into a hat together and delivered to the moderator of the said meeting and that he shake them together and call the name of a proprietor and the clerk of said proprietors should put his hand into the hat and take out a lot and open the same, and set the number of said lot against the name so-called, and so proceed till the whole were taken out, or drawn, entering the number of each lot to ye name called. This method was carefully observed and the number of each lot was entered to the name of the proprietor so-called by the moderator. At this meeting, it was also voted to levy an additional tax of six shillings on each proprietor's right, making in all seventeen shillings per right for laying out the town.<sup>7</sup>

These Connecticut meetings were unusual in the sense that although there were town meetings, there were "no rightful occupants of the town."<sup>8</sup> These were only proprietors' meetings, and the official town meetings did not occur until there was a permanent settlement. The charter demanded a town meeting, but since there were no "residents

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<sup>5</sup> Norwich Historical Society, *Norwich, Vermont: A History*. Leahy Press: Montpelier, Vermont, 2012. Garvin, James L., "The Range Township in Eighteen Century New Hampshire," *New England Prospect: Maps, Place Names and Historical Landscapes*. Dublin, New Hampshire: Seminar for New England Folklife, 1980.

<sup>6</sup> Slafter, Edmund F. *The Charter of Norwich, Vermont: and Names of the Original Proprietors*. Boston: David Clapp & Son, 1869.

<sup>7</sup> Child, Hamilton, *Gazetteer and Business Directory of Windsor County, for 1883-1884*, Journal Office, 1884.

<sup>8</sup> Aldrich, Lewis Cass, and Frank Holmes, *History of Windsor County, Vermont*

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upon the soil of the town," the meetings were held in the south.<sup>9</sup> During these early years, there was limited emigration to the new lands. Every season, three to five men journeyed northward to plot out their lots.

During these meetings, the proprietors also set aside a share for the Society for the Propagation of the Bible in Foreign Parts, a share for a Glebe for the Church of England, a share for the first settled Minister, one share for a school, and 500 acres for Benning Wentworth.<sup>10</sup>

The process of settling Norwich was very slow at first. The first documented settlers of Norwich were Jacob Fenton, Ebenezer Smith and John Slafter in the spring of 1763. The three "made clearings, built log cabins, and otherwise prepared for permanent occupation."<sup>11</sup> While these three men were the first three settlers in Norwich, there were small settlements across the river in Lebanon and Hanover, New Hampshire, as "the towns north and south of Norwich were not occupied until nearly two years later."<sup>12</sup> Following the pathfinder efforts of Fenton, Smith and Slafter, four families followed in 1764. From this point onward, "the settlement advanced with considerable rapidity."<sup>13</sup>

They spent the warmer months clearing the land and returned to Connecticut for the winter. Forests originally blanketed the area, so the first activity of its settlers was land clearing. The original trees included white pine, birch, rock maple, and beech. The big trees were cut fifteen acres at a time, and the settlers burned the remains. The cut wood was used for fencing and building the houses and outbuildings. If a "good burn" resulted, the settlers planted wheat soon after and a good crop secured. They placed the stumps of the trees in "great rows," and they most likely laid stone fences adjacent to the stumps.<sup>14</sup>

After surveying and identifying individual lots, the Norwich settlers soon brought their families northward to live on their new homesteads. The first winter was often the most difficult, as the families emigrated with few possessions. The families were "removed as

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<sup>9</sup> Aldrich, Lewis Cass, and Frank Holmes, *History of Windsor County, Vermont*

<sup>10</sup> Slafter, Edmund F. *The Charter of Norwich, Vermont*

<sup>11</sup> Aldrich, Lewis Cass, and Frank Holmes, *History of Windsor County, Vermont*.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Sagerman, Paula, *Jericho Rural Historic District, National Register Nomination Form*, United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2009

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they were from all places for obtaining the conveniences and comforts of life," and they "had to rely upon their own efforts to obtain only a small portion of what was needed."<sup>15</sup> Having limited supplies and money, the original settlers of Norwich most likely constructed log houses in which they "laid up logs for a house, using poles for rafters and covered these with elm, or hemlock bark, for a roof."<sup>16</sup> They used split or hewed logs for flooring, paper/cloth windows, and local stones for the fireplace, chimney, and hearth.

Following the first permanent settlements, Jacob Burton built the first sawmill on Blood Brook, thereafter providing lumber for future settlements. Elisha Burton built a grist mill a little later. That same year, John Hatch was part of a committee that surveyed the town, creating the first road system and dividing the town into sellable lots. Hatch also laid out the town's early roads. The first town meeting held in Norwich was in 1768 at the home of Joseph Hatch.

In 1771, Norwich was the "most populous of all towns of Windsor County, having forty families and 206 inhabitants."<sup>17</sup> The early settlements were close to the Connecticut River, with several ferry locations connecting Norwich with Hanover, New Hampshire. Steadily over time, the settlers populated the land higher above the river.

### Thomas Murdock

Thomas Murdock moved from Ireland to Connecticut in 1735. He purchased land in Preston in 1754, sold his land holdings by 1760, and moved to Norwich with his family in 1767. They "settled in the south part of town," purchasing large lots of land from Abner Baker and Hezekiah Johnson.<sup>18</sup> Murdock "soon to become a leading citizen of the town."<sup>19</sup>

Thomas married Elizabeth Hatch (sister of John and Joseph Hatch, early settlers in Norwich). They had seven children: Asahel, Constant, Jasper, Thomas, Jr., Anna, and Margaret.

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<sup>15</sup> Goddard, M.E. and Henry V. Partridge. *A History of Norwich, Vermont*. Hanover, NH: The Dartmouth Press. 1905.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Goddard, M.E. and Henry V. Partridge. *A History of Norwich, Vermont*. Hanover, NH: The Dartmouth Press. 1905.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.



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At the first Town Meeting in April of 1768, the community chose Thomas Murdock as town clerk, constable, and fence viewer. Murdock established himself half a mile north of the site of the present village of Norwich and built a small home across the street from Meeting House Farm.<sup>20</sup> He built the existing house c. 1788. It was an elegant Georgian home c.1788 with ornate details such as fluted corner posts, central entrances with full entablatures, and cornice with modillions and dentils.

### **Constant Murdock**

Constant Murdock, the son of Thomas Murdock, was born in Preston, Connecticut, in 1761. His sister, Elizabeth, was also born in Preston. She was baptized the same day as Constant Murdock but died as an infant. His two sisters, Elizabeth and Mary, were born in 1762 and 1765, respectively.

Constant married Sarah Jewett, also from Preston, in January 1790. Sarah died while giving birth to their only son, Thomas Jewett Murdock. He then married Lucy Riley in 1791. They had eight children: Sarah, Emily, Nancy, Elizabeth, Charles, George, Edward, and Henry. Constant's sisters both married Norwich men. Elizabeth Murdock married Jonathan Barrett Jr. in 1788 and Mary Murdock married Alexander Powell of Norwich.

Constant Murdock was involved in a variety of occupations in Norwich. He was a carpenter, building his father's barn as well as his barn. Murdock was also a Justice of the Peace in 1799. In 1811, he owned a fulling mill and dam, initially owned by his brother, Jasper.

### **Murdock Family and the Revolutionary War**

During the American Revolution, several members of the Murdock family served in the military and were involved with the political process of Vermont's independence and statehood. At the outset of the Revolutionary War, Norwich formed a militia and

Of this company, Peter Olcott was chosen Captain and Thomas Murdock, Ensign, doubtless by the votes of the men enrolled in the same. The company was probably a purely voluntary organization of patriotic young men in Colonel Seth Warner's regiment of Rangers in 1775, in the continental service.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> "Norwich Vermont in the Revolutionary War. "Access Genealogy. March 2014.

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Thomas Murdock and Jacob Burton attended a general convention at Westminster on January 15, 1777, "to examine into the number of towns of Cumberland and Gloucester counties that had voted in favor of the new State."<sup>22</sup> Declaring themselves New Connecticut, the meeting was essentially a formal declaration of independence both from the British crown and from the New York colony. Murdock then attended the Windsor Convention of June 4, 1777, where the 72 delegates at Windsor listened to a letter from Dr. Thomas Young of Philadelphia. Young, a supporter of the initiative for statehood, advised the delegates about the necessary steps for statehood. Young also suggested that the Republic change its name to Vermont, derived from the French words for Green Mountain.

Thomas Murdock attended the First Assembly for the State of Vermont in March 1778 when Vermont chose Thomas Chittenden as the state's first governor. During the October 1778 Second Assembly, Murdock was councilor. He was also member of the Court of Confiscation in 1778- 1779. This court addressed the "sequestration, confiscation and sale of properties of those persons living in or owning property in the state of Vermont at the outbreak of the American Revolution who remained loyal to the British government."<sup>23</sup>

Murdock was the chief judge of the Windsor County Court, 1782-87. He attended the General Assembly in Windsor; March 1786; Bennington, February-March 1787; Newbury; October 1787; and Manchester, October 1788. By March 1789, Murdock resigned from the General Assembly, as he "became tired of the noise and bustle of public affairs and retired to domestic enjoyment and private life."<sup>24</sup> He died at Norwich in 1803.<sup>25</sup>

Constant Murdock served in Captain Elijah Gates' Company of Volunteers in Colonel Benjamin Wait's Battalion. He responded to the enemy incursions at Royalton in October 1780 and marched to Peacham in March 1781.

Asahel Murdock (Constant's brother) came to Norwich with his parents. He was a private in the Green Mountain Boys between January 1776 and July 1777. During the second siege of Quebec, he was wounded in his left arm. In 1776 he served under Captain Saby in Colonel Seth Warner's regiment, and in 1777, he served under Captain Burton's company in

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<sup>22</sup> Aldrich, Lewis C. and Frank R Holmes. *History of Windsor County, Vermont*, 1891.

<sup>23</sup> Nye, Mary Greene. "Loyalists and their Property." *Proceedings of the VERMONT Historical Society*. March, 1942.

<sup>24</sup> Murdock Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich Vermont.

<sup>25</sup> Aldrich, Lewis C. and Frank R Holmes. *History of Windsor County, Vermont*, 1891.

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Colonel Samuel Herrick's regiment. He also served in Captain Bush's Company under Colonel Peter Olcott. He participated in the 1781 Royalton Raid actions.

### **Murdock Family and Religion**

Constant Murdock was involved with the early religious services in Norwich. At the annual March meeting in 1791, the town voted "that there be a Committee of five to promote singing the year ensuing, by taking in subscriptions, etc. Chose Sam Hutchinson, John Hatch, Jr., Constant Murdock, Hezekiah Goodrich, and Bliss Thatcher such committee."<sup>26</sup>

Sarah, the daughter of Constant and Sarah Murdock, married John Brown, who studied divinity Andover Theological Seminary and then became a tutor at Dartmouth College. He was a minister for several communities. Thomas Jewett Murdock, A. M., the son of Constant and Sarah Murdock, was born in Norwich in 1790. He studied divinity at Andover Theological Seminary, graduating in 1818. He was the pastor of the Congregational Church in Portland, Maine and Canterbury, Connecticut. After his death in 1826, he was "greatly lamented, and said to have been model of a man, scholar, and Christian."<sup>27</sup>

The last service held in the old church on Meeting House Hill was on December 28, 1817, it having been purchased on December 24, 1817, by Constant Murdock for one hundred dollars at auction.<sup>28</sup> Murdock used a portion of the timber from the meeting house for his barn at Meeting House Farm. Peter Olcott also used some of the timber for his ell at Maple Hill Farm.

### **Criterion A: Agriculture**

Meeting House Farm qualifies for National Register listing under Criterion A, as it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The farmstead is significant for its contributions to the development of farming in Vermont. With the well-preserved farmhouse and other ancillary agricultural structures, the property features well-delineated fields and tree lines that date to the early nineteenth century. The farmstead portrays the evolution of Vermont agriculture over the past two hundred and twenty years.

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<sup>26</sup> Goddard, M.E. and Henry V. Partridge. *A History of Norwich, Vermont*. Hanover, NH: The Dartmouth Press. 1905.

<sup>27</sup> Murdock Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich Vermont.

<sup>28</sup> Aldrich, Lewis C. and Frank R Holmes. *History of Windsor County, Vermont*, 1891.

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Figure 1 1856 Map

### Constant Murdock Farm

While most of his family emigrated to the new lands of the Western Reserve, Constant Murdock opted to remain in Norwich. With its proximity to the Connecticut River, Norwich provided excellent land for farmers, "as it had rich, fertile soil due to the decomposition and disintegration of the impure limestone found in the alluvial hill terraces of the White and Connecticut Rivers."<sup>29</sup> The mineral contents of the soil brought "sweetness, texture, and grain to the root crops, and good grass and grain. This area, like many areas of Vermont east of the Green Mountains, still maintains fertile soil as a result of this geology."<sup>30</sup>

Due to the varying topography of these upland locations, the agricultural fields were small and irregular.<sup>31</sup> The Vermont farms were

<sup>29</sup> Russell, Howard S. *A Long Deep Furrow, Three Centuries of Farming in New England*. University Press of New England, Hanover, New Hampshire, 1982.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Wilson, Harold Fisher, *The Hill Country of Northern New England, Its Social and Economic History, 1790-1930*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1936.

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Miniature factories, and the men spent a considerable portion of their time, especially in winter, turning out a great variety of products, including hardware, whips, clocks, chairs, farm boots, and ropes, besides a great multitude of minor articles such as axe handles, hames and horse collars, and a miscellaneous assortment of goods known as 'Yankee notions'.<sup>32</sup>

These farms were not entirely self-sufficient as "substantial quantities of grain and other foodstuffs, as well as tea and sugar, certain hardware, and even exotic items like spices and chocolate were purchased from outside of town."<sup>33</sup> In addition to potash, the early Norwich farmers produced flax, charcoal, and maple sugar.

The early settlers moved away from the banks of the river to the higher points like Meeting House Hill for a variety of reasons as the land was too moist for cultivation and the surging population growth of the riparian settlements. The valley community also faced floods, freshets, and tangled swamp-like vegetation. The air was drier and healthier compared to the damp, swampy river valleys and frost arrived later in the uplands. The hill land was easier to clear as the vegetation was sparse, and the dried-out trees were easier to remove than the dense wet riverine trees. These same trees also were a source for lumber, potash, and maple sugaring. Also, the prominent views and exposed sunlight of the hill sections improved the morale of the laboring, solitary settlers. With the threat of Native American incursions an omnipresent reality, a hillside settlement provided better forewarning as well as communication sightlines with neighbors. Another reason for moving to an upland location was proximity to transportation modes such as the White and Connecticut Rivers. <sup>34</sup> Vermont historian Rev. Hosea Beckley wrote in 1846, "so innumerable are the hills ... it cannot be expected that habitations should be found only in the vallies [sic]."<sup>35</sup>

Constant Murdock used his carpentry skills to build barns for his father. Thomas Murdoch paid his son for a "well finished barn, which is 40' long and 30' wide, which the said Constant has already put on my place."<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Berolzheimer, Alan. "The History of Farming in Norwich," *Norwich Times*. Norwich: Vermont, Village Green Publishing Company.

<sup>34</sup> Sagerman, Paula, *Jericho Rural Historic District, National Register Nomination*, United States Department of Interior, National Park Service, 2009

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Murdock Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich Vermont.

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Constant also owned other farms in Norwich identified as the 'hill farm' and the 'turnpike farm.'<sup>37</sup> After the death of Constant Murdock in 1828, his probate records listed three farms, including a 'home farm' (170 acres), the 'Hill Farm' (60 acres), and the 'Smith Farm' (140 Acres). In 1802, Nathan Smith wrote Mills Olcott, who owned several farms in Vermont that he wished to rent the Murdock place. There were three Murdock farms at this time, so it is unsure which farm is being queried. Alden Smith of Hartford bought the farm for \$850; Thomas Freelon of Norwich purchased 60 acres of the home farm for \$533; Ira Baxter purchased the Hill Farm for \$600.

Constant Murdock's personal property in the probate reflects his agricultural operations in the early nineteenth century. His personal property included large oxen, two cows, four yearlings, two calves, a mare, 91 sheep, and two hogs. He also owned a variety of farming tools including harnesses, scythes, leading lines, single wagon, saddles, sleigh bells, rakes, broad axe, chisels, planes, lot of cast iron, box of old iron, old sickles, potato washer, grindstone, hemp, shovel, spade, carts, and harrows. Reflecting the crops that Constant Murdock raised on the farm, his probate also consisted of flax, oats, hay, corn, buckwheat, flaxseed, and potatoes.

### **Samuel Currier**

Following the death of Constant Murdock, his heirs received equal portions of the Constant Murdock estate. In 1832, they each sold their undivided share of the farm to Richard H. Morris. John Emerson owned the property briefly before selling it to Lyman Eaton of Royalton in 1836.

Lyman Eaton sold the farm to Otis Marsh and Joseph Wyatt in 1838. As Marsh and Wyatt lived outside of Norwich at the time of this transaction, they most likely held the property as an investment. Otis Marsh was born in Hartland about 1821 and spent his youth in Woodstock and Norwich. He attended Norwich University and became a civil engineer. He worked for the Northern Railroad in New Hampshire and then railroads in Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Texas, and Louisiana, "and gained great distinction in his profession."<sup>38</sup> Wyatt was a Woodstock blacksmith establishing a partnership with B.H. Kimball in 1846. He was also a Norwich Justice of the Peace in 1845.

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ellis, William A. Norwich University. Her History, Her Graduates, Her Roll of Honor, Rumford Press: Concord, NH, 1898)

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The Joseph Wyatt estate sold the farm to Samuel Carrier in 1849. Born in New Hampshire, Samuel Carrier came to Norwich in 1831, establishing a blacksmith shop in the village. He succeeded Elihu Emerson as the town's blacksmith, creating his business in Emerson's shop. After Samuel bought the Murdock farm, his brother, James S. Carrier took his brother's shop. He married Mahala Blaisdell, and they had nine children.

Until about the 1820s, most farms in Windsor County were general-purpose farms that raised a variety of crops for subsistence and sustenance. The agricultural production sustained the farmstead, and farms only sold surplus products. The farmsteads had diversified farming operations. They were often improved (tilled, pasture, orchard, and mowings) and "unimproved" (woodland). It was typical at that time for farmers to clear at least 75% of the land due to the abundance of meadow required for sheep raising. During this time, sheep raising was the dominant agricultural activity, but Norwich also remained ideal for fruit trees, pasturage, and dairying. The farms produced butter, cheese, maple sugar, and wool. Vermont farmers grew potatoes, corn, oats, peas, beans, apples, wheat, rye, barley, and buckwheat. Farmers used horses and oxen to complete the work, and there was a relatively small herd of dairy cows. There were a few swine to use for lard and meat. Activities at the farm often included spinning and weaving, and productions such as sausage and soap making.

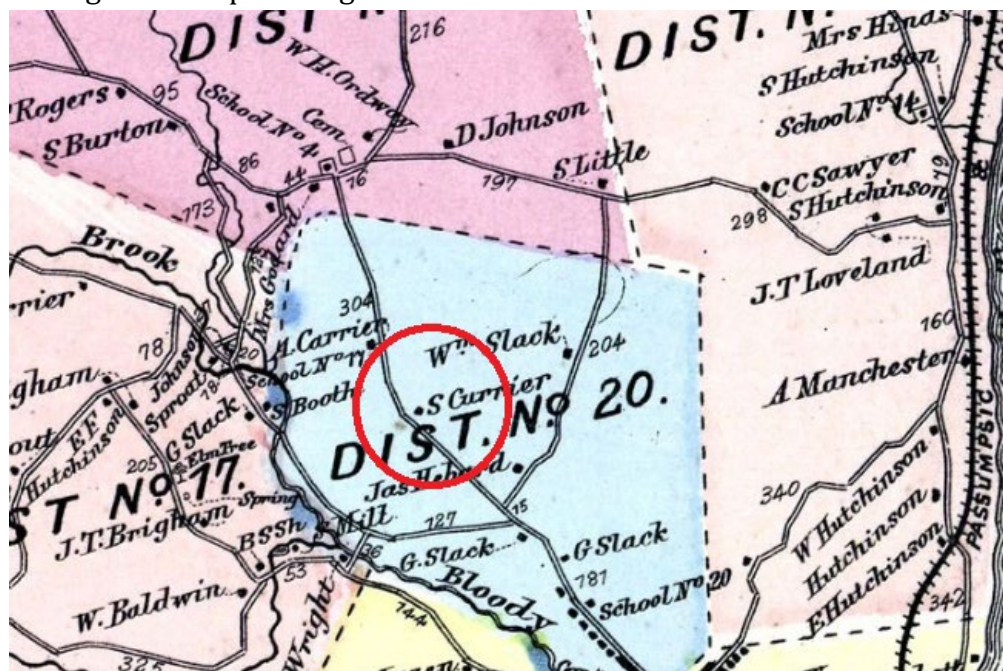


Figure 2 1867 Map

In 1850, Samuel Carrier had 80 acres of improved land and 20 acres of unimproved land, valued at \$1100. Carrier's livestock consisted of three horses, five cows, two oxen, eight



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other cattle, and five pigs. The value of his herd was \$350. The farm produced 50 bushels of corn, fifty bushels of oats, five bushels of peas, 100 bushels of potatoes. The orchards produced \$15 of products. The five cows produced 200 pounds of butter. Currier maintained honeybees, producing 40 pounds of beeswax.<sup>39</sup>

The Currier farm produced 20 tons of hay in 1850. A typical nineteenth-century haying day started with “men with scythes” entering

The fields at daybreak and mowed, several men one behind the other, and mowed around the field. Men or boys shook out the windrows of grass to dry and later raked it by hand into windrows and then into tumbles or cocks. Men with forks loaded hay on wagons or carts. It was drawn to the barn, pitched off by hand, and two or more men (depending on the depth of the mow) were in the mow to move (or mow) the hay back.<sup>40</sup>

Currier brought in sheep in the 1850s. The early nineteenth century was a period in change for farming trends in Windsor County as well as all of Vermont. The land was failing from years of improper use during the pioneer period as they “mined it rather than cultivated it.”<sup>41</sup> Farms converted from the cultivation of cash crops to animal husbandry, specifically sheep raising. This change from sustenance farming to commercial farming was related to several events: the import of Merino sheep to Vermont in 1811, the 1824 plague of wheat rust, and Vermont’s implementation of favorable wool tariffs in 1824 and 1828.

William Jarvis of Wethersfield, Vermont, the United States Consul to Lisbon, imported the first significant number of Merino sheep to Vermont. Jarvis returned to Vermont with 400 sheep, and he saw the state as an ideal location “because of its treeless hills, denuded by the pioneers’ need for firewood, building materials, and lumber for the potash markets.”<sup>42</sup> The rocky soil was better suited for pasture grazing than growing wheat and corn. A popular tale in New England was that sheep flourished in Vermont, for they had appropriately lengthy noses, “sharpened by nature,” in order to get between the rocks that strewn the countryside.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> *Agricultural Census of Windsor County, Vermont, 1850-1880*, Special Collections, University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont.

<sup>40</sup> Tarbell, Carroll R. *History of Mount Holly, Vermont*. Self-Published, 1887.

<sup>41</sup> Norwich Woman’s Club. “Know Your Town” 1940.

<sup>42</sup> Balivet, Robert F. *Vermont History*. v. 33, No. 1, Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, January 1965.

<sup>43</sup> Wilson, Harold Fisher, *The Hill Country of Northern New England, Its Social and Economic History, 1790-1930*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1936.



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Farmers prized Merino sheep for their long, soft wool, and the animals' grazing style was ideal for the rolling hills of Vermont. As Merinos and the related Saxony imports spread across the state, "the lengthy fleeces of these breeds offered a quality of wool that precisely met the needs of the increasing number of woolen mills, especially those producing high grade yarn and cloth." <sup>44</sup> Over time, Vermonters perfected the sheep breed. Between 1812 and 1865, the weight of fleece compared to the total weight of the sheep expanded from 6% to 21%.

Sheep raising for wool and stockbreeding was the predominant agricultural activity in Windsor County during the nineteenth century, and the Currier farm likely adopted this trend at Meeting House Farm. Reflecting this growth, the population of Norwich had soared to 2,316 in 1820. In 1840, sheep outnumbered people six to one in Norwich with a total of 13,000 sheep and 2,218 citizens.

Samuel Currier lived on the farm from 1849 to 1879 with his wife, Mahala, and their four children. In 1860, the farm had 80 acres of improved land and 20 acres of unimproved land, valued at \$3500. The farmhouse was valued at approximately \$1500. He had two horses, four cows, two oxen, eight other cattle, three sheep and three pigs. The farm produced 20 bushels of wheat, 70 bushels of corn and thirty bushels of wheat, 70 bushels of corn, and 30 bushels of wheat. The three sheep produced 350 pounds of wool. The farm also produced one bushel of peas, 100 bushels of potatoes, and four bushels of buckwheat. The dairy production consisted of 300 pounds of butter and the field produced 30 tons of hay. Instead of beeswax, Currier's bees produced 150 pounds of honey.<sup>45</sup>

In 1870, Currier lived on the farm with his wife. By this time, only one of their four children remained with the family. One of their sons, Ambrose, also lived on the farm with his wife, Cordelia. Ambrose, also a farmer, eventually purchased the Samuel Partridge Farm in Norwich. The Curriers also had one boarder, Joseph Richardson. The farm was valued at \$4200. He had 92 acres of improved and twenty acres of unimproved land. He paid \$300 in wages. The farm livestock consisted of two horses, two cows, two oxen, two other cattle, nineteen sheep and two pigs. The farm produced 30 bushels of wheat, 100 bushels of corn, 40 bushels of oats, four bushels of peas, 150 bushels of potatoes, and 25 bushels of buckwheat. The sheep produced 350 pounds of wool. There was \$175 sold in orchard

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<sup>44</sup> Russell, Howard S. *A Long Deep Furrow, Three Centuries of Farming in New England*. University Press of New England, Hanover, New Hampshire, 1982.

<sup>45</sup> *Agricultural Census of Windsor County, Vermont 1850-1880*, University of Vermont Special Collections, Burlington, Vermont.

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products. The dairy production was 200 pounds of butter and 100 pounds of cheese. The field produced 40 tons of hay. He sold \$100 in forest products.<sup>46</sup>

Currier began to tap his trees between 1860 and 1870, producing 100 pounds of maple sugar.<sup>47</sup> Maple sugar was considered one of the state's earliest commercial exports. Maple sugaring was an operation the settlers learned from native populations, and Vermont was famous for both the quality and output of the product. Maple sugaring was the Vermont farmer's first crop of the year, as it was gathered and processed during the spring thaw, prior to the planting of field crops.<sup>48</sup> After the sap was extracted from the tapped trees, it was boiled down to sugar or syrup. It was most often processed outdoors in a large kettle over an open fire.

During the winter, farmers headed into the timber lot to cut logs for firewood and lumber. In his book *Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn*, historian Thomas Hubka described the New England farmer as the "summer farmer and winter woodsman."<sup>49</sup> The woodlot was central to the Vermont farm as farmers spent most of their winters in the woods, cutting timber for the local sawmill and cordwood for the stoves of family and neighbors. Sugar bushes were also very important on a farm.

### Meeting House Farm, 1871-1919

Samuel Currier sold the farm to Hannibal Woodruff in 1871. "A true patriot all his life," Currier's death two years later of paralysis reduced "by one the number of Democrats in Norwich."<sup>50</sup> Following his death, Samuel's wife, Mahala, moved to another farmstead in Norwich.

Hannibal Woodruff, born in Tinmouth, Vermont, dealt in Morgan horses and special breed cattle in Rutland, Vermont. He also raised sheep in Tinmouth, formerly petitioning the United States government in 1866 to raise the tariff on foreign wool. Woodruff came from a long line of Tinmouth families. He was the grandson of Revolutionary War veteran Oliver

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> "Olcott-Johnson House." Historic American Buildings Survey, National Park Service Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction, Philadelphia PA, 1933.

<sup>49</sup> Hubka, Thomas C. *Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn*. Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1984.

<sup>50</sup> *Argus and Patriot*, Montpelier, Vermont, April 17, 1873.

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Woodruff (1750-1827), who served as a private in the Connecticut militia in 1775. By 1886, Woodruff returned to the Tinmouth area, dying in 1890.

George W. Kibling owned the property in 1878. Born in Ashburnham, Massachusetts, he moved to Hanover, New Hampshire, in 1842 with his parents. While in Hanover, he manufactured friction matches and then owned a confectionery business. Following the Civil War, he partook in a variety of enterprises. He was the proprietor of Kibling's Opera House in Hanover; prospected for minerals, making claims in several locations in Vermont and New Hampshire; operated a general store, grist mill, sawmill, and post office in Lewiston, Vermont; and operated a steamship on the Connecticut River. He was a Norwich Justice of the Peace in 1877.

Kibling sold the farm to Richard B. Pixley in 1878. Pixley grew up on his family farm in Sharon, Vermont. He served in the 9<sup>th</sup> Vermont Infantry during the Civil War. In 1880, Pixley lived here with his wife Lizzie, two sons, and mother-in-law. He maintained a maple sugar orchard of 300 trees and was a stock grower, maintaining a herd of 24 cattle.<sup>51</sup> Pixley had at least one laborer on the farm, Calvin Willey Bailey. Pixley was an official tester of the commercial fertilizer released by the Soluble Pacific Guano Company of Boston, Massachusetts.<sup>52</sup> Pixley maintained a modest apple orchard and in 1897, he "had a fine specimen of St. Lawrence apples in his cellar that he raised last year."<sup>53</sup>

Farms used apples for cider making and its various by-products such as jelly, vinegar, wine, and brandy. The period 1870-1900 was a time of renewed interest in apple growing in Vermont. With improved methods of transportation, the introduction of new varieties for eating and cooking purposes, and the development of refrigerated storage on rail and steamer transport, there were new markets for apple growers. Also, better canning, drying, and packaging processes, in conjunction with a growing demand for apples for eating and cooking purposes in cities throughout the northeast, encouraged more farmers to diversify their operations with apple orchards.

Alice and George Flanders owned the property in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1910, they lived here with their two children. He was an active member of the Riverside Pomona Grange. Before moving to Vershire, they sold the property to William Chandler in 1914.

<sup>51</sup>Child, Hamilton, *Gazetteer and Business Directory of Windsor County, for 1883-1884*, Journal Office, 1884.

<sup>52</sup>*Vermont Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin Issues 56-71*, Vermont Agricultural Experiment Station, 1897

<sup>53</sup>*The Landmark*, September 3, 1897.

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## Norwich Farming 1880-1968

As the sheep boom deflated, dairy farming increased in Vermont due to the growing demand for dairy products in the urban centers of southern New England as well as the advent of the railroad and the invention of the iced butter car. Following the Civil War, "the expansion of the railroad to the American west successfully eroded Vermont's advantage of proximity to East Coast grain, meat and wool markets. Farmers slowly shifted their emphasis away from sheep to more profitable dairy cattle and small-scale diversified farming."<sup>54</sup>

Farmers had always maintained a small dairy herd for their own butter, cheese, and milk, but now they were entering an era of dominant dairying output. The big difference was the focus on purebred cows such as Jerseys and Holsteins, which produced better milk than the mixed breeds that farmers used before the shift from sheep to dairy.<sup>55</sup> While most farms had cattle in 1850, dairying had not yet become a commercial enterprise. Only 11 Norwich farmers had as many as ten cows, and most had fewer than five.<sup>56</sup>

Dairying has long been one of Vermont's leading agricultural industries, and until fluid milk dominated the industry in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, cheese and butter were the primary commercial dairy products. Before the development of the factory system for cheese and butter making, dairy processing was a home-based activity.<sup>57</sup> The butter and cheese may have been made for out of state markets, but it was more likely marketed regionally throughout southern Windsor County. H.P. Hood and Company also had a creamery in Norwich. At this point, it is possible that Norwich farmers were shipping their butter and cheese surplus to markets in New York and Boston, as the railroad had arrived in Vermont two years earlier.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> "Agriculture and Industry," Central Vermont, A National Register of Historic Places Travel Itinerary Website. National Park Service, the Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce, Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, Vermont Historical Society, the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers, and the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions, N.D. Date Accessed April 13, 2017.

<sup>55</sup> Clifford, Cameron. *Farms, Flatlanders and Fords: A Story of People and Place in Rural Vermont 1890-2010*. West Hartford, Vermont: Clifford Archive, 2011.

<sup>56</sup> Berolzheimer, Alan. "The History of Farming in Norwich" *Norwich Times*.

<sup>57</sup> Gilbertson, Elsa and Suzanne Jamele, *Agricultural Resources of Vermont Multiple Property Form*, United States Department of Interior, National Park Service, 1991.

<sup>58</sup> Sagerman, Paula. *Jericho Rural Historic District National Register Nomination Form*, United States Department of Interior, National Park Service.

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By 1880, most farms in Vermont had replaced the dominant agricultural activity of sheep raising with dairying. Despite this general trend, many Windsor County farmers maintained large herds of sheep and cows with their sheep numbers exceeding the cow population. The farm also had horses, oxen, cows, sheep, and chickens. Farm production often included butter, cheese, wool, eggs, buckwheat, corn, beans, maple sugar, molasses, potatoes, apples, hay, and cordwood.

The transition to dairying was natural as it was already a known occupation to the farmers, just at a smaller scale. Before the Civil War

The keeping of cows on American farms was incidental to the general work of farm families. The 'native' cattle in use were of a very inferior breed, insufficiently and unprofitably fed and poorly housed. The handling of milk for whatever purpose was haphazard, to say the least.<sup>59</sup>

The production of butter and cheese continued, but by the end of the century was replaced with cream and fluid milk due to western competition.

The farm likely maintained a small dairy herd, which required approximately five times as much feed and pasturage than sheep. The surrounding rolling hills, adjacent farmsteads, and topography most likely limited the size of the herds. This fact is also reflected by the size of the barns and the room allotted for livestock. In addition, large dairy operations required lots of labor and the census data reflected no boarders/laborers. While a small flock of sheep most likely flourished at Meeting House Farm,

The marginal land on which Merinos had thrived proved unable to support dairy cows. The economics of commercial dairying, its labor and capital requirements, and the demand for ever-increasing productivity encouraged larger, better quality farms.<sup>60</sup>

While dairying was the dominant twentieth-century agricultural activity, farmers in Norwich continued to produce other crops. Due to the rough topography and the long winters, Vermont farmers sought alternative forms of income. In 1915, the State of Vermont reported that:

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<sup>59</sup> Rozwenc, Edwin C. *Agricultural Policies in Vermont 1860-1945*. Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 1981.

<sup>60</sup> Donath, David, "Agriculture and the Good Society." *We Vermonters: Perspectives on the Past*. Montpelier, Vermont: Vermont Historical Society, 1992.

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The tendency of farming today is towards specialization along those lines for which the regions are adapted. The leading specialty for the Vermont farmer is dairying, which is fortunate for the state from the standpoint of value of product per acre, employment of men throughout the year, and maintenance of the fertility of the soil. We may, with profit, attempt to develop other specialties, such as fruit growing, potato growing, etc., but the main interest centers in dairying.<sup>61</sup>

During the winter, farmers headed into the timber lot to cut firewood and log timber for lumber. During the spring, many farmers started the maple sugar process. Maple sugar and syrup production increased, and farmers began to sell their maple products to centralized processors rather than on the farm. In 1915, there were 9,558 tapped maple trees in Norwich. The farmers of Norwich produced 2,350 pounds of maple sugar and 2,889 gallons of maple syrup.<sup>62</sup>

During the summer, farmers participated in a variety of extra activities. Hay was mown on each farm and in the early part of the century was also sold in the villages. Clover and alfalfa were successful hay crops. Corn and oats were grown mostly for livestock feed. Vermont was also ideal for growing fruit, as "certain fruits largely consumed, require a cool climate for their best development."<sup>63</sup> Farmers grew potatoes "to provide a surplus to sell beyond household needs."<sup>64</sup> They also probably produced certified potato seed, as this was very common. Some raised poultry "to sell as meat or produce eggs for sale or trade."<sup>65</sup>

### Charles and Lucy Pierce Farm

William Chandler purchased the farm in 1914 for his daughter and son and law, Charles Warren and Lucy Pierce. Charles W. Pierce grew up in Quechee and worked in the mills in either Bridgewater or Quechee. He contracted tuberculosis and doctors advised that he develop a new lifestyle outside of the mills. Pierce was a reluctant farmer and did not enjoy farm labor. Over time, his son, Charles F. Pierce, assumed most of the farming duties.

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<sup>61</sup>, Agriculture of Vermont, *Seventh Annual Report of the Commissioner of the State of Vermont, 1915*. St. Albans: St. Albans Messenger Company, 1915.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Clifford, Cameron. *Farms, Flatlanders and Fords: A Story of People and Place in Rural Vermont 1890-2010*.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

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The Pierces left their small rented dairy farm on Woodstock Road in Quechee with their three young daughters in March 1914. The cows followed behind them during the day-long journey. Chandler held the deed for five years before selling it to the Pierces in 1919 for \$1500. In 1920, the Pierce homestead consisted of Charles and Lucy Pierce and their five children, Katherine, John, Charles, Margaret and Lucy. A stepfather, Vespuccius Chamberlain, also lived with the family.

Charles W. Pierce had a small herd of sheep and a herd of Jersey cows. The Pierces dropped milk cans at the end of the road, which were picked up every other day and delivered to the Bellows Falls Creamery. The creamery returned the cans at the time of the next pick up. The Pierces had to sell their milk to southern markets. There were several large farms in the vicinity of Hanover which supplied the large population of Hanover, Dartmouth College and the hospital.

To accommodate their dairy herd, Charles Pierce built a small milk house/ice house (demolished c. 1973) attached to the south elevation of the barn. This was a single-story, gable-roof structure constructed of wood with a stone foundation. As it served as an icehouse, the Pierces were able to keep the milk cold. It contained a window on the east and west elevation for light. The milk room featured a stone setting trench, or cooling tank, at the base of one or more walls where the farmers placed milk pans in a stream of cold running water.<sup>66</sup>

In 1930, the farmstead consisted of Charles and Lucy Pierce, and three daughters and two sons. Lucy's father, William Chandler, and her brother, Edwin Chandler, also lived in the house. The 73-year-old Vesuvius Chamberlain also lived in the house.

During the Great Depression, Norwich remained unaffected. Families like the Pierces were already very frugal, growing their vegetables, raising their beef, creating their milk, and preserving their food through canning and smoking. As Norwich was primarily a rural farming community, the population did not face the layoffs found in the Midwest and urban areas.

By 1940, the farmstead consisted of Charles and Lucy Pierce; son, Charles F.; and daughters, Margaret and Lucy. Father and son worked the farm. Their daughter, Katherine, son-in-law, Robert Davenport and granddaughter also lived on the premises. Robert

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<sup>66</sup> Gilbertson, Elsa and Suzanne Jamele, *Agricultural Resources of Vermont Multiple Property Form*, United States Department of Interior, National Park Service, 1991.

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worked as a deliveryman. Lucy Pierce's brother, Edwin Chandler, was retired and also lived with the family. Their daughter, Lucy May, married Ray Edwin Kilbourn in 1943.

The Pierce House was the first house in Norwich to have a Delco electrical system. This was before Norwich had any electricity. During the birth of her eighth child, Lucy Pierce suffered from a stroke and was very sick. As a result, the Pierces installed the electrical system and indoor plumbing to accommodate the sick Lucy Pierce.

The Pierces' son, Charles Franklin "Bub" Pierce, married Janet Caroline Kendall on October 4, 1947, in Strafford, Vermont. They lived with the elder Pierces on the farm. When Janet married Bub,

she moved from the house across the street into her present house to continue working the farm with her husband, the only Pierce family member who was interested in running his father's farm.<sup>67</sup>

Bub was a member of the Norwich Congregational Church and Norwich Volunteer Fire Department.

### **Charles F. and Janet Pierce Farm**

After years of mostly running the family farm for his father, Charles "Bub" Pierce and his wife Janet assumed full ownership of the farm.

The Pierces had a herd of approximately 27 milker cows and another 23 heifers, yearlings and calves. In addition to the herd of Jersey cows, the Pierces had pigs, cows for meat, chickens, and laying hens. They had two workhorses, Queenie and Babe, who did most of the work on the farm before buying tractors.

In 1944, there were 186 farms in Norwich encompassing 21,606 acres of land with a \$33 per acre value of land and buildings. These farms harvested approximately 25% of its cropland (4,925 acres) with 293 acres failing and 123 acres remaining idle. 90% of farmsteads had running water; 78% had electricity; 85% had radio and 57% had telephone service. 23% of the Norwich farms had motor trucks; 14% had tractors and 73% had automobiles. 67% of the Norwich farms had 125 milking cows and 1,183 cows and heifers over two years old. 89 Norwich farms had approximately 3,174 chickens. 65 Norwich farms

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<sup>67</sup> "Janet Pierce: 'Nanny' With a Soft Touch." *The Connecticut River Valley Reporter*, August 28, 1973.



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had 245 acres dedicated to corn; 12 farms had 50 acres devoted to oats for grain and 95 farms had 51 acres for potatoes.<sup>68</sup>



**Figure 3 Dairy Barn with milk room (Van Arman Family)**

In 1948, there were 50 dairy farms recorded farms in Windsor County, ranging between less than 100 acres to nearly 1,000 acres in size. The average size was 283 acres. The Pierce Farm was considerably less than the average size of Windsor County farms. Total lands dedicated to crops ranged from 12 acres to 140 acres, with an average of 54 acres. The typical Windsor County farm used close to 95% of their land for producing feed, primarily roughage. Timothy, or a mix of timothy and clover, were the primary hay crops. Farms also used alfalfa for feed. More than 75% of the farms made corn silage and approximately 25% made grass silage. Oats were raised mainly as a nurse crop and were fed green or harvested as hay. A small number of the farms, including the Pierce farm, grew potatoes. The Windsor County farms in 1948 kept approximately eight or more dairy cows with more than 50% having herds more than 17 in size. Every farm kept heifers with one heifer kept for every three cows. The farms kept the cows for four to five years. The average cost of a cow was \$128 with selling prices occasionally exceeding \$221. Heifers cost approximately \$112.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>68</sup> *Farm Census for the Towns in Vermont Based on the Bureau of Census Unpublished Date, January 1, 1945.* University of Vermont and State Agricultural College Cooperative Agricultural Extension Service, 1946.

<sup>69</sup> Houghaboom, Verle R. and William W. Stone, *Dairying in Windsor County*. Agricultural Extension Service, University of Vermont and State Agricultural College, Burlington, Vermont, 1948.

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The typical 1948 farm had little labor assistance, with an average of less than one person per farm. The Pierces hired very little outside help, relying on their large family for labor. For a typical farmstead, the farmers invested 58% of the capital in the real estate, 29% in the livestock, and 13% in the machinery and equipment. By 1948, farms made a transition to mechanization. While many farms maintained working horses and oxen for work, farms invested in trucks, tractors, milking machines, hay balers, side-delivery rakes, tractor plows, tractor discs, and manure spreaders.<sup>70</sup>

A 1948 farm received 66% of its income from milk; 10% from livestock; 6 % from eggs; and the remaining for lumber/pulp, maple syrup, potatoes, hay, and work performed off-site. A typical farm spent 40% of its expenses on feed, 11% on equipment, 4% of livestock purchases; 8% on hired labor; 5% on equipment operating expenses and the remaining on repairs, building maintenance, taxes, fertilizers, utilities and milk hauling.<sup>71</sup>

The large farms were doing much better than the smaller farms for they could use labor and equipment more effectively. Chores such as retrieving the livestock from the fields, distributing from the haymow, and cleaning milking machines took the same amount of time regardless if a farm was managing ten cows or 40 cows. Labor was used much more effectively with larger herds. In addition, many farm chores require two laborers. As a result, smaller farms needed to hire additional help although their herd size did not truly justify extra hands. Also, a small farm required the same machinery as large farms, so the smaller farms were incurring substantial costs but yielding a proportional amount as the larger farms. Finally, a larger farm could sell its milk at a lesser price when dealing with large volumes.<sup>72</sup>

From the start of World War II through the 1970s, "the amount of active farmland in Norwich (including pasture, cropland, hayfields, and orchards) diminished by one-half, to about 3,500 acres."<sup>73</sup> This decline was attributed to the economics of maintaining a small-scale farm, the availability of the automobile, and the attractive landscape. The small dairy farms could not compete with the larger, technologically advanced farms. The car allowed for commuting, and many farmers' children entered other professions.

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Berolzheimer, Alan. "The History of Farming in Norwich" *Norwich Times*. Norwich: Vermont, Village Green Publishing Company.

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The Pierces tapped trees up in the woodlots as well as the line of maple trees that lined Union Village Road. There was a sugarhouse located on the farm of Janet's mother, located directly across the street. The workhorse pulled sleds containing tubs along the tree lines as they collected the sap. In addition to being a busy location for boiling, the sugar house was also a springtime social location. Following the active short window of sugaring, they cleaned the buckets and pans and closed up the sugarhouse.



**Figure 4 Heifer Barn (Van Arman Family)**

In addition to the sugarhouse, there was a log house located in the woods, northeast of the house. Built during the Great Depression, the cabin served as a popular playhouse for the children.

During the 1950s, the Pierce farm focused on dairy and haying. Every summer, Bub Pierce worked daily on mowing and haying the fields. The Meeting House Farm had several identifiable areas, including fields "below the currant bushes," "behind the barn," and "on the knoll."<sup>74</sup> The children assisted on the farm. During hay season, Deb Van Arman guided the horses as they helped pull bunches of hay into the second story haymow. In addition, she led the dairy cows to the pasture. They often used a lot to the north of the farmstead, and they had to drive the cows up Union Village Road and through the bar-way.

<sup>74</sup> Pierce Daybook, Van Arman Personal Collection, Norwich, Vermont.

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Bub Pierce also hayed his mother's and the Bankhart's fields across Union Village Road. In the 1950s, the Pierces bought a new hay baler, dramatically streamlining the cumbersome process. Before the new acquisition, an individual had to ride in the back and hand bale the hay with wires.

Janet Pierce worked mostly in the house. She loved to cook, specializing in bake goods. She made baked doughnuts, pies. They pickled beans and peas. They canned succotash, corn, and string beans. They grew squash, pumpkins, carrots, radishes, cabbage, spinach and lettuce. The kids loved making root beer, using concentrate and mixing it with water. They also had apple orchards that produced apple pies, vinegar and cider. Jeff Bradley, who grew up just down the road, spent many days on the farm, tossing hay bales and collecting sap for maple syrup. He recalled the yeast doughnuts and dill pickles, both of which were eaten dipped in maple syrup, made by Janet Pierce.<sup>75</sup>

The Pierce children played with neighborhood children after their chores or during school vacations. For a game to occur, "all it took was for someone to call friends to gather in a large backyard or field to play a game of baseball, softball or football."<sup>76</sup> The Pierce farm was the site of most football games while there was a baseball s/softball field on Main Street. Additional games included horse, hopscotch, and kite flying. During the winter, the Pierce children skied at Altow/Cemetery Hill Ski Area, participating in the Ford Sayre Ski Program, which provided equipment and lessons for \$1.50 for the entire winter.

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<sup>75</sup> Caruso, Aimee. "A Century of Farming in Norwich: Family Members Flock from Around the World to Mark Anniversary." The Valley News, Aug. 3, 2014.

<sup>76</sup> Norwich Historical Society. *Norwich, Vermont: A History*. Leahy Press: Montpelier, Vermont, 2012.

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**Figure 5 View from across Union Village Road (Van Arman Family)**

The Pierces raised pigs and beef to provide their own meats. They took their pigs to a butcher offsite and received sausage in return. Every November, during deer season, their meat stock was often complemented with fresh venison. During World War II, they resorted to lamb, which was quicker and easier to raise. In tough times, they resorted to eating mutton. Once the rationing of World War Two came to an end, the Pierce family rarely had lamb as they ate their fair share during the war.

As Dartmouth was a male institution, the Pierces supplemented their income in the fall when female students from schools like Wellesley, Skidmore, and Smith migrated northward to watch the Dartmouth football games. In 1954, "eleven girls stayed over for the Colgate-Dartmouth game."<sup>77</sup> The house also filled up during the annual Dartmouth Winter Carnival and the fraternity sponsored Green Key weekend. During the winter, Bub Pierce winterized the tractor and took visitors for hayrides. Bub also occasionally worked for Railway Express in Norwich.

The primary duties on the farm were mowing fields, baling hay, milking cows, and leading the animals to and from pasture. The annual ritual of planting and harvesting potatoes was an event not eagerly anticipated by the Pierce children. In addition, picking the small

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<sup>77</sup> Pierce Daybook, Van Arman Personal Collection, Norwich, Vermont.

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currants from the currant trees was often treated as a household punishment. When currants were linked to the White Pine Disease, the state told the Pierces to remove their currant trees. During the fall, Bub spread lime on the fields. He also sprayed the apple trees. In addition to farming tasks, Bub Pierce performed other duties. He was always up in the fields mending fences, repairing sleds and wagons, and every year, he painted either the exterior or interior of the house and barns. In the 1950s, he dug the septic tank, removed the rear porch and added a new one, and converted an upstairs closet into a bathroom.

Charles Pierce, affectionately referred to as 'Gramp,' helped Bub with farming tasks throughout the 1950s. Bill Bradley, Bub's closest friend, was always assisting Bub on the farm. Bub also bartered with neighbor Roy Douglas: Bub hayed his fields, and Douglas often helped with carpentry related tasks around the farm.

The family often went to Hanover and White River Junction for shopping while they did Christmas shopping from a Sears & Roebuck or Montgomery Ward catalog. Bub Pierce went to White River Junction to purchase grain at the Eastern States Exchange, where the train unloaded grain into the trackside building. He also purchased sawdust for animal bedding and covering the berry plants during the winter.

After a long winter of having no greens on their plates, the spring meals often featured dandelions. Harvested before they blossomed and became bitter, the dandelions were an annual rite of passage, showing that the spring had finally arrived. On Saturdays, they ate salt pork and eggs. The Pierces kept a pork barrel in the basement. They thinly sliced the pork, soaked it in butter, and cooked it in Crisco. Served over potatoes, the family eagerly anticipated the meal. Sundays were more straightforward, with tomatoes and crackers being a standard menu option.

When the Pierces ate out, they often dined at their neighbors' or friends' homes. Deb Pierce recalled visiting the Johnson's Maple Hill Farm, the next property to the north. Louise Johnson's sister, Margaret Coleman, "visited faraway places when she wasn't teaching school in Massachusetts," and when Coleman visited her sister, the Pierces often attended slide shows that chronicled Coleman's journeys.<sup>78</sup>

Occasionally, they went into the village and ate at the Riverside Restaurant and then went to a movie such as "The Caine Mutiny," "Bride Goes Wild," and "The Court Jester." They often went to the Root School at Goodrich Four Corners for community meals, Christmas

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<sup>78</sup> Norwich Historical Society. *Norwich, Vermont: A History*. Leahy Press: Montpelier, Vermont, 2012.



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parties, and indoor roller-skating. Every July, the Pierces prepared food for the Norwich Fair.



Figure 6 Dairy/hay barn with attached horse barn (Van Arman Family)

During the winter months, when farming tasks were less demanding, the residents of the Meeting House Hill neighborhood often gathered socially with kitchen junkets. They took place either at the Pierce farm or Johnson farm “as these homes had pianos and large pianos.”<sup>79</sup> With the piano playing of Jimmy Huntley, the families gathered for singing, food and merriment. Deb Pierce recalled, “listening to the adults converse; singing along; eating the delicious desserts that were served.”<sup>80</sup>

In 2018, the Pierce children recalled life on the farm where they aided in haying and collecting maple sap with Deb and David's father “Bub,” riding the tractor and collecting eggs, and sitting around the kitchen table sharing one of their mother Janet's bountiful meals.<sup>81</sup>

## Pierce Day Care

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Leahy, Senator Patrick Leahy, *Meeting House Farm Centennial*, 2014/.

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Janet and Bub Pierce lived on the farm with their children and the elder Charles Pierce. Janet often invited children to play with her children. As there was no Norwich nursery school then, "the number multiplied and established a daycare center at her home."<sup>82</sup> Janet Pierce ran a daycare established in 1953 "when there was a need for playmates for the Pierce pre-school children."<sup>83</sup> The children "were invited to the farm to play and the mothers of these young children decided to go to work and asked if their children could come on a paying basis. Hence the number of children coming to this farm multiplied as parents learned of this service."<sup>84</sup>

There was "an array of jungle gyms, toy trucks, and a tire swing to keep everyone occupied. Sometimes everyone picked vegetables from the garden and helped to string the beans. The 50 head of milking cows fascinated the children and some of the kids affectionately called the dog a cow."<sup>85</sup> When parents went on vacation or business trips, "they would often leave their children at the Pierce Farm for the night. It was not at all unusual to find 13 or 14 children bedded down in the house on a single night."<sup>86</sup>

Considered part of the Pierce family, the children took an active role in the daily activities of the farm.<sup>87</sup> One former attendee recalled, "I loved to spend the night there... She is just the neatest woman, always baking bread and canning something... We use to sit around all day just waiting for a chicken to lay an egg, and then we'd race to show it to her."<sup>88</sup> During the winter months, "the children roamed through the huge old house that has belonged to the Pierces for generations ... It is a lived-in house, with armchairs as comfortable as a warm lap to sit in and room to move."<sup>89</sup>

After the death of Bub, Janet Pierce served as town clerk and tax collector for 17 years. She was a member of the Order of the Eastern Star. She served on the Civil Board of Authority in Norwich, a member of the Senior Action Center, the Noon Neighbors, and the Norwich Historical Society. Janet also was a member of the Pen Pal group. Started as a social group, the Pen Pal women also raised money for local charities and people in need. Janet was also an active supporter of the Girls Scouts, leading trips and helping with fundraising projects.

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<sup>82</sup> "Janet Pierce: 'Nanny' With a Soft Touch." *The Connecticut River Valley Reporter*, August 28, 1973.

<sup>83</sup> Pierce Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> "Janet Pierce: 'Nanny' With a Soft Touch." *The Connecticut River Valley Reporter*, August 28, 1973.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Pierce Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

<sup>88</sup> "Janet Pierce: 'Nanny' With a Soft Touch."

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.



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### Van Arman Farm

Bub farmed until he became ill in 1970 and died the following year, at the age of 51, and Janet farmed with the neighbors' help until later in 1971, when Jay and Deb Van Arman took over. Deb was the granddaughter of Charles and Lucy Pierce. They expanded their herd and carried on with the dairy business consisting of Jersey and Holstein cows.<sup>90</sup> Jay Van Arman also drove a school bus for the Norwich School District.

The Van Armans added ten more Holsteins to their herd and built a solar-powered, lean-to addition to the main barn with new stanchions.



Figure 7 Painting depicting original horse barn located between hay barn and main house. (Van Arman Family)

New federal regulations in the mid-1900s meant expensive upgrades for dairy farms and the Van Armans had three children to put through college, and the farmer's income was insufficient to meet these goals. The Van Armans took part in the federal Whole-Herd Buyout Program, selling their dairy cows in 1986. Jay worked as a mail carrier in Norwich, and Deb, a physical therapist, worked at the Veterans Administration.

Despite selling the dairy herd, the Van Armans continue to operate the farm. Deb maintains vegetable, herb, and flower gardens, and Jay runs a composting business and makes hay, selling approximately 14,000 bales a year. They also utilize Vermont's current use plan to reduce taxes.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Caruso, Aimee. "A Century of Farming in Norwich: Family Members Flock from Around the World to Mark Anniversary." *The Valley News*, Aug. 3, 2014.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

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Many of Norwich's small farms could not adjust to the changing times, resulting in shutting down their operations. For the Van Armans,

Keeping that land together has been really, really important to the whole family...It's very unusual, I think, and a real credit to them as individuals and to their commitment to the land, the importance of family, and the place that they have been able to do this.<sup>92</sup>

Like Constant Murdock centuries earlier, Jay Van Arman is dedicated to the Norwich community. He served on the Norwich Select Board, School Board, and Zoning Board. He volunteered with the Norwich Fire Department for 29 years. Jay volunteers with the Norwich Lions Club, served on the council for the Parish Church, and was also a Justice of the Peace. He delivers Meals on Wheels one day a week. Jay puts up the flags on Main Street for Patriotic holidays and he decorates the trees with Christmas lights. Deb plants flowers along Main Street and keeps them watered. She is also involved with the Norwich Historical Society.

### **Criterion C: Architecture**

Meeting House Farm meets National Register Criterion C as an intact historic farmstead whose component parts reflect nearly 200 years of farming on the property. The farmstead retains distinctive characteristics of a traditional Vermont farmstead and is significant for the architectural value of its buildings, notably the farmhouse and barns.

Thomas Murdock built a finely detailed, wood-frame, Georgian-style house with architectural features such as a hipped roof, square plan and Palladian windows. The house has entrances on the two primary elevations. Classical pilasters and molded cornices frame the doors. It has an overhanging boxed eave with crown molding, fascia, and fine dentil course and fluted corner boards. The interior possessed Georgian features such as two equal size parlors flanking a center stair hall and two chimney stacks symmetrically positioned on either side of the center stair hall. Considered "the only example in Norwich of the fully developed Georgian style," the house "obviously reflects a degree of architectural sophistication unmatched elsewhere in Norwich, and reveals how by this date it was possible to achieve a degree of elegance and richness quite impossible in the earlier

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

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years of settlement.”<sup>93</sup>

With its symmetric central hall plan, hipped roof, and square plan, Thomas Murdock built a home that closely resembled the c. 1777 Partridge-Snell house in Norwich. An additional similarity was the presence of an entry on two primary elevations with finely detailed pilasters and cornices. Elisha Partridge, the daughter of Thomas Murdock, built the Partridge Snell House. Built eleven years later, Murdock may have employed many design elements that he saw in his daughter’s home.

Constant Murdock built his first home close to the existing house (no longer standing) soon after his arrival in Norwich. In 1794, Thomas Murdock deeded Constant 50 acres – “the east half of the 100 acres on which I now live.”<sup>94</sup> He also sold Constant “whole of undivided land of Abner Barker.”<sup>95</sup> Also, he sold the “remainder of 8<sup>th</sup> 100-acre lot on the west side of 1½ mile highway – after 55 acres taken off north side – Constant to have south side.”<sup>96</sup> On March 26<sup>th</sup>, 1795, Thomas Murdoch(sic) deeded to Constant Murdoch (sic) “the farm on which I now live. Also, one half of the dwelling house and all the outhouses thereunto belonging together with such stock, hay farming tools, and other materials which I have now put into his hands.”<sup>97</sup> Constant was to “support or supply me and my wife Elizabeth Murdoch with victuals, cloathing (sic), expense money and all other necessities during our natural lives.”<sup>98</sup> In 1800, Thomas Murdock conveyed to Constant “50 acres of land in the township of Norwich as foresaid said land being the whole of the westerly part of the farm that I now live on.”<sup>99</sup>

The timbers for the c. 1817 barn are believed to have come from the first meeting house in Norwich Center. After the last service in the Meeting House, the building was “purchased December 24, 1817, by Constant Murdock for one hundred dollars at auction.”<sup>100</sup> The remaining timbers from the meeting house are believed to be part of Peter Olcott’s farmstead, Maple Hill Farm, immediately adjacent to the north.

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<sup>93</sup> White, and Dana Doane Johnson, Hugh S. Morrison, editor, *Early Houses of Norwich, Vermont*, Dartmouth College: Hanover, New Hampshire, 1933.

<sup>94</sup> Murdock Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich Vermont.

<sup>95</sup> Norwich Land Records, Norwich Town Clerk, Norwich, Vermont.

<sup>96</sup> Murdock Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich Vermont.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Aldrich, Lewis Cass, and Frank Holmes, *History of Windsor County, Vermont*, With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of some of its Prominent Men and Pioneers. Syracuse, New York: D. Mason and Company Publishers, 1891.

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To accommodate his growing agricultural operation, Samuel Currier added the post & beam barn in 1865, directly abutting the new barn to the gable end of the c. 1817 barn. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Richard Pixley added a barn that located at the site of the guest house (#2) as well as the heifer barn (#9).

Besides the installation of electricity, there were very few changes to the main house during the first half of the twentieth century. In addition, the Pierce family did not add any agricultural buildings to the farmstead throughout the twentieth century.

One addition to the farmstead was the milk house. Starting in the twentieth-century, there were concerns about the handling of milk on the farm. The Federal government mandated that farmers construct separate milk houses designed following minimal sanitation requirements. Charles F. Pierce built a milk house that projected from the southwest corner of the barn in 1963. For convenience, the milk house was attached to the main barn and separated from the stable area by a door to prevent the stable odors from contaminating the milk. It was located on the side of the barn closest to the main road or driveway for easy loading on to milk wagons and, later, trucks.<sup>101</sup> According to the *Agricultural Resources of Vermont Multiple Property Form*:

The milk room featured a cooling tank at the base of one or more walls ... once the milk had set, the cream was brought into the churning room where it was made into butter.<sup>102</sup>

The federal government mandated a cement floor and bulk tank, and the Pierces added stanchions with cement floors in the barn. Eventually, milk houses became mandatory for most milk producers. Consequently, throughout the next twenty years, nearly every dairy barn in the state had one of these modest yet essential little additions built on to it.<sup>103</sup>

During the 1970s, the Van Armans enlarged the main barn (#3) and added the upright silo (#4) to the northeast corner of the hay barn. Farms added above ground, vertical silos, which produced an automatic gravitational system that reduced the labor previously employed to stomp down the feed and cover it with dirt. Following the trends of Vermont farms during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Pierces built a silo with concrete staves, consisting of

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<sup>101</sup> Gilbertson, Elsa and Suzanne Jamele, *Agricultural Resources of Vermont Multiple Property Form*, United States Department of Interior, National Park Service, 1991.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

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pre-cast blocks of concrete with a series of metal bands similar to those used on the wood stave.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the Van Arman family added many modern agricultural buildings, including the Guesthouse/Garage (#2), Hay Wagon Barn (#5), Equipment Shed (#6), Garage (#7), and Cattle Barn (#8).

### Criterion C: Art

Meeting House Farm meets National Register Criterion C, for it possesses two significant overmantel art pieces. The overmantel is a modern term for what was called either a "chimney painting" or a "chimneypiece" during the eighteenth century. Overmantels were typically painted on wooden panels to decorate the ample rectangular space above the fireplace. Frequent subjects of overmantels include landscapes featuring single estates or entire towns, hunting scenes, genre scenes, history subjects, animals, still-life objects, and patriotic emblems. Compositions were drawn from observation; borrowed from engravings, wallpaper, embroidered samplers, and design books, or invented.<sup>104</sup>

The 33" x 39" overmantel panel in the southwest bedroom "is of special interest because of its unusual subject and high quality of execution."<sup>105</sup> It depicts a "handsome country estate that is surrounded by high fences and flanked by an avenue of trees."<sup>106</sup> Additional features in the painting include a second house, a pond, and a sailboat. The painting

Retains much of its original appeal and decorative charm. The colors are lively and naturalistic with green and browns attractively set off against a rosy sunset sky. A characteristically primitive touch is provided by a tilted foreground perspective, which combines with the low horizon line to create an unusually bold recession effect.<sup>107</sup>

While some theories suggest that the picture depicts the home of Constant Murdock's brother, Jasper Murdock, the painting most likely represents an imaginary house and grounds.

Located in the northwest bedroom, there is a 42-inch by 64-inch painting. It depicts a seaport with townhouses, sailing ships, an avenue of trees, and a large domed structure.

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<sup>104</sup> Worcester Art Museum, <https://www.worcesterart.org/>, Worcester, Massachusetts. Accessed July 24, 2019

<sup>105</sup> McGrath, Robert L, *Early Vermont Wall Paintings, 1790-1850*. University Press of New England: Hanover, New Hampshire, 1972.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

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Unlike the overmantel panel in the southwest bedroom, this one is painted on plaster rather than wood. The artists also used oil rather than the more common distemper technique, which involved a combination of glue, water and dry pigments. Framed by wood paneling, the painting also features a method know as marbleizing:

An added effect is created by a band of greenish-gray painting simulating marble that runs across the wall above the scenic mural and thereby forming a transition from the world of pictorial illusion to that of architectural reality.<sup>108</sup>

Marbleizing is found throughout New England, but this is the only known example in Vermont. This painting is also the only known example of a scenic landscape using the oil on plaster technique. With its urban seaport, this painting is “the first appearance of a marine subject in a Vermont home.”<sup>109</sup>

While using different methods, the same artist most likely painted the two overmantel paintings. The overmantel artists of the eighteen century

Are believed to have been itinerant, probably because there was not enough work in any one community to provide an adequate income. There is no account of how decorative painters were trained, but presumably, they learned by serving apprenticeships, as did other craftspeople in the eighteenth century. Overmantel painters obtained pigments, linseed oil, and other supplies from apothecaries, from merchants who sold imported goods from the Atlantic trade, and, in Boston, from specialized color shops.<sup>110</sup>

The two paintings share common attributes such as low horizon lines, color schemes, and “the arrangement of trees in artificial rows to create perspective recessions occurs in both paintings as does an equivalent disposition of ponds, lakes, mountains and elements of architecture.”<sup>111</sup>

The two overmantel paintings, with their depictions of idyllic landscapes,” represent some of the first pure landscapes in American art, antedating by almost half a century the better-known Hudson River school.”<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Worcester Art Museum, <https://www.worcesterart.org/>, Worcester, Massachusetts. Accessed July 24, 2019

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

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## Conclusion

Due to its rich history and intact historic resources, Meeting House Farm is a significant area of Norwich with architectural and landscape features that are visual reminders of a vibrant rural eighteenth and nineteenth-century area. Today, Meeting House Farm remains an idyllic agricultural area with a well-maintained late eighteenth century historic home, several outbuildings, and open fields that depict the farming history of the area. The Van Arman's continue to use the fields and outbuildings for agricultural purposes.

The historic landscape retains components of its earlier agricultural heritage and appears much as it did throughout the late eighteenth to mid-twentieth century. The land has retained its historic setting with open fields surrounding the homestead and surrounding forested woodland. Stone and barbed wire fences separate the fields from the historic buildings. Taken together, the individual components create a relatively intact landscape set within the existing historic buildings of Meeting House Farm. The farmstead today embodies the history of farming in Norwich. It has changed, adapting to accommodate changes in the economy and the farming techniques, while retaining the original patterns of its buildings, pastures, and woodlands.

In addition to depicting Norwich's rich history, Meeting House Farm's significance also lies in its intact historic art and architecture. The farmhouse contains two early examples of overmantel art employing rare techniques such as using oil on plaster and marbling. The farmstead and outbuildings retain a high degree of integrity of design, workmanship, setting, and materials. The barns associated with the farmhouse are fine examples of early English barns. They retain much of their original timber framing components and character-defining features, including three-bay arrangements, sliding doors, open trusses, and scribe marks. The barns retain original layouts such as drives, livestock stanchions, stables, and haymow. These features demonstrate the workmanship and design technology available to its builders as well as the agricultural practice of the early farming and diversified, small-scale agriculture of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Changes to the barns, though altering the character of the original structure, demonstrate the progression of agriculture in Vermont in the nineteenth century from grain and diversified farming to dairy operations.

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**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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☒ Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_ Norwich Historical Society

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 90 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- A. **Lat:** 43.72644° N **Lon:** 72.30882° W
- B. **Lat:** 43.72534° N **Lon:** 72.30831° W
- C. **Lat:** 43.73168° N **Lon:** 72.30187° W
- D. **Lat:** 43.73345° N **Lon:** 72.30575° W
- E. **Lat:** 43.73672° N **Lon:** 72.30434° W
- F. **Lat:** 43.73622° N **Lon:** 72.30663° W
- G. **Lat:** 43.73506° N **Lon:** 72.30741° W
- H. **Lat:** 43.73492° N **Lon:** 72.30715° W
- I. **Lat:** 43.72892° N **Lon:** 72.31004° W

### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundaries of Maple Hill Farm are the legal boundaries of the two parcels of land identified in the Town of Norwich tax maps as Parcel #10-211.000 (2.0122 acres) and Parcel # 10-211.000 (88.5056 acres).

### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes the farmhouse, outbuildings, fields, pastures, and woodlots that have historically been part of the Meeting House Farm and that have retained historical integrity.

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### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Brian Knight  
organization: Brian Knight Research  
street & number: P.O. Box 1096  
city or town: Manchester state: VT zip code: 05254  
e-mail brianknight@fastmail.fm  
telephone: 201.919.3416  
date: July 23, 2019

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15-minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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## Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered, and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

## Photo Log

Name of Property: Meeting House Farm

City or Vicinity: Norwich

County: Windsor County

State: Vermont

Photographer: Brian Knight

Date Photographed: June 2018

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo 1 of 30: View looking north at Building #1

Photo 2 of 30: View looking southeast at Building #1

Photo 3 of 30: View looking south at Building #1

Photo 4 of 30: View looking north at Building #1

Photo 5 of 30: View looking west at Building #1

Photo 6 of 30: View looking south at Building #1

Photo 7 of 30: View looking north at Building #2

Photo 8 of 30: View looking southeast at Building #3



Meeting House Farm

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Photo 9 of 30: View looking northwest at Building #3

Photo 10 of 30: View looking northwest at Building #3 and Building #4

Photo 11 of 30: View looking northeast at Building #5

Photo 12 of 30: View looking northeast at Building #5 and Building #6

Photo 13 of 30: View looking northeast at Building #6 and Building #7

Photo 14 of 30: View looking south at Building #8

Photo 15 of 30: View looking southeast at Building #9

Photo 16 of 30: View looking west at Building #9

Photo 17 of 30: View looking southwest at Structure #10

Photo 18 of 30: View looking northwest at Buildings #3, #4, #7 and #9

Photo 19 of 30: View looking north at North Fields

Photo 20 of 30: View looking south at North Fields

Photo 21 of 30: View looking south at Farmstead

Photo 22 of 30: View looking east at East Fields

Photo 23 of 30: Kitchen

Photo 24 of 30: Stairs

Photo 25 of 30: 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Room

Photo 26 of 30: 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Landing

Photo 27 of 30: 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Landing

Photo 28 of 30: 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Hearth with painting, SW Room

Photo 29 of 30: 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Hearth with painting, NW Room

Photo 30 of 30: Flared Post

Meeting House Farm  
Name of Property

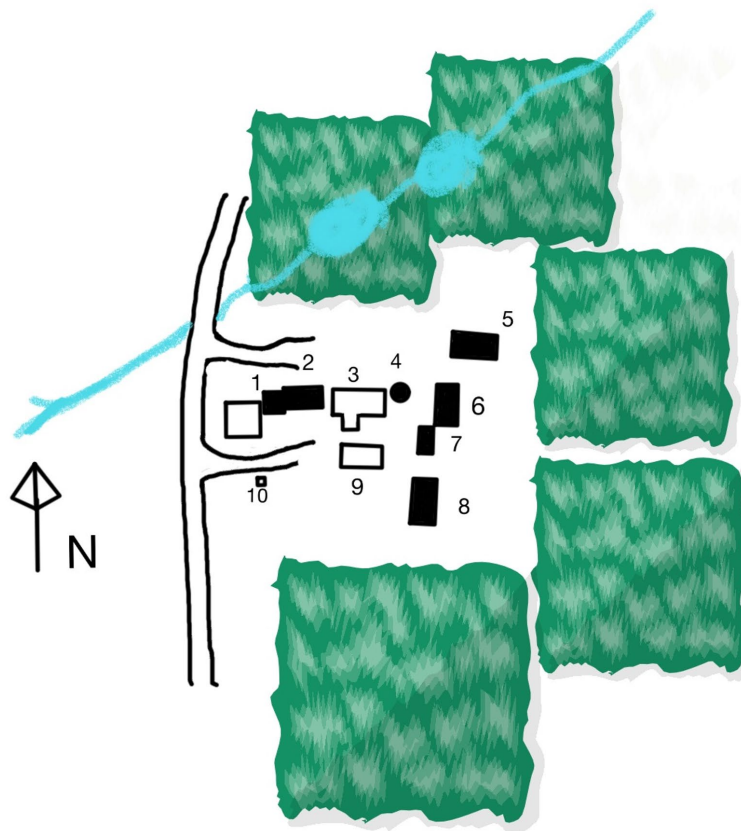
Windsor, Vermont  
County and State

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Meeting House Farm  
Name of Property

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Meeting House Farm  
National Register Nomination  
Norwich,  
Windsor County,  
Vermont

Contributing ☐

Non-contributing ☐

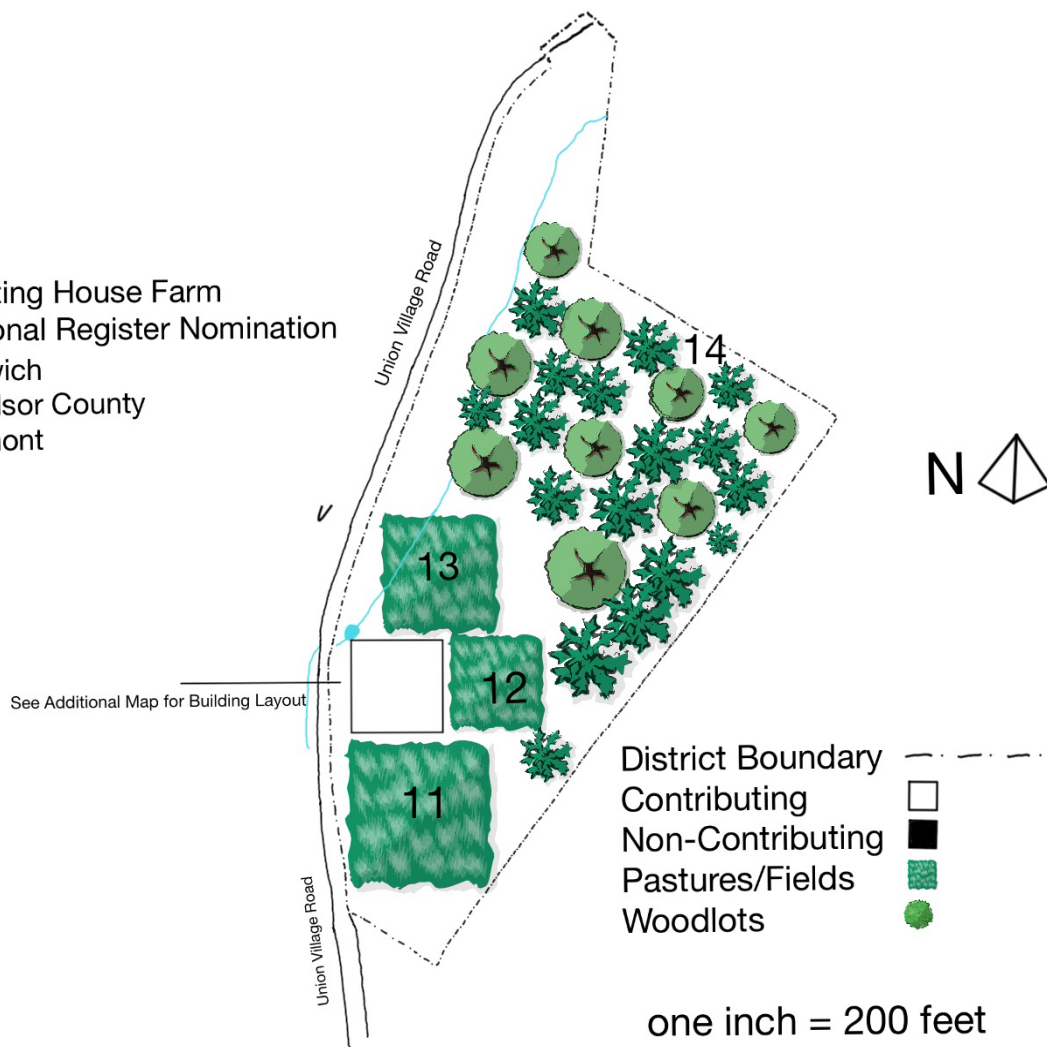
Pasture/Fields ☐

one inch = 200 feet

Meeting House Farm  
Name of Property

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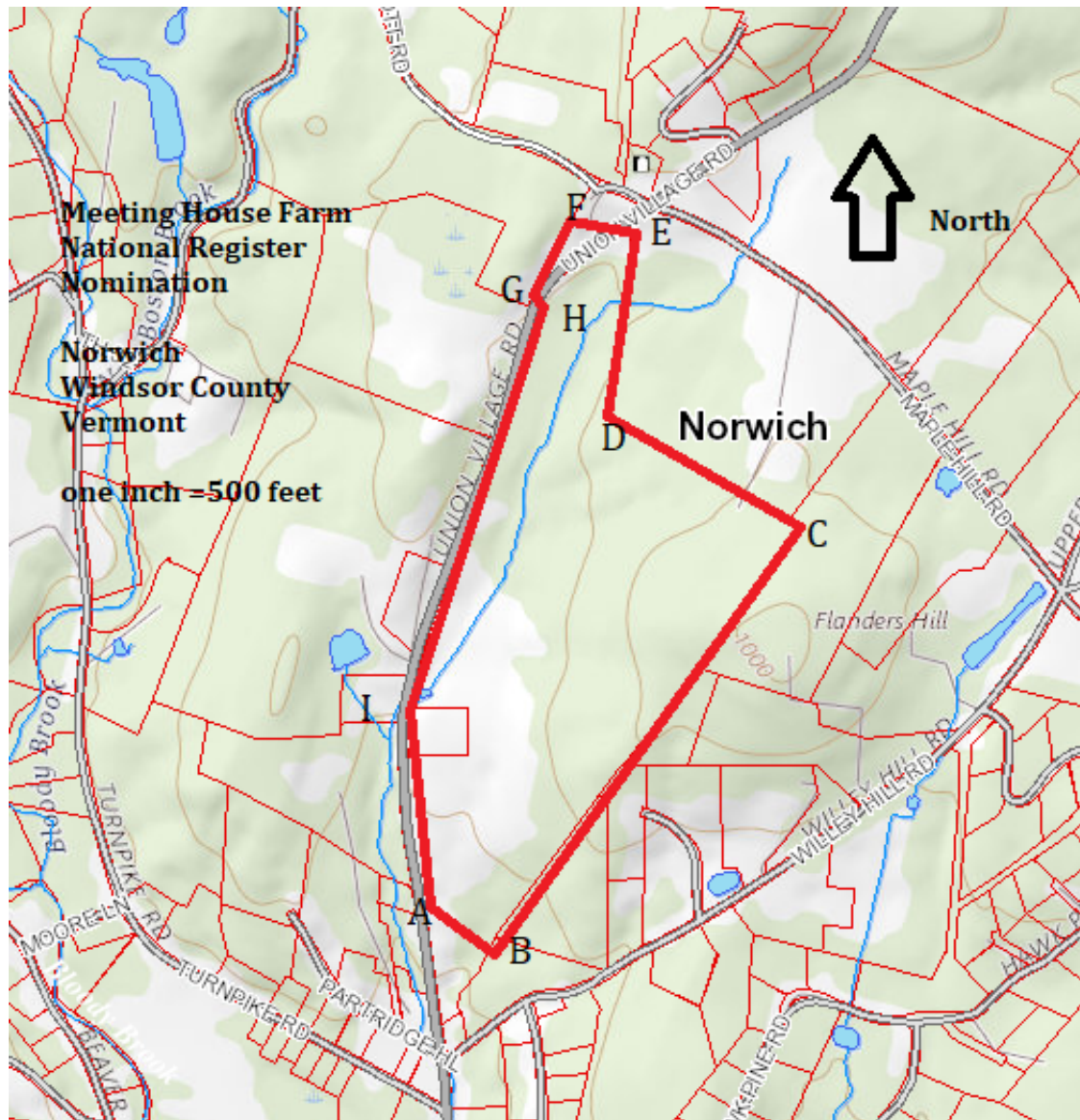
Meeting House Farm  
National Register Nomination  
Norwich  
Windsor County  
Vermont



**Figure 8 Boundary Map**

Meeting House Farm  
Name of Property

Windsor, Vermont  
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**Figure 9 Location Map**

- A. Lat: 43.72644° N Lon: 72.30882° W
- B. Lat: 43.72534° N Lon: 72.30831° W
- C. Lat: 43.73168° N Lon: 72.30187° W
- D. Lat: 43.73345° N Lon: 72.30575° W
- E. Lat: 43.73672° N Lon: 72.30434° W
- F. Lat: 43.73622° N Lon: 72.30663° W
- G. Lat: 43.73506° N Lon: 72.30741° W
- H. Lat: 43.73492° N Lon: 72.30715° W
- I. Lat: 43.72892° N Lon: 72.31004° W









































































