

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.

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Weekly List 20200320

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
Continuation Sheet**

Maple Hill Farm

Name of Property

Windsor Co., VT

County and State

Agricultural Resources of Vermont

Name of multiple property

Section number 7 & 8 Pages 1, 15, 16, 19 & 61
listing

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 100005062

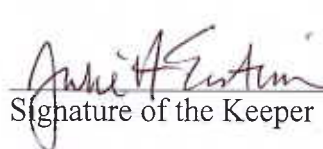
Property Name: Maple Hill Farm

County: Windsor

State: VT

Multiple Name: Agricultural Resources of Vermont

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

3/16/20
Date of Action

Summary

Maple Hill Farm is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the state level of significance under Significance Criteria A (Agriculture), B (Politics/Government), and C (Architecture). The property meets the registration requirements or the Farmstead property type established in the "Agricultural Resources of Vermont" Multiple Property Submission, with a period of significance of c. 1773-1966—bracketed by the date of construction of the earliest contributing resource and the date when farming operations ceased on the property, respectively.

The 41.7-acre National Register-listed remains of this farm consist of eight (8) contributing buildings and six (6) contributing sites. It was the home and farmstead of early settler, Revolutionary War veteran, and Lt. Governor Peter Olcott (1733-1808). As noted in the documentation, Maple Hill Farm "... portrays the evolution of Vermont agriculture over the past two hundred and twenty years" (Section 8, p. 18).

Amended Items in Nomination

With the advance approval of the nominating authority, the purpose of this Supplementary Listing Record is to make two substantive amendments to the Maple Hill Farm National Register documentation.

Significance Criterion D and Area of Significance (Archeology/Historic – Non-aboriginal) is Removed

The documentation submitted identifies the subject property as eligible under all four significance criteria; however, the case for significance criterion D and Area of Significance of Archaeology/Historic – Non-aboriginal is not supported. For that reason, Criterion D is removed—as is the associated area of significance of Archeology/Historic – Non-aboriginal. If, in future, the property is deemed to have sub-surface integrity, research questions are written, and it can be demonstrated to either have yielded, or be likely to yeild, information important in history or prehistory, then the National Register documentation will be amended via the Additional Documentation process to reflect that added criterion.

The State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

Distribution List

National Register files

Nominating Authority, without nomination attached



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: Maple Hill Farm

Other names/site number: Olcott-Coleman-Johnson House

Name 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: 65 Maple Hill Road

City or town: Norwich State: Vermont County: Windsor

Not 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:

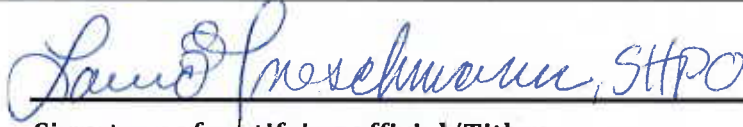
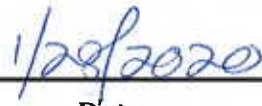
 national X statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 X A X B X C X D

Maple Hill Farm
Name of Property

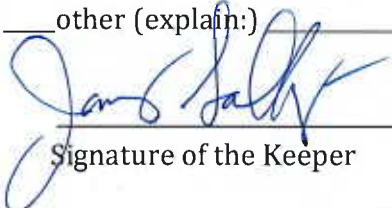
Windsor, Vermont
County and State


	
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>State Historic Preservation Office</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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Historic name: Maple Hill Farm

Other names/site number: Olcott-Coleman-Johnson House

Name 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: 65 Maple Hill Road

City or town: Norwich State: Vermont County: Windsor

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

___ national X statewide ___ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

XA XB XC XD

Maple Hill Farm

Name of Property

Windsor, Vermont

County and State

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

State Historic Preservation Office

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Maple Hill Farm

Name of Property

Windsor, Vermont

County and State

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

☐

Site

☐

Structure

☐

Object

☐

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing

8

Noncontributing

0

buildings

6

0

sites

0

0

structures

0

0

objects

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14

0

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

Domestic/Secondary Structure

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.)

Colonial: Georgian

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Foundation: stone, brick

Roof: slate, asphalt shingle

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.)

Summary Paragraph

Located in Vermont's Connecticut River Valley, Maple Hill Farm encompasses approximately 41.7 acres in the town of Norwich in Windsor County, Vermont. Maple Hill Farm is a farmstead located on a large rolling hillside 1½ miles 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 hipped roof, central chimney, and overhanging boxed eaves with crown molding, fascia and fine dentil courses and corner boards. The interior first floor retains a typical Georgian plan consisting of two relatively equal size parlors flanking a center stair-hall. These two front rooms retain original fabric such as wood paneling, wine closet and wainscoting. There are two chimney stacks symmetrically positioned on either side of the center stair hall between the flanking rooms.

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Maple Hill Farm retains integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, design, feeling and association. Each contributing building retains sufficient integrity to convey the historic significance of the property and its agricultural heritage.

Narrative Description

Norwich is on the western bank of the Connecticut River. It is bounded to the north by the town of 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, Maple Hill Farm is part of a sparsely settled landscape. The houses are spread out, and most sit on large parcels. It was the agricultural potential of the land that first attracted the early settlers to Norwich. The property retains much of its productivity and has supported consistent farming activities for more than 200 years. The landscape retains the patterns established by earlier farming activities, and land use evolved naturally according to the physical characteristics of the soil. The land near the farmstead is mostly level and was the easiest to clear, till, and mow for crops. The land with a desirable species of trees remained as woodlots, serving the lumbering or maple sugar industry. Collectively, the farmstead, lot lines, and stone walls represent the evolution of the subsistence hill farm landscape and remain intact today.

1. Farmhouse, c.1789, contributing building

The farmhouse has a moderate setback from Maple Hill Road. Oriented on a north-south axis, the house sits on slightly rising ground surrounded by outbuildings, open pasture, and trees. Mature sugar maple trees line both sides of the road.

This 2½-story house has an L plan with Georgian features. There is a 40-foot by 24-foot main block, 24 x 16-foot original ell, and a woodshed ell. Resting on a fieldstone foundation partly reinforced with concrete abutments, the main block has a hipped roof with asphalt shingles, wood clapboard siding, and a central chimney. There are c.1985 9/9 sash that are copies of the original windows. The frames feature splayed wood window hoods. The original eighteenth-century shutters complete with hardware survive on the east and west facades. The shutters on the south side date from the latter half of the nineteenth century. Architectural features include overhanging boxed eaves with crown molding, fascia, and fine dentil courses and corner boards. The dentils end on the northern side of the main block. Centered on

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the south elevation, the entrance has a simple entablature and paneled double doors flanked by closely paired windows on each side. The doors are reproductions based on original doors that are found elsewhere in the building. The second story of the south elevation has a center window flanked by two closely paired windows. The east elevation has a pair of closely arranged 9/9 windows in the southern bays on the first and second stories and a smaller 2/2 window on the north bay of the first story. Centered on the first story of the west elevation is a door opening that was enclosed c.1855. Closely paired windows flank it on each side. There are five 9/9 windows on the second story of the west elevation.

The interior of the main block was "as indicative of the elegant and refined taste of Peter Olcott as the exterior."¹ There is eastern white pine throughout the building for paneling, floors, baseboards, and wainscoting. White pine was the optimal wood as it was "free of knots" and had a "clean, even grain," which "furnished an ideal material for such work. It did not shrink, warp, or check, largely because the wood used was always well seasoned."²

The first floor retains a Georgian floor plan with two relatively equal size rooms flanking the center stair hall. The ceiling height throughout the first floor is a little over eight feet. The narrow, eight-foot by eight-foot, paneled main stair is U-shaped with simple square balusters positioned at an angle on the stair treads. There is simple decorative scrollwork under the treads. There is evidence of an opening for a transom light above the door, but it is infilled with an eighteenth-century board and wrought nails.

The interior features a central chimney plan. While the two chimney stacks are symmetrically positioned behind the center stair hall and in the kitchen, they are positioned asymmetrically along the interior wall as "the fireplace was rarely on the central axis of the room, and there was always a door on one side of it."³ There is a four-foot by two-foot space, accessed from the kitchen, between the two flues on the center chimney. The space maintained an even temperature and maple syrup was kept there year-round through the twentieth century.⁴

¹ White, and Dana Doane Johnson, Hugh S. Morrison, editor, *Early Houses of Norwich, Vermont*.

² Kelly, Frederick. *Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut*. Dover Publications: New York, 1952.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Interview with Philip Zea, May 2018.

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The two front rooms retain original fabric such as pine floors, white pine paneling, simple baseboards and paneled wainscoting. There are plaster ceilings and plain casings cover the exposed posts. The wainscot is composed of large, raised rectangular panels. The height of the wainscoting is determined by the height of the windowsills above the floor as the continuation of the window stool forms the chair rail.⁵

The front two rooms have six-panel Georgian interior doors with fielded panels. The door composition includes cross rails tenoned into vertical stiles which enclose bevel-edged panels. The dining room has six-panel Georgian doors with arches, and the parlor has six-panel Georgian doors without arches. The remaining interior doors are 2/2 or 2/1 panel doors. There are three flat-paneled doors upstairs that date to the 1870s.

The west front room is 16-foot by 16-foot with wood paneling and fireplace. The entire east wall has simple raised paneling. A closet door on the north and a door to the central entrance hallway to the south flank the off-center fireplace. The wall panels are composed of a series of rectangular panels, secured by rails and stiles. The cornice of the wall consists of small, rectangular panels, oriented horizontally, with more extended panels located above the two doors. The fireplace surround is simple and there is no cornice projection creating a mantelshelf. There is a large rectangular panel above the mantelpiece, flanked symmetrically by the smaller rectangular pieces placed vertically. The space between the fireplace and the door to the entrance hall features a six-panel composition similar to the interior doors.

The east 16-foot by 16-foot dining room has a wood-paneled west wall with an off-center fireplace with a mantelpiece. This room has more elaborate detailing than the west room. The wall paneling consists of a composition of rectangular panels, oriented both horizontally and vertically, with an upper row of panels with arched tops. The cornice molding consists of regularly spaced, vertically staggered, oval-shaped perforations along the frieze band. The arches are repeated in the upper panels of the two doors, one from the hall, the other leading to the rear room. To the left of the fireplace is the doorway to the entry hall. A pulvinated frieze caps the door. The fireplace has a simple molded architrave trim capped by a pulvinated frieze and crenellated molding cornice. The pulvinated frieze mirrors the frieze above the door leading to the entry hall. The fireplace dentils differ from those

⁵ Kelly, Frederick. *Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut*.

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found on the wall cornice as they appear to be drilled or incised while the walls are beaded. Unlike the west room, there is no large rectangular panel above the mantelpiece as the upper arched wall paneling continues above the mantel. The red brick masonry is exposed. The northern wall features an off-center door and a built-in shallow wine closet with a paneled door and flanking pilasters. The interior of the closet consists of original paint and compartments for bottles and spices. The wine closet has a wood door with fixed-glass panes in an arched window.⁶ The arched window in the wine closet is reflected in the upper panels of the dining room, the door leading to the entryway and the panels on the front exterior front door. The door is flanked by two fluted pilasters with pilaster rosettes at the top. A woodblock keystone caps the doorframe. The pilasters and keystone terminate at the cornice with mitered bed moldings. The lower two thirds of the dining room wall have three rows of customary rectangular paneling, the lowest one duplicated in the wainscot on the other three sides of the room.⁷ It is believed that two people worked on the paneling in the dining room, or it was worked on at two different times, as the paneling profiles are different.⁸ There have only been two coats of paint in this room with the original color being a blue-gray. The c.1835 wallpaper above the wainscot in the dining room had "a pattern in sepia and silver on a background of intense cobalt blue."⁹ The wallpaper was removed c.1945.

Leading from the north side of the dining room is a small 10-foot by 7-foot room with a 5-foot by 5-foot closet. It is believed to have served as Peter Olcott's office as it once had a separate exterior door on the east elevation, and there is evidence of shelving in the rooms.

The 14-foot by 23-foot kitchen is centrally located behind the great chimney. Initially, there was a fireplace and chimney mass along the north wall. The Johnsons removed the secondary chimney and fireplace in the early nineteenth century. In the mid-twentieth century, Albert Johnson "excavated the cellar" and "found ashes where the fireplace was located."¹⁰ The back stairs were along the north wall but in the 1850s, Daniel Johnson reconfigured the stairs, moving them to the southwest corner of the kitchen. The kitchen was accessed from the outside by a door on the

⁶ The wood paneling is similar to the Hatch-Peisch House in Norwich.

⁷ Interview with Philip Zea, May 2018.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Congdon, Herbert Wheaton. *Old Vermont Houses*.

¹⁰ Coleman, Louise, "Coleman-Johnson House." Coleman family research file, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

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west side of the room. It was closed in the mid-nineteenth century. Originally, there was wainscoting with feather graining on a brown background in the kitchen. An example of this wainscoting remains in the cellar way.¹¹ A small 7-foot by 7-foot pantry and 15-foot by 7-foot well room abut the north end of the kitchen. The water cistern was located in the northeast corner of the well room. A well under the northeast corner of the house furnished the water supply. The well room was enlarged c.1998 to incorporate the nineteenth-century summer kitchen and was converted to a kitchen.

The 16-foot by 16-foot front bedrooms on the second floor have a similar arrangement to the first floor. The two front bedrooms mirror the first floor with the southwest bedroom designated as a chamber directly above the first-floor living room. The floors in the east chamber are unpainted. The room-sized rag carpet survives. The master bedroom was directly above the dining room with a smaller 7-foot by 11-foot bedroom abutting the north side of the main bedroom. There were three smaller bedrooms located above the kitchen, in what was formerly one large open space. The large room was converted into bedrooms, hallways and bathrooms in 1871. All the rooms on the second floor have a ceiling height of seven feet.

The east elevation of the ell has a door, a 9/9 window, and closely paired 6/1 windows on the first story. The second story has a 12/8 window. The c.1855 woodshed ell primarily covers the north elevation of the original ell. The exposed sections of the north elevation consist of vertical sheathing on the east side and a 9/9 window on each story on the west side. These two windows are closely situated to the corner boards of the northwest corner of the main block. There is a section of wooden gutter on the rear of the main block. There are two small dormers in the rear of the attic.

Resting on a fieldstone foundation, the ell has wood clapboard siding on the east elevation and flush vertical siding on the north and south elevations. It has two bays with curved double doors on the east elevation. The doors have simple wood trim with keystones. There is one long c.1998 shed dormer with closely paired, 21-light windows, along the east elevation of the ell. The west elevation has three 6/6 windows and a door on the first story and modern single-pane knee wall windows on the second story. The north elevation has two, three-light fixed windows on the first story.

¹¹ Ibid.

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The c.1855 ell consists of the north end of the modern kitchen, pantry and mudroom on the first floor and a renovated library on the second floor that was formerly the granary. The remaining space was used for storage. It is used for wood storage today. A portion of the original arched panel, front double door, is located in the ell, separating the modern kitchen to the mudroom.

Daniel Johnson made several changes in the mid-nineteenth century. He added a classical front door with side windows (since removed), removed the western entrance, removed the east woodshed, added the woodshed ell on the north, and removed the large kitchen fireplace and chimney.

2. Garage, c.1941, contributing building

Resting on a stone foundation with concrete reinforcement, this one-story building is on a north-south axis. Clad with wood clapboard siding on the front elevation, it has a shed roof with corrugated metal. There are paired four-light casement windows on the north and west elevations and two double doors on the south elevation. The milk house with vertical siding extends from the west elevation. The milk house has a wood door and clapboard siding on the south elevation, a single-light window, and vertical siding on the west elevation and paired four-light casement windows and vertical siding on the north elevation. There is a cooler in the center of the milk room. Abutting from the north elevation is a covered spring-fed stock tank. It has a gable roof and flush horizontal siding.

To the southeast of the garage is a large mound consisting of bricks and brick fragments. It is believed that this brick pile contains bricks from the kitchen chimney and hearth that was removed from the farmhouse kitchen c.1855.

3. Henhouse, c.1930, contributing building

Resting on a concrete foundation, this one-story building has a poured concrete floor, vertical siding, and a metal gable roof. There are two 6/6 windows on the east elevation, one 6/6 window on the south elevation, and a wood plank door. The interior is sunken approximately one foot below grade.

4. Corn Crib, c.1930, contributing building

Resting on square wood posts, this 1½ story building has horizontal board siding

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and a metal roof. The slats on the southeast gable end have gaps between them to allow for airflow into the building. Chicken wire covers the slats to prevent rodents from entering the building. Off-centered on the west elevation is a door with vertical wood planks. The interior features a center space with stairs accessing the second floor. To the north and east of the corncrib were a small shed and a series of lean-to woodsheds that were removed c.1980.

5. East Barn, c.1789, contributing building

The East Barn is a 34 x 42-foot English barn oriented on an east-west axis. It is a gabled, rectangular, eaves-front structure with one story, a fieldstone foundation, and a hand-hewn, mortise-and-tenon frame. The posts are flared or "gunstock" with double tenons on top for the girt and plate. Centered on the north elevation is a large double door. A pedestrian door located on the east side of the north elevation was boarded over at an unknown date. There are two small doors on the south elevation: one into the central bay, the other into a little stable along the east end. The east gable end has horizontal siding.

The interior features cow stanchions and a sheep manger on the east side, a threshing floor in the middle, and an open space on the west side. The threshing floor is the barn's second floor.¹² The open space, approximately a foot below the wood flooring, has a dirt floor. There is a two-story, wooden shaft containing a c.1930 gravity-fed grain bin along the southwest wall. About the same time, a pent roof was constructed along the south side of the barn at the same pitch as the main roofline to protect an overhead track, which supports a bucket that transports manure from the main stable to beyond the East Barn.

The barn was formerly located closer to Maple Hill Road and east of the main house. The Johnson moved to its present location, c.1855. There is a bar way, which was a break in the stone wall for access and foundation outline at its former location.

The barn has been in continual use since c.1789. Olcott hired Ebenezer Broughton and Silas Carpenter to build his barns. The two were credited for 32 and 42 days work "on my Cow house" in November 1789.¹³ Lemon Fisey of Norwich provided "one day of work on my cow house" and "Simeon Carpenter 1/2-day work on my cow house" in November 1789.¹⁴ There is evidence of the original small stable and it

¹² Barn Grant Completion Report, Phil and Betsy Zea Collection, Norwich, Vermont

¹³ Olcott Family Papers, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

¹⁴ Ibid.

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was used for hay storage and livestock until 1964 and more recently for storage.

6. Dairy Barn, c.1929, contributing building

This is a two-story barn with circular-sawn, mortise-and-tenon framing, vertical barn board siding, and a metal roof. Sited parallel to the main road, it sits on an east-west axis. There is an earthen ramp leading to a barn door on the eastern bay of the south elevation. The lower level of the south elevation has three sets of paired, six-light sliding windows. There are two six-light fixed windows on the first story of the east elevation. Centered in the west gable end is a small window opening. There is a hay door and fixed window on the west elevation. Extending from the north elevation is a covered high drive intended as a passageway for a horse-drawn cart, or cattle coming in from the fields. There is a shed roof shed extending from the east elevation of the covered entrance.

The first floor of the dairy barn consists of two rows of cow stanchions and three pens. A metal ceiling track supporting a large manure bucket circles the perimeter of the stanchion space and exits the building at the southeast corner. It then runs underneath the eaves of the East Barn. It formerly extended to the east of the East Barn and then turned northward to a manure shed. Accessed by a ramp on the south elevation, the second floor of the dairy barn features the upper sections of the gravity-fed grain bin and haymow.

7. West Barn, c.1791, contributing building

This is a two-story English Barn with vertical siding and a metal roof. It is situated perpendicular to the main road on a north-south axis. The gabled, rectangular, eaves-front structure has one story, a fieldstone foundation, and a hand-hewn, mortise-and-tenon frame. The posts are flared or "gunstock" with double tenons on top for the girt and plate. Centered on the east elevation is a wood door. The southern bay has a 12-light sliding window and a bank of five fixed windows on the northern portion of the east elevation. There is a pedestrian door on the northeast corner of the east elevation. The roofline extends over this door to provide shelter. Centered on the west elevation is a large sliding door.

During the 1930s, Albert Johnson converted the northeast corner into a heifer room. It is a low ceiling space with three stalls. The northwest corner of the room extended beyond the walls of the dairy barn and the west barn. This extension necessitated the need for a small abutment with a shed roof and vertical siding on the north

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elevation. The upper story consists of a haymow and three horse stables.

8. Barn, c.1860, contributing building

Sitting perpendicular to the road on a north south axis, this one-story structure has vertical barn board siding and a metal roof. The gabled, rectangular, eaves-front structure has a fieldstone foundation, and a hand-hewn, mortise-and-tenon frame. There are two vehicular bays on the south elevation. There are two, 12-light fixed windows on the south elevation. Extending to the west is a c.1930 shed roof addition with horizontal siding, corrugated metal roof, and a wood door on the south elevation. The west elevation of the barn has horizontal siding and a sliding barn door. The interior features open space in the center and a mechanical room to the south. The horse stables in the West Barn are accessed through doors on the south side of the barn, accessed through the interior of the carriage barn. The c.1870 shed addition was used for storage.

9. Dooryard, contributing site

The east doors from the kitchen and the ell open to the dooryard, providing easy access to the woodshed, garage, milk house, henhouse, apple trees and summer gardens. The dooryard most likely “served as the center of domestic, agricultural, and home-industry activities.”¹⁵ With close access to vegetables, eggs and milk, kitchen activity focused around the dooryard. Wood chopping for the fireplaces and stoves was completed close to the woodshed. As the dooryard opened onto the driveway, it was the primary space for residents and visitors to pass through. In his book *Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn*, historian Thomas Hubka described the activities of the dooryard:

Most frequently the dooryard served as a place for chopping firewood and harnessing horses and oxen, and as a general vehicle staging and loading area, but it also served as a critical outdoor or overflow area for work conducted in the buildings, including crop processing, butchering, tool and vehicle repair, and many domestic chores. Consequently, it was often active and sometimes cluttered in contrast to the seldom-used front yard.¹⁶

¹⁵ Hubka, Thomas C. *Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn*. Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1984.

¹⁶ Ibid.

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10. Porter Lot, contributing site

Located at the northeast corner of Union Village Road and Maple Farm Road, this approximately 1.5-acre lot is believed to be the site of Peter Olcott's first Norwich home, his store/tavern and then the farm of Mary Porter. There is a granite post with an iron ring, perhaps a horse tie or a fence post, along the southern border. Further research is necessary to establish the type(s) and location(s) of buildings that used to occupy this site. As such, the Porter Lot has the potential to yield information important to our understanding of Norwich's early settlement history.

11. West Pasture, contributing site

Located to the west of the barnyard, this is a pasture measuring approximately 9.7 acres. It is gently sloping cropland and rolling landscape of pastureland with moderate slopes and some rock outcropping. It was used for grazing animals, so proximity to the dairy barn was important. A small stream meanders south through the property, which contributes to wet conditions in parts of the fields and determines the land use. Stone walls, hedgerows, and barbed wire fencing mark the perimeter.

12. Woodlot, contributing site

There are approximately 16.3 acres of woodland containing a wide variety of coniferous and deciduous trees.

13. East Hayfield, contributing site

Located to the east of the barnyard, this is a field measuring approximately 6.2 acres. It is gently sloping cropland and rolling landscape of fields with moderate slopes and some rock outcropping. Stone walls, hedgerows, and barbed wire fencing mark the perimeter.

14. Potash Site, contributing site

This is a circle of stones, approximately five feet in diameter, with a pile of stones at the center. The site is grown over with grass. Underneath the grass are remnants of charcoal. This is believed to be the site of Peter Olcott's potash operations. It was close to the original location of the East Barn.

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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

☐

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G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Agriculture

Architecture

Politics/Government

Archaeology/: Historic – non-aboriginal

Period of Significance

c. 1773-1966

Significant Dates

1773

1789

1791

1929

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Olcott, Peter

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Smith, Benjamin (house)

Woodworth, Benjamin (house)

Dillon, Jonathan (house)

Willis, Nathan (house)

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Grosswait, Salls (house)

Broughton, Ebenezer (barns)

Carpenter, Silas (barns)

Fisey, Lemon (barns)

Carpenter, Simeon (barns)

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.)

Maple Hill Farm encompasses approximately 41.7 acres of pristine agricultural land 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 century to 1966. Peter Olcott, an early settler, Revolutionary War veteran, and Lieutenant Governor of Vermont, built the house.

Maple Hill Farm qualifies for National Register listing under Criterion A: Agriculture, as it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. 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.

Maple Hill Farm qualifies for National Register listing under Criterion B: Politics/Government, as the farm served as the primary home of Peter Olcott. Olcott was instrumental during the Revolutionary War, commanding troops during General John Burgoyne's 1777 invasion of the north. He served on the Governor's Council during Vermont's tenure as an independent republic. He was sent as an emissary to the Continental Congress to petition for Vermont's statehood and was Vermont's first Lieutenant Governor when Vermont joined the Union as the 14th state.

Maple Hill Farm meets National Register Criterion C: Architecture as an intact historic farmstead. The farmhouse retains exterior architectural features such as hip roof, central chimney, wood clapboard siding, stone foundation, 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

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rooms flanking each side of a central stair hall. The two front rooms retain original fabric such as wood paneling, wine closet and wainscoting. The East and West Barns possess simple, functional designs reflecting the agricultural practices of the time. They are general-purpose barns used for basic animal shelter and storage purposes, housing the livestock, and hay on the first floor.

Maple Hill Farm meets National Register Criterion D: Archeology/Historic – non-aboriginal. The Porter Lot, located on the western edge of the property and settled c.1773, may yield valuable information about Peter Olcott's first home in Norwich.

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.1773, the date of construction of the earliest contributing resource, and concludes in 1966, the date when farming operations ceased on the property.

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

Early Settlement

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 Mansfield, Connecticut. The original name was Norwhich "but common consent dropped the first 'h' in the name."¹⁷ 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."¹⁸

Norwich is laid out similarly to a range township. The land was granted to private

¹⁷ 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.

¹⁸ Goddard, M.E. & Henry V. Partridge, *A History of Norwich Vermont*. Hanover, N.H.: The Dartmouth Press, 1905.

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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 lots, he followed a European approach, in which he created six-mile square lots. 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 2,000 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 the quality of land received was more or less equitable, each grantee received two or three 100-acre lots in different ranges within the town.¹⁹

This type of layout was prevalent in New Hampshire and migrated into Vermont with Benning Wentworth's land grants. While the range approach possessed many traditional characteristics, "their collective single-minded application was new, and would revolutionize New England platting and inform the Northwest Ordinance of 1785."²⁰

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.²¹ The charter also called for the proprietors to lay out a central village. The original Norwich Center was near where Peter Olcott settled. Between 1761 and 1768, these original proprietors held their town meetings in Mansfield, Connecticut.²²

¹⁹ Norwich Historical Society, *Norwich, Vermont: A History*. Leahy Press: Montpelier, Vermont, 2012. Garvin, James L., "The Range Township in Eighteenth Century New Hampshire," *New England Prospect: Maps, Place Names and Historical Landscapes*. Dublin, New Hampshire: Seminar for New England Folklife, 1980.

²⁰ Lenney, Christopher J., *Sightseeing, Clues to the Landscape History of New England*. University Press of New England, Hanover, New Hampshire, 2003.

²¹ Slafter, Edmund F. *The Charter of Norwich, Vermont: and Names of the Original Proprietors*. Boston: David Clapp & Son, 1869.

²² Goddard, M.E. & Henry V. Partridge, *A History of Norwich Vermont*.

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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.²³

These Connecticut meetings were unusual in the sense that although there were town meetings, there were "no rightful occupants of the town."²⁴ 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 upon the soil of the town," the meetings were held in the south.²⁵ 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.²⁶

The process of settling Norwich was prolonged 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."²⁷ While these three were the first three settlers in Norwich, there were small

²³ Child, Hamilton, *Gazetteer and Business Directory of Windsor County, for 1883-1884*, Journal Office, 1884.

²⁴ Aldrich, Lewis Cass, and Frank Holmes, *History of Windsor County, Vermont*

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Slafter, Edmund F. *The Charter of Norwich, Vermont*

²⁷ Aldrich, Lewis Cass, and Frank Holmes, *History of Windsor County, Vermont*.

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settlements across the river in Lebanon and Hanover, New Hampshire, while “the towns north and south of Norwich were not occupied until nearly two years later.”²⁸ Following the pathfinder efforts of Fenton, Smith and Slafter, four families followed in 1764. From this point onward, “the settlement advanced with considerable rapidity.”²⁹

They spent the warmer months clearing the land and returned to Connecticut for the winter. As the area was initially forested, 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 laid the stone fences adjacent to the stumps.³⁰

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 they were from all places for obtaining the conveniences and comforts of life,” and they “had to rely upon their efforts to obtain only a small portion of what was needed.”³¹

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.”³² 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, Elisha Burton built a sawmill on Blood Brook, thereafter providing lumber for future settlements. That same year, John Hatch surveyed the town, 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.”³³ The early settlements were close to the Connecticut River,

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Sagerman, Paula, *Jericho Rural Historic District, National Register Nomination Form*, United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2009

³¹ Goddard, M.E. & Henry V. Partridge, *A History of Norwich Vermont*.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

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with several ferry locations connecting Norwich with Hanover, New Hampshire. Steadily over time, the settlers populated the land higher above the river.

Peter Olcott purchased Norwich lots eight, nine, and ten in the 2nd Range, and the family then moved to Norwich in 1772. He was born in Bolton, Connecticut, on April 25, 1733. He was a direct descendant of Thomas Olcott, one of the earliest settlers of Hartford, Connecticut. After he married Sarah Mills in 1759, the Olcott's moved to her hometown of Windsor, Connecticut. They then moved to Bolton, Connecticut, where he entered into a partnership with Samuel Talcott to "trade in English and West India goods and to keep shop."³⁴ This operation found Olcott active in various mercantile activities. In 1768, he purchased 51 barrels of pork, three barrels of larde [sic], 27 bushels of bean, 12 bushels of rye, and ten bushels of Indian corn.³⁵ That same year, he shipped beef, tallow and pork to Barbados. While in Bolton, Olcott was appointed captain of the 1st Military Company. This was a colonial militia that answered to the Connecticut governor, Jonathan Trumbull, and King George III.

Peter and Sarah Olcott arrived in Norwich with four children – Timothy, age seven; Roswell, age five; Sarah, age four; and Margaret, age one. The family arrived in Norwich with recent tragedy on their minds, as the couple lost their nine and eleven-year-old sons just months before their migration to Vermont.

The Olcott family initially boarded with Olcott's business partner, Isaac Fellows. Olcott's journal entry from November 1773 stated, "then I came to Mr. Fellows to live."³⁶ Olcott purchased several parcels of land throughout Norwich. Benjamin Fenton, an original proprietor of Norwich, sold Olcott the "9th lot in the 2nd Range."³⁷ He also received land from Simeon Carpenter, which was part of the 10th lot, 2nd Range.

Norwich Center

Soon after his arrival, Peter Olcott opened a store in Norwich, having operated a similar store in Bolton, Connecticut. He sold building supplies such as lumber, shingles, and nails. Additional items included rum, molasses, sugar, salt, textile materials and tobacco.

³⁴ Olcott Papers, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

³⁵ Ibid

³⁶ Olcott Papers, Peter Olcott Ledger, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

³⁷ Peter Olcott Research File.

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Maple Hill Farm and the cemetery are the remaining vestiges of Meeting House Hill, the first village center in Norwich. This area was known as "The Center," while the site of the present village was known as "Burton's Plain" and later "The Plain."³⁸

Olcott utilized a barter system. He sold sundry items and liquor to the people of Norwich, Thetford, and Sharon, and they repaid him with other services. The services included working in his mill, sending goods down the Connecticut River, clearing land, cutting cordwood, building fences, and watching his cattle. Representative services included "pay in pork in fall," "pay in wheat," "clear land four days," "drive oxen up from Connecticut," and "go after sheep."³⁹ After the Revolutionary War, the Olcott account book reflected a transition from barter to cash services.

Olcott maintained a long-standing partnership with John Ely of West Springfield, Massachusetts. In 1775, Ely and Olcott established a partnership in which "Olcott is to put a quantity of good white pine timber in the Connecticut River."⁴⁰ A representative order of goods that Olcott imported from Ely was 40 pounds of German steel, tea kettle, hand skillets, Firk Island salt, 21 gallons of molasses, and 115 gallons of rum. Following one of the provisions of the Benning Wentworth grants, Olcott and Ely preserved the tall, slender white pine for masts for the Royal Navy. By 1781, these masts may have gone to the fledgling American navy when Ely and Olcott agreed, "to get down the Connecticut River 200 masts."⁴¹

Olcott also manufactured pearlash/potash on the property. This granular substance produced from wood ash and used in making soap was in high commercial demand.⁴² After the initial clearing of their land, the settlers found that they had a surplus of wood. They used the timber on the farm for lumber as well as charcoal and potash. Olcott was also involved in potash in Connecticut as a 1772 journal entry stated, "then began Elijah Webster, his work at the potash."⁴³

During his first ten years in Norwich, Olcott opened his house to travelers. In July 1778, he

³⁸ Mausolf, Lisa, *Norwich Village Historic District National Register Nomination Form*, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1991.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Olcott Papers, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

⁴¹ Peter Olcott Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

⁴² Doyle-Schechtman, Deborah. *Marshland Farm National Register Historic District Nomination Form*, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1998.

⁴³ Olcott Papers, Peter Olcott Ledger, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

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made "dinners for men who work at farm."⁴⁴ In August 1778, he provided a Mr. Hopson with two dinners and "two days keep his horse."⁴⁵ In October 1780, charged "to boarding Mr. Loomis and Bovey" and "keeping his horse four week (sic)."⁴⁶ In 1787, Olcott, a licensed tavern near his home as he was "nominated to keep house of entertainment in said town, until the last Tuesday of May next, for which he has given surety of 100 pounds of his keeping an orderly tavern."⁴⁷

Olcott spent time repairing his buildings. In 1782, he hired John Wright of Thetford for "masoning ...9 or 10 days," and in 1786, he hired Alexander Headman of Norwich for "working on my barn."⁴⁸

Olcott was "a man of considerable means when he came to Norwich, which, united with his superior talents, gave him a commanding influence in the community."⁴⁹ Peter and Sarah had nine children: Pelatiah (1762-1773), Peter Jr. (1764-1773), Timothy (1766-1799), Roswell (1768-1841), Sarah (1769-1788), Sarah Jane (1769-1825); Margaret (1772-1796), Mills (1774-1845) and Martha (1779-1825). Two of the Olcott daughters married Jasper Murdock. After the death of Sarah Olcott, Martha married her husband. His brother, Constant Murdock, built the barn at Meeting House Farm directly south of Maple Hill Farm. The two were the sons of Thomas Murdock, an early Norwich settler and the town's first town clerk, constable and fence viewer. Thomas Murdock was a member of the Westminster convention of January 15, 1777, and served on the committee "to examine into the number of towns of Cumberland and Gloucester counties that had voted in favor of the new State."⁵⁰

As grist mills and sawmills developed on Burton's Plain, the Norwich population steadily grew around the industrial center. By the early eighteenth century, the village center had transferred from Meeting House Hill to the present location. In 1819, the cornerstone for the American, Literary, Scientific, and Military Academy was laid and a year later, the first cadets attended class. In 1834, the Academy became Norwich University.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Peter Olcott Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ "Olcott Family of Norwich Vermont," Access Genealogy.

⁵⁰ Aldrich, Lewis C. and Frank R Holmes. History of Windsor County, Vermont, 1891.

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Criterion A: Agriculture

Maple Hill 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. 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.

The Peter Olcott Farm

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."⁵¹ 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."⁵²

Due to the varying topography of these upland locations, the agricultural fields were small and irregular.⁵³ The Vermont farms were

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.'⁵⁴

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

⁵¹ Russell, Howard S. *A Long Deep Furrow, Three Centuries of Farming in New England*. University Press of New England, Hanover, New Hampshire, 1982.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Wilson, Harold Fisher, *The Hill Country of Northern New England, Its Social and Economic History, 1790-1930*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1936.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

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chocolate were purchased from outside of town."⁵⁵ In addition to potash, the early Norwich farmers produced flax, charcoal and maple sugar.

An examination of Olcott's ledger reveals the different agricultural activities on the farm, the Norwich community bartered goods such as "three sheep," "going after my sheep," "yoak (sic) cattle," "two days killing and fattening my beef," "killing my hogs," "clearing farm land," "Shearing my sheep," "pulling flax and carting wheat," "four days reaping," "mending the corn house," and "six days mowing."⁵⁶

Olcott maintained an active apple orchard. According to the *Agricultural Resources of Vermont Multiple Property Form*:

Apple trees were grown on the earliest farms in Vermont. Immigrants from southern New England brought young seedlings with them and found the trees adapted well to Vermont's soil and climate. The traveling apple salesman was a familiar sight in early nineteenth-century Vermont, and the large variety of apple types during this period was largely attributed to these salesmen. By the early nineteenth century, most, if not all, farms had at least one apple tree to supplement the family diet, and there are records of small eighteenth-century pear and apple orchards in Bennington County and the lower Champlain and Connecticut River Valleys.⁵⁷

The 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 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.

⁵⁵ Berolzheimer, Alan. "The History of Farming in Norwich," *Norwich Times*. Norwich: Vermont, Village Green Publishing Company.

⁵⁶ Olcott Family Papers, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

⁵⁷ 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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⁵⁸ 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]." ⁵⁹

In 1791, Olcott sold Samuel Hovey 125 acres of land that adjoined his farm. Hovey was to pay in grain or stock. The two were to share responsibilities for the property. They each agreed to "put a good yoak (sic) of oxen onto the farm," and Hovey was "to find the other necessary utensils of husbandry." ⁶⁰ The two shared in the costs of seed. Olcott paid Hovey to thrash all of the corn while Hovey was allowed to keep the stalks and husks. The two equally divided the pasture and grassland while Olcott was to "put the house and barn in decent, comfortable repair." ⁶¹

Mills Olcott

As Peter Olcott grew older, he expressed some concern about who was going to live at Maple Hill Farm. Ben Porter, Peter Olcott's son in law, wrote his brother-in-law, Mills Olcott, "your father has told me of your agreement to go to the homeland at Norwich, and I am happy that you have decided for you know how I feel about the soil." ⁶² Ben suggested that Mills could "take the 30 acres east of garden and adjoining the farm you bought of Mr. Loveland." ⁶³ Ben also suggested that the western portions of the farm where the parson, James W. Woodward, could be "accommodated at the other end of the farm nearer to his work." ⁶⁴ This refers to portions of the Olcott farm that were closer to the Meeting House.

Peter Olcott died at the Hanover home of his son, Mills Olcott, on September 12, 1808, aged seventy-five years. The *Dartmouth Gazette* reported:

By his death, society is deprived one of its valuable members; science of one its enlightened patrons; his family of a kind and tender husband; an affectionate and indulgent parent. ⁶⁵

⁵⁸ Sagerman, Paula, *Jericho Rural Historic District, National Register Nomination*, United States Department of Interior, National Park Service, 2009

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Olcott Family Papers, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Peter Olcott Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ *Dartmouth Gazette*, September 21, 1808

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After the death his youngest son Mills took possession of the house. Mills Olcott, "a man of modesty, judgment, integrity, benevolence, urbanity, and great moral worth," owned Maple Hill Farm until the 1850s, although he never lived there.⁶⁶

A year after his 1790 graduation from Dartmouth College at the age of sixteen, he "was appointed Deputy Marshal by the Honorable Lewis R. Morris, then Marshal of the State of Vermont, and took the first census in 1791."⁶⁷ Mills "continued in various employments for his father till the year 1794."⁶⁸ He then studied under the Honorable Stephen Jacob of Windsor, Vermont, and the Honorable Benjamin West of Charlestown, New Hampshire. After being admitted to the bar in 1798, he opened an office in Hanover, New Hampshire, in 1800.

Following a similar path of public service as his father, Mills Olcott held the office of justice of the peace, town representative, was appointed Secretary and Treasurer of Dartmouth College in 1816 and was a Trustee of Dartmouth College in 1821. In 1809, Mills was appointed Aide-de-Camp, with the rank of Colonel to his Excellency Jeremiah Smith, Governor of New Hampshire⁶⁹ A member of the New England Federalist Party, Mills Olcott attended the Hartford Convention, a series of meeting that expressed grievances with the War of 1812, the 3/5s Compromise, the Louisiana Purchase Act and the Embargo Act of 1807. Mills Olcott was a Director and then President of the Grafton Bank, President of the Grafton County Bible Society, a Corporate Member of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, and an honorary member of the Northern Academy of Arts of Sciences. Also,

Being of a commanding appearance, and understanding the proprieties of large public meetings, he was often called to preside on such occasions, as the 4th of July, President Monroe's visit to Dartmouth College, and a public Dinner given at Hanover to Governor Clinton.⁷⁰

Peter Olcott's three children inherited most of the estate. The January 1809 estate papers "bequeathed all the rest and residue" to the others.⁷¹ As to the "division of the house

⁶⁶ Prescott, Alfred. *The New Hampshire Repository, Volumes 1-2*. Alfred Prescott Publishing: Gilmanton, NH, 1846.

⁶⁷ Prescott, Alfred. *The New Hampshire Repository, Volumes 1-2*.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Mills Olcott Papers, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH

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farm...it was intended that each should have an equal quantity."⁷² Two years later, the heirs "intentionally settled reputing the division of this within described land so that each has received an equal quantity."⁷³

The Olcott estate consisted of a "farm containing about 150 acres less a piece of about four acres at the corner near the church. Upon this piece was a small house and an orchard adjoining."⁷⁴ Sarah Porter received a smaller plot of land. Ben Porter received three cows, one heifer, one pair of three-year-old steers, sheep, lambs, two large hogs, two small hogs, one wooden wheeled cart, one plough, one yoke and one small draft chain. Mills received two cows, five heifers, and one bull. He "paid to his sister Martha and to Roswell (his brother who was developing lands in Canada) a sum to cover their inherited portion of the 'large house.'"⁷⁵ The final amount was \$6,244.⁷⁶

Starting in 1809, the Olcott children attempted to sell the Peter Olcott farm. An 1809 advertisement in *Spooners Vermont Journal* stated:

An excellent farm in Norwich, VT, containing 88 acres in a very high state of cultivation and improvement, well fenced, principally with stone wall; a good thrifty young orchard, from whence may be made 30 barrels of cider and a variety of older fruit trees which bear annually; a good two-story house and cellar under the whole and within of 20 rods of the meeting house and brick schoolhouse, with a share in two pews in the Meeting House and four shares in the "Conn. River Turnpike" road which passes by the door. An excellent stand for a tavern and trader.⁷⁷

For a brief period, a man by the name of Farrar lived on the Olcott farm. In 1813, Farrar had "all the pasture and grain and ½ the hay and cider."⁷⁸ Jeremiah Bissell, who performed several odd jobs for Peter Olcott, continued to work on the farm after his death. Bissell lived on the premises for some time. In 1822, Bissell wrote to Mills Olcott that he wished to "let his farm for a year" and that "I should be glad to take on here yours this year."⁷⁹

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Peter Olcott Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

⁷⁵ "Friends and Relatives Celebrate Coleman Centenary at Maple Hill." *The Gazette*. October 1, 1969

⁷⁶ Peter Olcott Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

⁷⁷ *Spooner's Vermont Journal*, August 1, 1809

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Letter, Jeremiah Bissell to Mills Olcott, April 9, 1822, Mills Olcott Papers, Olcott Family Papers, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire
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Another portion of the Olcott estate was known as Buck's parcel, located at the southeast corner of Maple Hill Road and Union Village Road. At one time, Porter wrote Mills Olcott whether he could let Martha's farm and Buck's Farm together as Porter wanted "them together – it would suit a tavern keeper."⁸⁰

Mills Olcott managed several properties. He owned farms and parcels of land in Barnet, Tunbridge, Middlesex, Barre, Thetford, Plainfield, and Lincoln. In 1821, he had the following tenants on his farms– Jeremiah Bissell, James Bly and Carpenter. They may have lived at Maple Hill Farm or the Martha Porter farmstead, which Mills eventually sold to Ira Baxter in 1835.

Ben Porter owned Vermont farms in Bradford, Underhill, Averill Lincoln, Chittenden, Barre, Tunbridge, and Newbury. He also held lands formerly belonging to Governor Benning Wentworth in Worcester, Wheelock, Ryegate and Sherburne. Porter received letters of inquiry about his vast holdings. In 1820, Nathan Avery wrote Mills Olcott that he was "wishing to take on a farm for one or two years upon some shares. I'm not in a situation to put on any teams, as I have no stock but one cow and two sheep... I will endeavor to carry it on a husband like manner."⁸¹

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."⁸² 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

⁸⁰ Letter, Ben Porter to Mills Olcott, April 3, 1810, Mills Olcott Papers, Olcott Family Papers, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire
Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

⁸¹ Letter, Jeremiah Bissell to Mills Olcott, April 9, 1822, Mills Olcott Papers, Olcott Family Papers, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire
Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

⁸² Norwich Woman's Club. "Know Your Town" 1940.

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pioneers' need for firewood, building materials, and lumber for the potash markets.”⁸³ 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,” to get between the rocks that strewn the countryside.⁸⁴

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.”⁸⁵ 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%.

Because of Norwich’s proximity to Wethersfield, where William Jarvis lived, it is possible that sheep raising began in Norwich soon after 1811. By 1830, sheep raising for wool production and stockbreeding was the predominant agricultural activity in Windsor County, and Maple Hill Farm likely adopted this trend. Reflecting this growth, the population of Norwich “had soared to 2,316 a number not exceeded until 1890.”⁸⁶ In 1840, sheep outnumbered people six to one in Norwich with a total of 13,000 sheep and 2,218 citizens.

In 1825, Mills Olcott and Jeremiah Bissell agreed to use the Olcott Farm and “keep 100 sheep.”⁸⁷ Bissell had been long acquainted with Peter Olcott as he often bartered his services of “working in the garden,” “working on farm,” “Cutting Wood,” “thrashing part of my wheat,” and “shearing sheep.”⁸⁸ There was an 1829 agreement between James Bly and Mills Olcott for “farm of Mills Olcott” for twenty years.⁸⁹ In 1850, James Bly had eight acres with two cow and two swine. He grew rye, corn, potatoes, and beans. With his small dairy herd, he produced 200 pounds of butter and 35 pounds of cheese.

⁸³ Balivet, Robert F. *Vermont History*. v. 33, No. 1, Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, January 1965.

⁸⁴ Wilson, Harold Fisher, *The Hill Country of Northern New England*.

⁸⁵ Russell, Howard S. *A Long Deep Furrow, Three Centuries of Farming in New England*.

⁸⁶ Norwich Historical Society. *Norwich, Vermont: A History*.

⁸⁷ Peter Olcott Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

⁸⁸ Olcott Papers, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

⁸⁹ Mills Olcott Papers, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH

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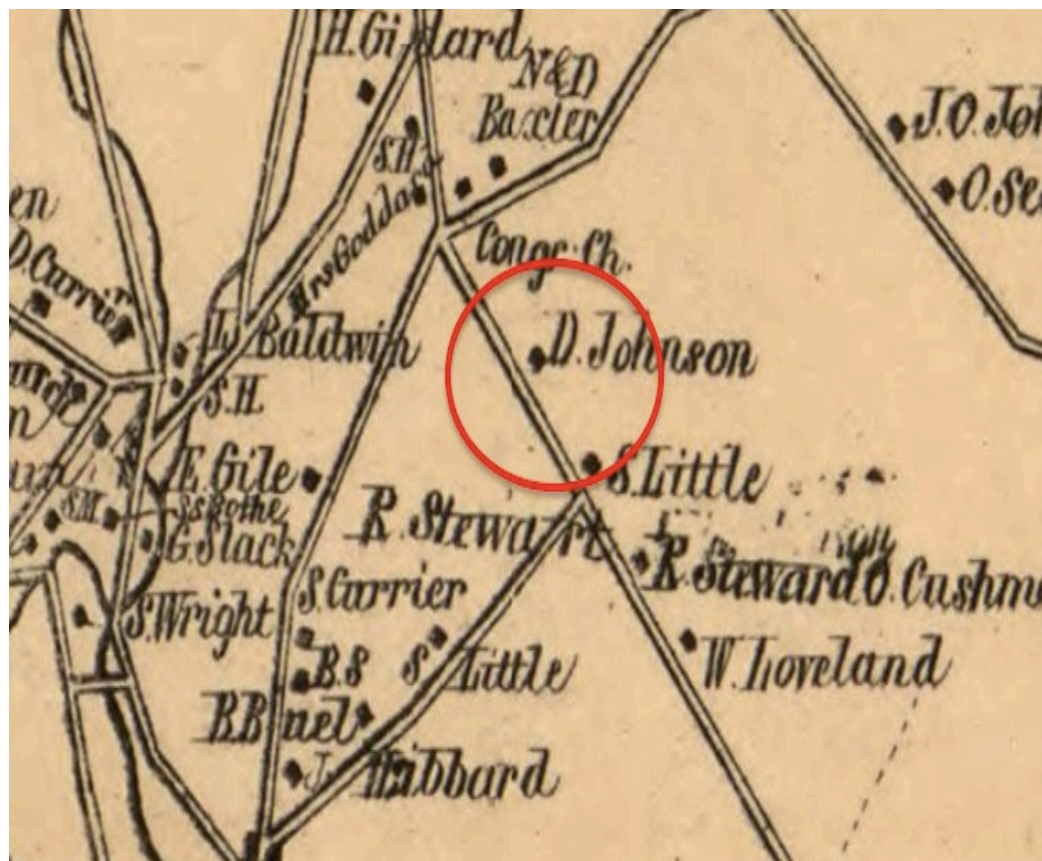


Figure 1 C. 1856

After the tenancy of Jeremiah Bissell, Mills Olcott leased the farm to Isaac Waterman and then Dexter Hawkins. Mills Olcott's tax bill for 1813 stated that Waterman was the "occupant and farm formerly owned by Roswell Olcott and being on the road from the center meeting house to the river."⁹⁰ Isaac Waterman was the grandson son of Daniel Waterman, one of Norwich's early proprietors who came from Mansfield, Connecticut. Dexter Hawkins lived on the farm with his wife, Martha, and three children.

Until about the 1820s, most farms in Windsor County and Vermont were general-purpose farms that raised a variety of crops for subsistence and sustenance. The agricultural production sustained the farmstead, and farmers only sold surplus products. The farm livestock often included one or two cows, beef cattle, one or two oxen, swine, and a few horses. Early crops may have included wheat, corn, oats, beans, potatoes, and possibly maple sugar.

⁹⁰ Mills Olcott Papers, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH.

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The farmsteads of the late nineteenth-century had diversified farming operations. Farms 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 a farm 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. Farm work was accomplished with horses and oxen, 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.

In 1850, Dexter Hawkins, who leased the Peter Olcott farm, had 75 acres of improved land and 30 acres of unimproved land. He had one horse, three cows, two ox, three cattle, 13 sheep, and two pigs. He grew wheat, corn, oats, beans and potatoes. His flock of thirteen sheep produced 315 pounds of wool, and his three cows produced 300 pounds of butter. Hawkins also produced 100 pounds of maple sugar. By 1860, Hawkins moved to another farm, next door to his younger brother. He died in Pomfret, Vermont, in 1870.

In the decades leading up to the American Civil War, Norwich farmers cleared much of the forests for sheep grazing. Sheep required few laborers, but a lot of open space. Sheep were raised in large numbers in Norwich until at least the late 1880s. The small area of unimproved forest (an average of 20% of the land) documented in the 1850-1880 U.S. Agricultural Census records reflects the importance of cleared land during the sheep-raising period.⁹¹

The children of Mills Olcott – Catherine O. Bell, Rufus Choate, Helen Choate, Jane Heydock, and Charles E. Thompson – eventually dispersed the Maple Hill farm property, selling the “governor Olcott Farm” to Daniel Johnson for \$2555.⁹² Daniel Y. Johnson lived at Maple Hill Farm between 1854 and 1868. He was the son of John William Johnson, who “lived a short distance beyond this place on the opposite side of the road... He was lame and a cobbler.”⁹³ He was also the great uncle of Albert Johnson, who lived on the farm in the 20th century.

Johnson lived on the farm with his wife Sophia, two sons, Albert and Henry, and daughter, Martha. The farm was valued at \$3,000. Sophia was a member of the Waterman family, one

⁹¹ Sagerman, Paula. *Jericho Rural Historic District National Register Nomination Form*.

⁹² Mills Olcott Papers, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH

⁹³ “Olcott-Johnson House.” Historic American Buildings Survey.

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of the early families of Norwich.



Figure 2 1869 Beers Atlas (Norwich Historical Society)

In 1860, Daniel Johnson had 100 acres of improved land and 37 acres of unimproved land, with a total value of \$3000. He had one horse, four oxen, five other cattle, and one pig. His livestock was valued at \$400. During the previous year, the farm produced 30 bushels of wheat, 100 bushels of corn, 80 bushels of oats, 150 bushels of potatoes, two bushels of corn, 12 bushels of buckwheat. The Johnson maintained 25 sheep, which produced sixty pounds of wool. Their three cows produced 200 pounds of butter. Johnson utilized the surrounding forest for timber, orchards, and maple sugar. Apple trees thrived in the Vermont climate, and much of the state's soil was conducive to raising apples. Also, the apple was a hardy fruit and easy to ship. The water source for his agricultural and domestic activities came from a lease on a spring "above the house for 999 years."⁹⁴

During the 1859 season, the Johnson farm produced 100 pounds of maple sugar. 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, before the planting of

⁹⁴ "Centennial of Maple Hill Farm in the Coleman Family." Coleman Family research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont

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field crops.⁹⁵ After they extracted the sap 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.

Johnson maintained relatively small orchards. He 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. In addition, 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.

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."⁹⁶ 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.

The Horace Pinneo Coleman Farm

Daniel and Sophia Johnson eventually sold the property and moved to West Fairlee, Vermont. In 1891, they moved to Minnesota to live with one of their sons. Horace Pinneo Coleman and his wife, Martha, lived at the farm between 1868 and 1880. Prior to moving to Norwich, the Colemans lived in Hanover and then operated a farm in Lunenburg, Vermont. One of their daughters, Abby, moved to Hanover to teach at the Christian Street School. Abby married Charles Dana Hazen and lived with him at Brookside Farm in Hartford. Abby "wanted her parents to come back to this vicinity and wrote to them of available farms."⁹⁷ The elder Colemans first moved back to Hanover, New Hampshire, and then lived in a brick house in the Norwich hamlet of Lewiston. They then moved to the existing farm. It was at that time; the farm received its name as "Uncle Charles Hazen called the place Maple Hill

⁹⁵ "Olcott-Johnson House." Historic American Buildings Survey.

⁹⁶ Hubka, Thomas C. *Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn*.

⁹⁷ Johnson, Louise. "The Coleman-Johnson House." Coleman Family Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

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Farm.”⁹⁸ The farmhouse remained unchanged except for Coleman converted the upstairs garret into additional bedrooms.

In 1870, Horace Coleman had a small farming operation. His land valued at \$1200. He only had one horse and one cow. Despite not owning any sheep, he produced 225 pounds of wool. He grew corn, barley, and potatoes. His orchard produced 70 bushels of apples. While the census did not mention any cow ownership, Coleman produced 900 pounds of butter and 170 pounds of cheese. He also produced 300 pounds of maple sugar. During the 1870s, “the land was cleared southeast of the farm so one could see their next neighbors – the David Lovelands in 1872.”⁹⁹

Horace Coleman brought three maple trees from his farm in Hanover “and planted them - one west of the house and two in the front yard.”¹⁰⁰ In 1959, two were “standing but one was blown over in the hurricane of 1938.”¹⁰¹ Another tree fell in the 1970s and the third tree was cut down in 1994. Louise Johnson, the granddaughter of Horace Coleman, recalled the trees on Maple Hill Farm:

There were many apple trees on the farm - some in every field, and I can remember six or seven here in the front yard. There was an old very tall Poplar Tree to the west side and a Fir Balsam in front of the house. I recall a number of times when riding over towards Hanover Center, where my grandmother Hurlbutt lived, that my father would point out the tops of those trees and say that is where we live.¹⁰²

Between 1870 and 1880, the Coleman farmstead included Horace’s children Milton, Martha and Nettie; and William Otis, who worked on the farm and. After the death of Horace Coleman in 1880, his son Zenas “Milton” Coleman took ownership of Maple Hill Farm. Born on the Lunenburg farm, Milton arrived in Norwich and lived “first with his parents, then with his sister and later with his wife.”¹⁰³ He was a deacon of the Congregational Church and his wife Celia was President of the Norwich Women’s Missionary Society. He was named after “his great grandsire who was an early settler in Hanover and who was a

⁹⁸ Johnson, Mrs. Albert. *The Olcott-Johnson House, Norwich, Vermont*. “Olcott-Johnson House.” Historic American Buildings Survey, National Park Service Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction, Philadelphia PA, 1933.

⁹⁹ Johnson, Louise. “The Coleman-Johnson House.”

¹⁰⁰ Johnson, Mrs. Albert. *The Olcott-Johnson House, Norwich, Vermont*. “Olcott-Johnson House.” Historic American Buildings Survey.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ McNally, Margaret Cheney and Frances L. Niles. *Norwich*. South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 1998.

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surveyor.”¹⁰⁴

Milton ran the dairy farm with his brother Otis. The two brothers “took milk to the creamery at Hanover. They cut hemlock lumber and peeled it, selling the bark to the tannery in the village.”¹⁰⁵

In 1892, Milton left the farm, renting the property to Frank Johnson for one year, and went west. He returned in 1893 with his new bride Celia Estelle Hurlbutt.¹⁰⁶ Celia Hurlbutt was born in Hanover Center, New Hampshire, and spent much of her youth living and working East Northfield, Massachusetts, while her sister attended Northfield Seminary.

Around the turn of the nineteenth century, Harriet Ensworth Bowline, a relative of Milton Coleman, visited Maple Hill Farm. In 1968, she recounted her time in Norwich:

We ate baked beans and brown bread regularly and relished codfish and baked potatoes – strange foods in our environment. We knew that on Sunday, our grandparents ate a quick lunch of doughnuts and cheese and returned to the church for service to walk afterwards in the village cemetery among the Iris and Poplars.¹⁰⁷

She continued:

We had been informed of the woods in which the deer played and of snows so deep the stone fences were disregarded, and the sleighs glided over the usual farm barriers. We knew how in Vermont the ferns grew thickly in shady dells and how in summer Water Lilies floated on the surface of the ponds. We could taste the Chokecherry in spring, and in the lanes of fall, see the Sumac and Goldenrod in full color. Not many of the beauties of the land were a surprise to us when we did see Norwich.¹⁰⁸

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

¹⁰⁴ Johnson, Louise. “Norwich Center.”

¹⁰⁵ Johnson, Mrs. Albert. *The Olcott-Johnson House, Norwich, Vermont*. “Olcott-Johnson House.” Historic American Buildings Survey.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ “Centennial of Maple Hill Farm in the Coleman Family.”

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

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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."¹⁰⁹

Farms always maintained a small dairy herd for their butter, cheese, and milk, but now Vermont farms 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.¹¹⁰ 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.¹¹¹

Farmers made butter and cheese for out of state markets, but it was more likely marketed regionally throughout southern Windsor County. H.P. Hood and Company also a creamery in Norwich. At this point, it is possible that Norwich farmers were shipping their butter and cheese surplus to markets in Brighton, New York and Boston, as the railroad had arrived in Vermont (including White River Junction) two years earlier. By 1851, White River Junction was an important railroad hub, serving rail lines leading north, south, east, and west.¹¹²

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. Prior to 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

¹⁰⁹ "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.

¹¹⁰ Clifford, Cameron. *Farms, Flatlanders and Fords: A Story of People and Place in Rural Vermont 1890-2010*. West Hartford, Vermont: Clifford Archive, 2011.

¹¹¹ Berolzheimer, Alan. "The History of Farming in Norwich" *Norwich Times*.

¹¹² Sagerman, Paula. *Jericho Rural Historic District National Register Nomination Form*.

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unprofitably fed and poorly housed. The handling of milk for whatever purpose was haphazard, to say the least.¹¹³

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 sheep most likely flourished in Maple Tree 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.¹¹⁴

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:

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.¹¹⁵

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/or syrup production increased, and farmers started to sell their maple products to

¹¹³ Rozwenc, Edwin C. *Agricultural Policies in Vermont 1860-1945*. Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 1981.

¹¹⁴ Donath, David, "Agriculture and the Good Society." *We Vermonters: Perspectives on the Past*. Montpelier, Vermont: Vermont Historical Society, 1992.

¹¹⁵, *Agriculture of Vermont, Seventh Annual Report of the Commissioner of the State of Vermont, 1915*. St. Albans: St. Albans Messenger Company, 1915.

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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.¹¹⁶

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."¹¹⁷ Farmers grew potatoes "to provide a surplus to sell beyond household needs."¹¹⁸ 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."¹¹⁹

The Albert and Louise Johnson Farm

Born on the farm in 1897, Milton and Celia's daughter, Louise Carrier Coleman, was the next owner of the farm. In 1928, Louise married Albert Johnson, who lived and worked on his father's farm in Norwich. After their marriage, Albert moved in with Louise, Milton and Celia at Maple Hill Farm.

After the death of Milton in 1931, Albert and Louise solely operated the farm. The couple agreed to "purchase the farm known as 'Maple Hill Farm' or 'Olcott Home' with the farming equipment including stock etc."¹²⁰ The transfer deed stated that "Mrs. Celia H. Coleman may have a room here - two rooms downstairs being reserved for her use - the owners have the right of way to the front door."¹²¹ Celia continued to live with the Johnsons until 1940. Albert and Louise electrified the property in October 1940.¹²² That same year, the home was valued at \$3000.

Louise recalled their early years on the farm that the couple

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Clifford, Cameron. *Farms, Flatlanders and Fords: A Story of People and Place in Rural Vermont 1890-2010*.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Johnson Family Research Files. Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

¹²¹ Mills Olcott Papers, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH

¹²² Johnson, Mrs. Albert. *The Olcott-Johnson House, Norwich, Vermont*. "Olcott-Johnson House." Historic American Buildings Survey.

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Bought the farm. Built cow stable and milk house. Excavated cellar. Put on new clapboards. Built cow barn. We helped. Improved buildings.¹²³

The Johnsons were “lifelong residents of Norwich” and “gracious neighbors.”¹²⁴ Louise “spent her entire life on the farm, apart from her schooling, and Albert had come up in the world, coming up over the hill from Loveland Road.”¹²⁵ The Colemans had approximately 30- 35 milking cows and nine young stock during the 1930s. Suzanne Lupien recalled the Johnson farm in 1999:

The barns housing the team of workhouses, the vast spaces required for loose hay storage. The milk house water-cooling the milk. The henhouse populated by a dozen or so ‘biddies,’ as Louise called them, herding them in at night with her old... hockey stick.¹²⁶

Louise Johnson was a 1917 graduate of the Northfield School for Girls and did coursework at Boston University. She was a kind and friendly lady:

She was very intelligent and articulate, characteristic of farm folk of that generation. We took every opportunity to visit her, mostly after school, and I can still remember the bit of fear mixed with excitement that knocking on her woodshed door would generate in our stomachs – a healthy sign of respect and awe.

She loved children and always took a keen interest in us, finding the time in her busy farm life to greet us, invite us in and discuss the news of the day!¹²⁷

¹²³ Johnson, Mrs. Albert. *The Olcott-Johnson House, Norwich, Vermont*. “Olcott-Johnson House.” Historic American Buildings Survey.

¹²⁴ Lupien, Suzanne. “Albert and Louise.” *The Valley News*, January 3, 1999

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Lupien, Suzanne. “Albert and Louise.”

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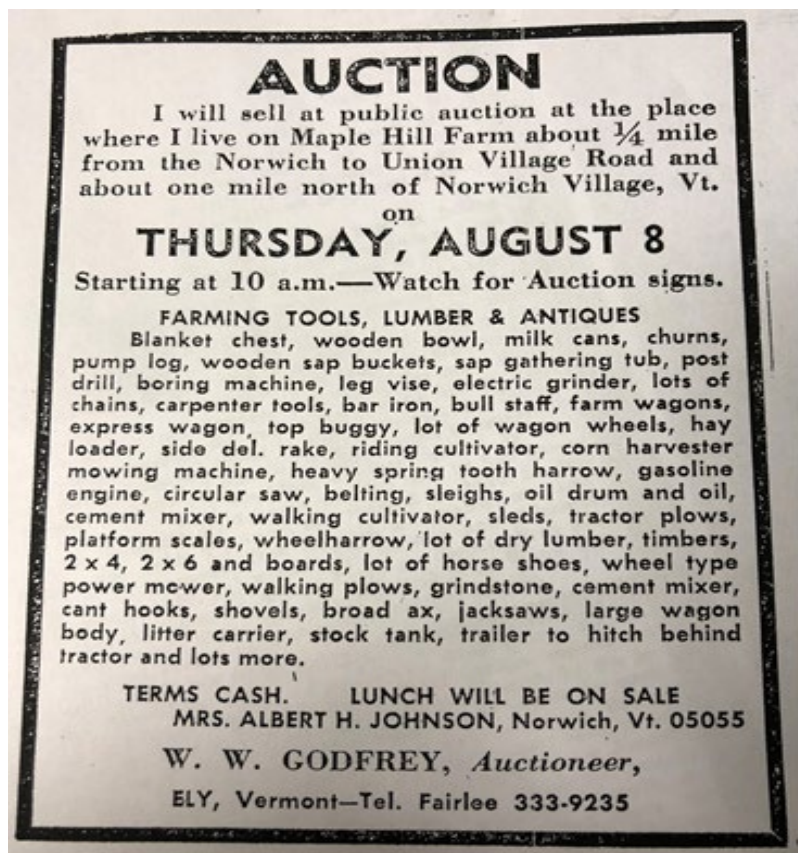


Figure 5 1966 Auction Ad (Zea Family)

While Louise Johnson was a friendly, open-armed individual, the neighborhood children found Albert taciturn:

Albert, a legendary hard worker at a time when everyone worked hard, is said to have required his hired men to run the woodlot before dawn in order to be ready to swing their axes when the sun had risen sufficiently to illuminate the task at hand. Daylight, a gift from God, was not to be wasted.¹²⁸

While Albert toiled in the fields, Louise Johnson worked around the house:

Louise was likely to be in the house, a great old central chimney colonial whose entire history she knew. Cookstove always needed to be tended and she was rarely far from hers. Running a cookstove well is like conducting an orchestra – kettles of water whistling, scraps for the hens simmering away next to any number of things cooking.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

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Her Home Comfort was warm every day of the year, creating an atmosphere unmatched by anything one can dream up to make a house cozy

The presence of the mighty stove, the old delicate rifle hanging where it used to hang for well over a hundred years, the water barrel, set up they used to be, with the water streaming in through a reed, ensuring a constant fresh water supply, and providing the sound of a bubbling brook as well, all created interesting textures and forms and smells everywhere, each having a purpose, each contributing to the whole of the farm. It seemed to be world unto itself, to the continuity of time.¹²⁹

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."¹³⁰ 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.

As Albert Johnson grew older, he relinquished his farming activities. In July 1964, he delivered his last shipment of milk and subsequently sold all of his cattle. Two years later, Albert Johnson died.

Soon after the death of her husband, Louise Johnson held a public auction at the farm. The advertisement highlighted farming tools, lumber, and antiques. Amongst the farm equipment were milk cans, churns, sap buckets, sap gathering tub, post drill, bull staff, farm wagons, wagon wheels, buggy, hay loader, and cultivators. For the next twelve years, Louise Johnson shared her knowledge of Norwich, the Congregational Church, the Olcott, Coleman, and Johnson families with the people of Norwich. She gave numerous talks and her written material is held in the Norwich Historical Society. Louise died in 1978. Suzanne Lupien recalled the lifestyle of her neighbors directly across Maple Hill Road:

There they were. Living their hard-working lives, year in, year out, quietly, understanding what is essential, what is valuable...they understood care and repetition from which springs devotion. They understood these things far beyond cognitive understanding, beyond words, beyond heads, in their hearts. No room for frivolity, no reason for cynicism, no time for leisure, no such things as stress. Self-

¹²⁹ Lupien, Suzanne. "Albert and Louise."

¹³⁰ Berolzheimer, Alan. "The History of Farming in Norwich" *Norwich Times*.

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reliance and original thought are two peas in a pod. Explanations, justifications, information have no place in such a modest life, full of dignity.¹³¹

Criterion B: Peter Olcott

Maple Hill Farm qualifies for National Register listing under Criterion B for its association with Peter Olcott, who is significant in the area of Vermont politics and government. Maple Hill Farm served as the Olcott's primary home. Olcott was instrumental during the Revolutionary War, commanding troops during General John Burgoyne's 1777 invasion of the north. He served on the Governor's Council during Vermont's tenure as an independent republic. He was sent as an emissary to the Continental Congress to petition for Vermont's statehood and was Vermont's first Lieutenant Governor when Vermont joined the Union as the 14th state.

After arriving in Norwich in 1772, Olcott "took a leading part in public affairs in his new home. The town elected Olcott to the most important town offices, and soon came to be regarded as one of the leading men of the place."¹³² He was elected Overseer of the Poor in 1773, town clerk in 1774, first Justice of the Peace in 1778 and County Judge in 1781. His ledger entries reflect some of the work he performed as a Norwich public official. In 1774, Olcott heard the "confession of Sarah Curtis that she had done Elias Curtis an injustice – child not his."¹³³

As a town magistrate, Olcott even had to manage the indiscretions of his children. In 1775, Olcott wrote about his son: "Roswell Olcott was seen to play on the sabbath (sic) and is to be whipped if he is seen to play in eight sabbaths."¹³⁴

The Olcott home was the site of every town meeting between 1774 and 1779 when the town built a meetinghouse. Olcott's "influence was potent in fixing the location of the first meeting house very near to his residence and upon land which he gave for a site."¹³⁵ The meetinghouse was "about 20 rods a little north of west from Capt. (Peter) Olcott's dwelling

¹³¹ Lupien, Suzanne. "Albert and Louise."

¹³² "Olcott Family of Norwich Vermont," Access Genealogy

¹³³ Peter Olcott Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

¹³⁴ Peter Olcott Research File.

¹³⁵ "Olcott Family of Norwich Vermont," Access Genealogy

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house, on the north side of the highway."¹³⁶ The meeting house no longer stands, dismantled in the early nineteenth century.

Although Norwich had a congregation as early as 1770, the first minister, Reverend Lyman Potter, was ordained in 31, 1775, "... in the open air, upon the spot chosen for the future temple, but then a primitive forest."¹³⁷ Until the congregation built a new meetinghouse, religious services were scattered about town as "families often hiked three to six miles to attend similar services in Hanover. They also met in homes or Peter Olcott's barn or out in the open air if the weather was agreeable."¹³⁸

Olcott was involved with the construction of the meetinghouse as he paid "Gershem Bartlett for smith making window frame."¹³⁹ Gershem may have been the gravestone cutter who carved most of the early stones in Norwich.¹⁴⁰ In addition, Olcott paid John Thompson for "nails" and "to myself, one day framing."¹⁴¹ In February 1778, Olcott paid "to cut timber and make a road to the meeting house."¹⁴² The Meeting House "cost six hundred and ninety-four pounds and was lathed and plastered on the inside, and clapboarded on the outside, but never was painted and had no steeple or bell."¹⁴³

The Olcott family's involvement with the construction of a meetinghouse reflected their religious nature. Years later, Mills Olcott recalled growing up in his home:

It was my high privilege to be brought up by Christian parents – my mother was especially vigilant and attentive to impress upon her children, at all times, in the most affectionate manner, the infinite importance of religion; and my further recollection are her parental cares with me, in this respect – though at times they were little heeded, and long afterwards in life most culpably neglected; there has been no period when they have not fastened upon my memory and when my conscience has not been convinced ; and which I had not been determined to attend to that subject on some future day.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁶ Goddard, M. E. and Henry V. Partridge. *A History of Norwich Vermont*.

¹³⁷ Callaway, David. "Norwich History." Daily UV, October 2017.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Olcott Papers, Peter Olcott Ledger.

¹⁴⁰ Interview with Philip Zea, July 2018

¹⁴¹ Olcott Papers, Peter Olcott Ledger.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Aldrich, Lewis Cass, and Frank Holmes, *History of Windsor County, Vermont*.

¹⁴⁴ Olcott Papers, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

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A group of settlers from Preston, Connecticut, had hope that their hamlet would serve as a good site for the new meetinghouse. Because there was “considerable dissatisfaction” with the choice of the Olcott land for the meetinghouse, the area became known as Judgment Hill, a name it kept for many years.¹⁴⁵ This name may have come from the Preston group who may have

Thought the hand of Captain Olcott, a newcomer who had then resided in town only about a year, rather too prominent in settling this matter. But he gave liberally of his large means for the promotion of the enterprise and soon after conveyed to the town as a free gift the land for a meetinghouse lot and for the public burial ground adjoining.¹⁴⁶

Now all that remains of Norwich Center on Meeting House Hill is the burial ground on land donated by Olcott and his 1773, which is presently an ell on the Lupien House, and 1789 houses.

Peter Olcott and Sons

From the west side of his new house, Olcott had a commanding view of Norwich and the buildings that he was associated with – the Meeting House, which was on his land, his store, an ashery, barn and his original smaller house.

Olcott conducted business in his home as well as a store, located closer to the Meeting House Hill village center. His two sons, Timothy and Roswell, eventually joined his father, in the business known at Peter Olcott & Sons. In 1780, Peter Olcott and Ira Allen agreed for the purchase of “five fat oxen,” as well as pork and salt. The 1790 inventory included a vast array of goods such as sewing silk, ivory combs, whips, plates, snuff boxes, and mouse traps. He also continued to run his tavern. Entries from 1791 include “two bowls of toddy,” I mug of flip – dinner,” and One bowl grog – dinner.”¹⁴⁷

Olcott was active in the timber business, establishing a sawmill near the river in Norwich. He regularly hired workers to clear land and had laborers transport cut timber down the Connecticut River. By 1793, Peter Olcott possessed a little over 1000 acres of land comprising 14 separate lots.

¹⁴⁵ Callaway, David. “The Church on the Plain.” *Norwich Times*, Fall 2017.

¹⁴⁶ *Goddard, M. E. and Henry V. Partridge. A History of Norwich Vermont.*

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

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He also owned land in Thetford, Strafford, and Northfield. His entries in his ledger included "sawing boards," "sledding boards from mill," and "cattel (sic) and cart for large days work carting board pine."¹⁴⁸

The Revolutionary War, Independent Nation, and Statehood

Early in the Revolutionary War, "a company of militia was organized in Norwich as early as 1774 or 1775," and 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."¹⁴⁹ Olcott's dedication to the fledgling republic went beyond military service. In July of 1776, Peter Olcott wrote, "then I went to New York as a member of Congress."¹⁵⁰ He returned two months later. As Norwich was part of New York's Gloucester County, the provincial congress of New York appointed Olcott as a commissioner of sequestration. Gloucester County was a former county in New York that became part of the state of Vermont in 1777.

Olcott's record during the Revolutionary War was marred with controversy. During Burgoyne's 1777 invasion of New England from the north, Olcott commanded a militia regiment. During the continental army's retreat from Fort Ticonderoga, General Arthur St. Clair directed Colonel Seth Warner to protect the main army. Advance elements of the British army met up with Warner's rearguard on July 5, 1777, at Hubbardton, Vermont. Olcott and Bayley's militia camped within two miles of the Hubbardston, and Warner requested their assistance in the battle, "but instead of supporting their hard-pressed commander, they hurried from the scene."¹⁵¹ St. Clair's adjutant, Colonel Wilkinson, claimed that Olcott and Bayley's militias "were exceedingly insubordinate and seditious."¹⁵² St. Clair claimed that if Olcott had "obeyed my orders, it is probable that the enemy might have been repulsed."¹⁵³

Following General Burgoyne's 1777 campaign, there was panic amongst Vermont's frontier

¹⁴⁸ Olcott Family Papers, Peter Olcott Ledger, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

¹⁴⁹ Goddard, M. E. and Henry V. Partridge. *A History of Norwich Vermont*.

¹⁵⁰ Peter Olcott Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

¹⁵¹ Crockett, Walter Hill. *History of Vermont*. Century History Company, New York, 1921.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

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towns. Olcott entered in his journal: "On my return from Ticonderoga requested by Colonel Bellows to apply to the convention at Windsor to call a general meeting of exposed towns."¹⁵⁴ He wrote a similar letter on July 12, 1777:

On my return from Ticonderoga, I desired by Col. Bellows ... and sundry other gentlemen to apply to the convention at Windsor to call general meeting from those towns lying near the Connecticut River, which are exposed to the ravages of the enemy.¹⁵⁵

When Olcott arrived in Windsor in July 1777, "the convention was broken up."¹⁵⁶ Olcott was still concerned about the towns that were "imminently exposed," so he requested an emergency "meeting of the Committee of Safety and military officers from Coos to Walpole on both sides of the river."¹⁵⁷

He was a Colonel of the Fourth Regiment of Vermont Militia, and his regiment was en route to the Battle of Bennington in August 1777, "but not soon enough to participate in it."¹⁵⁸ He and his regiment did participate in the Battle of Saratoga and General Burgoyne's subsequent surrender that autumn.

At the March 1778 General Assembly in Windsor, Olcott served on a committee chosen to receive, sort and count the votes cast for Governor, Deputy Governor, Treasurer, and twelve members of the council."¹⁵⁹ Olcott and fellow Norwich resident, Thomas Murdock, were elected as councilors.

As Vermont looked for ways to fill its treasury, the Vermont Council of Safety created local councils to put loyalists on trial and confiscate their property. In 1778, the Bennington Council of Safety appointed Olcott as Sequestration Commissioner for Tory Property "to take possession of and confiscate the property of 'Tories.'"¹⁶⁰

The New Hampshire Grants Controversy remained unsettled during the Revolutionary War. The four principal contenders in these disputes were the New York State party, the

¹⁵⁴ Peter Olcott Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

¹⁵⁵ Johnson, Louise. "About Peter Olcott."

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ "Olcott Family of Norwich Vermont," Access Genealogy

¹⁵⁹ Crockett, Walter Hill. *History of Vermont*. Century History Company, New York, 1921.

¹⁶⁰ Goddard, M. E. and Henry V. Partridge. *A History of Norwich Vermont*.

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Bennington party, with Ethan and Ira Allen and others promoting the emergence of the new state; the Exeter party, representing New Hampshire; and the College party, which included various towns along the river.¹⁶¹

The "College Party" in eastern Vermont and western New Hampshire hoped to establish an independent state called New Connecticut with Hanover as the capital. In 1778, representatives from eight Vermont and fourteen New Hampshire towns met at the Cornish Convention, where participants made several proposals for boundaries for the proposed state. Olcott served on an executive committee "with large powers."¹⁶² In February of 1778, Olcott and Woodward submitted a letter to Congress requesting that New Hampshire annex Vermont or the creation of a new independent state focused on the Connecticut River valley.

In 1780, Bezaleel Woodward and Peter Olcott sought money from New Hampshire towns Plainfield and Cornish. Consequently, Woodward and Olcott saw Plainfield and Cornish as part of their constituency and needed their tax money. In this era, the Plainfield town records cite themselves "Plainfield, Vermont." After collecting little money, "we have been obliged to borrow already and must borrow considerably more."¹⁶³ They wrote to Colonel Jonathan Chase to raise money so that "we may be able to discharge the pecuniary obligations we have laid ourselves under in the public cause."¹⁶⁴ Soon after that, Olcott requested a meeting of Woodward, Olcott, Colonel Chase, General Moses Bayley, Colonel Elisha Paine, Esq., Jonathan Freeman, and Governor Joseph Marsh. In January 1781, Olcott served on the executive committee at the Charlestown Convention, which voted for New Hampshire's annexation of Vermont's Connecticut River valley towns.

In 1780, there was a British-led Indian attack on the Vermont towns of Royalton, Sharon, and Tunbridge. The raiding party burned homes, killed livestock and took many men and boys prisoner. Olcott responded by raising a militia to head to Royalton. Olcott wrote George Washington in December of 1780:

We are about eighteen or twenty thousand in number, who are in this deplorable situation, and are the only object now remaining on the northern frontier worthy the attention of the Enemy—and without supply of arms, ammunition or military

¹⁶¹ Hoefnagel, Dick and Virginia L. Close, "Dresden: What is in the Name." Dartmouth College Library Bulletin.

¹⁶² Crockett, Walter Hill. *History of Vermont*. Century History Company, New York, 1921.

¹⁶³ Olcott Family Papers, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

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command. They have already begun their devastations among us and we are in continual expectation of total destruction—which will unavoidably take place unless we have speedy relief... The damage they have done in destruction of grain, forage, and cattle at Royalton & towns adjacent in October last is more than would have been sufficient to have supported such party one year, as would be necessary for our defence (sic).¹⁶⁵

Olcott recommended that the Connecticut River towns could provide the logistics for an invasion of Canada as the region had “plenty of grain and imagine there would be no difficulty in procuring a sufficient supply for an Army into Canada, could it be secured before the season admits its transportation.”¹⁶⁶

Olcott feared that if Washington did not offer aid in support of the Vermont frontier, the people of Vermont might abandon the north:

Unless we have assistance soon we have reason to expect the Inhabitants will take the earliest opportunity to transport not only their spare provisions but all their effects to places of better security and we fear will totally abandon the Country, thereby enlarge the frontier so that nearly the whole New England force will be necessary to defend it, and instead of our supporting with provisions a number of inhabitants, in the N. England States equal to our own, they will be obliged to support among themselves a large number of Inhabitants now in this Country.¹⁶⁷

From 1781 to 1788, Olcott was the commander of the Vermont militia's Third Brigade with the rank of Brigadier General. In May 1781, Olcott wrote to Colonel Jonathan Chase to “call on the commanding officers of the several military companies within your regiment.”¹⁶⁸ Olcott also called for the raising of companies east of the Connecticut River. Thomas Chittenden wrote Peter Olcott on September 13, 1781: “certain information of the enemy's hostile intentions on the frontier makes it necessary that the militia of this state to put in an immediate posture of defense – you will therefore without any loss of time cause a muster of your brigade.”¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵ Letter, Peter Olcott to George Washington from Peter Olcott, 11 December 1780, *Founders Online*, National Archives.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Olcott Family Papers, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

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Olcott served on the Governor's Council (1778-1781); delegate to the Cornish Convention (1778); Representative in the General Assembly (1778, 1801); and Vermont Supreme Court from 1782 to 1784. He oversaw the case of Isaac Brownson of Norwich in 1785 when Brownson was accused of "inveigling words of flattery and deceit and promises" with a Norwich lady.¹⁷⁰ Olcott passed a guilty verdict in which he mandated Brownson "to procure good and sufficient bonds with one party in the sum of 50 pounds."¹⁷¹

In 1787, Olcott oversaw the court-martial of Lieutenant Chamberlain, who was accused of "ungentlemanly like behavior" as he treated "Captain Beaumont with ridicule and contempt" for mustering his company "without any orders from any superior officers."¹⁷² Olcott determined Chamberlain, not guilty. A second court-martial immediately followed as the previously mentioned Beaumont was charged for marching "with his musket like a common soldier."¹⁷³ Olcott gave a guilty verdict.

Olcott also offered services to the community, such as "signing writs," executing documents "by order of the constable," "attending your arbitration," "signing one attachment," and "acknowledgment of deed."¹⁷⁴

Following the cessation of hostilities with Great Britain, settlers flocked to Vermont. A by-product of this immigration was the incurrence of debt caused by surveying and allotting lands and court cases settling land disputes, Vermont addressed this debt by incurring a tax upon an already cash-poor Vermont population. During the mid-1780s, discontent farmers protested at the courthouses, often leading to violent interactions between civilians and the sheriffs. In 1786, a man was imprisoned and fined for inciting a riot in Hartland. A larger group of protesters gathered together to rescue the jailed man. Hearing of the gathering of this mob, the Hartland sheriff intervened. There was a small skirmish resulting in injuries and the arrest of the rioters. Fearing an attempt to rescue the rioters from jail, Olcott assembled 600 soldiers. The size of Olcott's ad hoc militia deterred any further violence and Olcott's presence squelched the potential of additional force.

When the United States admitted Vermont to the Union in 1791, Olcott participated in the first Election Day. Since Vermont already had an operational government, the election was ceremonial. Olcott gathered together with Governor-elect Thomas Chittenden and other

¹⁷⁰ Ibid

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Ibid

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

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council members outside of the state capital of Windsor and were met by “a troop of horse, a company of artillery, and one of infantry, all in ‘most beautiful uniforms,’ doubtless of the beloved Continental buff and blue, glittering with great brass buttons, whereon were inscribed the initials “ G. W.” and the legend, ‘Long live the President.’” After the tabulation of the official votes, the group rode triumphantly into town, and “the artillery company fired a salute of fifteen guns, and then the governor and council, the members of the house, and all the good people there assembled repaired to church and listened to the election sermon.”¹⁷⁵

Olcott was Vermont’s Lieutenant Governor from 1790 to 1794, serving under Thomas Chittenden. In a letter posted in the 1794 edition of the *Farmer’s Library*, Olcott stated: “that the infirmities of age and bodily indisposition render him incapable of discharging the important functions of his office.”¹⁷⁶ Olcott requested that the people of Vermont “to elect some person of known integrity and abilities, who will be both serviceable and reputable to the community at large.”¹⁷⁷ Peter Olcott was the last lieutenant governor of an independent Vermont. Olcott took office in 1790 and served in the position as Vermont transitioned from an independent republic into statehood. When the next Lieutenant Governor, Jonathan Hunt, won the election, it signified the first time that the State of Vermont voted for a Lieutenant Governor. Although he resigned as Lieutenant Governor, he did represent Norwich in the Vermont House once again in 1801. He was a Trustee of Dartmouth College from 1788 until his death in 1808.

After the death of Peter Olcott, his son, Mills Olcott, purchased a coffin plate from Jedidiah Baldwin, a coffin from Cady Simon, and a tombstone from W. Gray. Peter Olcott was buried near his home at Meetinghouse Hill cemetery. A monument in the burial ground stated:

Sacred to the memory of the
Hon. Peter Olcott, Esq.
who died 12th Sept. A.D. 1808 Aged 76
The distinguished offices he sustained in the
various Departments of State, evidence the
estimation in which he was held by his
fellow citizens.
Having taken an active and leading part

¹⁷⁵ Robinson, Rowland Evans. *Vermont: a Study of Independence*. Houghton, Mifflin: Boston, 1892.

¹⁷⁶ *The Farmer’s Library*, September 2, 1794

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

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in the Revolution, he continued until his
death an inflexible supporter of Freedom.
Being a Friend to the promotion of
Knowledge and public professor of
Religion, he liberally contributed to the
advancement of these in the world.
With a full reliance on the promises
of the Gospel
His surviving relations mourn the loss
of a kind husband and
father.¹⁷⁸

Sarah Olcott died within two years of her husband's death. Like Peter Olcott, a monument to Sarah was placed at the Meetinghouse Hill cemetery:

This monument is erected in filial remembrance of
Mrs. Sarah Olcott
Consort of the late Hon. Peter Olcott, Esq.
Ob. 23 Feb. A.D. 1810 AE 73
She was mortal and therefore not
perfect, but her friends could
never discover her faults. She possessed in an extraordinary degree the
various virtues which contribute human excellence but her preeminent
characteristic was piety. On the Rock
having rested her hopes, from this
fountain having drank deep
the waters of Salvation. She prayerfully left the world and her mourning friends to join her Savior
and her God.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁸ Johnson, Louise. "Of Peter Olcott." Coleman Family Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

¹⁷⁹ Johnson, Louise. "Of Peter Olcott."

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Criterion C: Architecture

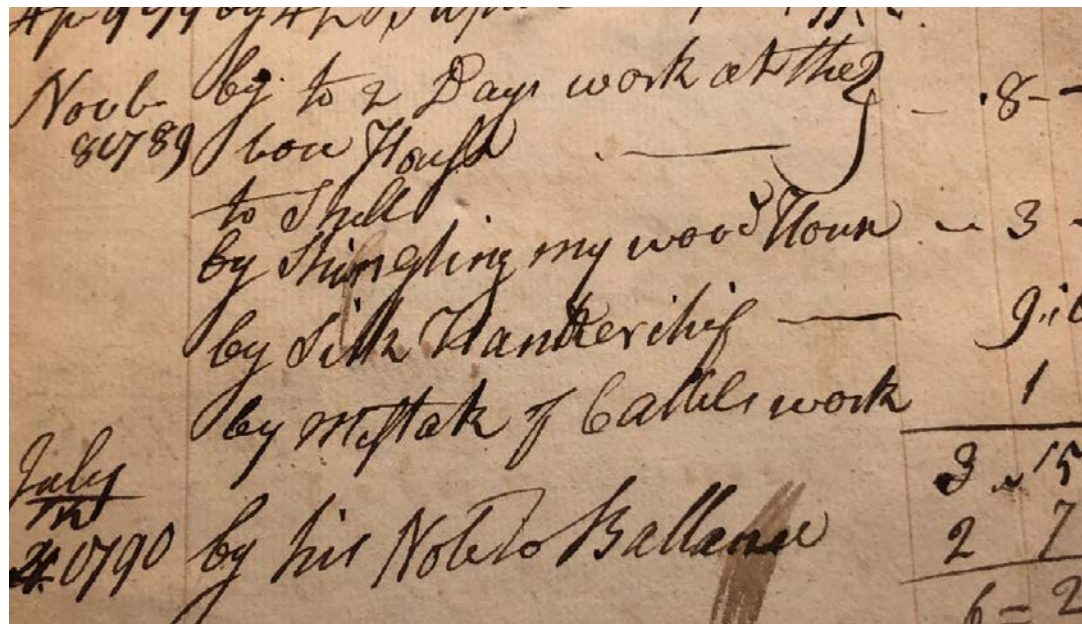


Figure 2 1789 Ledger Entry for "shingling my wood house." (Dartmouth College)

Maple Hill Farm meets National Register Criterion C as an intact historic farmstead. The farmhouse retains exterior architectural features such as hip roof, central chimney, wood clapboard siding, stone foundation, 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 central stair hall. The two front rooms retain original fabric such as wood paneling, wine closet and wainscoting. The East and West Barns possess simple, functional designs reflecting the agricultural practices of the time. They are general-purpose barns intended for basic animal shelter and storage purposes, housing the livestock, and hay on the first floor.

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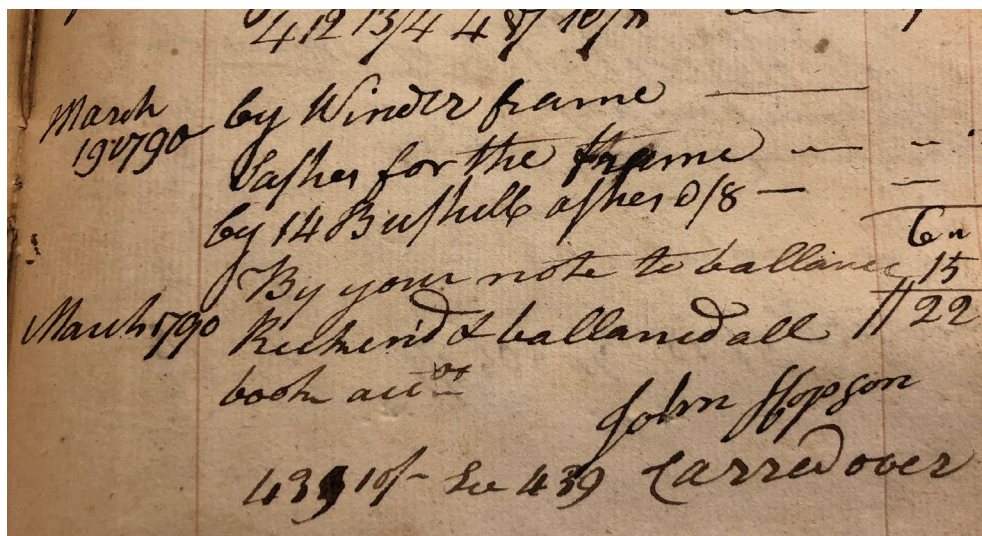


Figure 3 Figure 8 1790 Ledger Entry for Window frames and frame (Dartmouth College)

Farmhouse

After fifteen years in Norwich, Olcott built a new home. As Olcott "was a man of wealth, influence, and mature years, he probably would have built a fine residence soon after his arrival in town."¹⁸⁰

While Olcott did supply building materials for the community, he may have stocked up goods before the construction of his second home. In 1787, he bought 5000 "poor brick" from Hezekiah Johnson of Norwich and 15,725 feet of pine timber from Daniel Waterman. Lyman Potter, David Lord, and David Wood all provided nails in September and October 1789, respectively. On April 12, 1790, Nathan Brown "left 439 nails here."¹⁸¹ On December 14, 1789, Jonathan Lang of Norwich provided 700 bricks with "1200 bought by mine."¹⁸² In addition to Waterman, Olcott had several other timber sources, including Norwich residents Samuel Hutchinson, Samuel Partridge, Joseph Smalley, Joseph Bartlett and Matthias Rust. He also bought timber from sources in Sharon, Thetford, Lebanon and Hanover.

During the spring and summer of 1790, there was another influx of building material. In June of 1790, Jasper Murdock provided "430 feet of boards;" Lieutenant Benjamin Baxter provided "13 or 14 hundred shingles;" Captain John Hopson provided "180 feet plank and 66 feet slat work;" and Abithier Austin marked nails, Ebenezer Broughton was paid for

¹⁸¹ Olcott Papers, Peter Olcott Ledger, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

¹⁸² Ibid.

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"hewing the sleepers to my barn."¹⁸³

In 1789, Olcott entered into his ledger, "digging my cellar."¹⁸⁴ With his barter approach to business, it appears that several people could have worked on his house and outbuildings. Journal entries for fall and winter of 1789 include Benjamin Smith for "shingling the wood house;" "Benjamin Woodworth for three days work framing;" "Jonathan Dillon 2 ½ days framing;" Nathan Willis "five days work framing;" and Salls Grosswait provided "two days work at the house" and "shingling my wood house."¹⁸⁵ In 1790, Captain John Hopson provided window frames and "sashes for the frame."¹⁸⁶ Originally from Guilford, Connecticut, the Hopson family was one of the original settlers of Norwich. Thirteen years earlier, Hopson served under Olcott during the battles during Burgoyne's 1777 northern invasion. Jeremiah Bissell, who regularly worked for Olcott, "provided one month and four days work" in December 1789.¹⁸⁷ Benjamin Bacon "came here to work Dec. 10, 1789," and Solomon Freeman "came here to live April 16."¹⁸⁸ Reuben Benton came to work and lived at the Olcott premises in April 1790. Andrew Miner of Vershire lived and worked at the Olcott's from December 1791 through March 1792.

Olcott was "a man of wealth and taste and built a very fine house. The proportions have a feeling of calm serenity and solidity, aided by the strong horizontal lines of the roof."¹⁸⁹ The two-story home had Georgian style influences such as a hip roof with boxed eaves with crown molding, fascia, and fine dentil course. The hip roof at Maple Hill Farm had

A somewhat more elegant effect than the common steep-pitched gable, though it is by no means lacking in strength and boldness of line. There is a mere suggestion of classical detail to be seen in two rows of small details under the eaves, yet this does not in any way detract from the fundamental simplicity of the whole.¹⁹⁰

The interior was "as indicative of the elegant and refined taste of Peter Olcott as the exterior."¹⁹¹ The house has a large central chimney with four fireplaces, two on each floor. The dining room and parlor feature hand-cut, white pine paneling with chimney and wine

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Peter Olcott Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

¹⁸⁵ Olcott Papers, Peter Olcott Ledger, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Peter Olcott Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ White, and Dana Doane Johnson, Hugh S. Morrison, editor, *Early Houses of Norwich, Vermont*,

¹⁹¹ Peter Olcott Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

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closets. The central chimney “with its cavernous fireplaces, served not only to heat the house but also as a strong central support for the inner ends of the heavy summer beams and girts which carried the floors – acting as a kind of spinal column for the house.”¹⁹² There was an entrance on the west side of the house. According to author Herbert Wheaton Congdon, the chimney wall paneling “was the finest paneling I have seen in Vermont.”¹⁹³

The Olcott House, as well as many of Norwich’s earliest homes, possess traits of early colonial Connecticut homes. With Norwich settlers coming from the Connecticut towns of Mansfield, Lebanon, Preston, Tolland, Hebron, Willington, Coventry, Norwich, Wethersfield, Franklin, Ashford and Lyme, these settlers likely brought their architectural influences northward. The second story windows had an arrangement found in houses in Olcott’s native Connecticut – there are five windows with a center window directly positioned above the door and two closely paired windows positioned at a distance on each side. The five, second-story windows “with the middle one at a distance from the others and placed directly over the door shows a “Connecticut influence.”¹⁹⁴

This distinctive Connecticut second story window pattern is on the homes of Norwich residents Hatch (c.1773), Burton (c.1775), Partridge (c.1777), Loveland (c.1792) and Slafter (c.1786). The hip roof is similar to the homes of Slafter (c. 1786), Murdock (c.1784), Brigham (c.1786), and Burton (c.1775). The central chimney plan was in the homes of Hatch (c.1773) and Burton (c.1775).

The central chimney floor plan, with a small center entrance and two flanking rooms, is also found at the Hatch House in Norwich. This configuration is strikingly similar to the c.1761 Trumbull House in North Haven, Connecticut; the c.1750 Warham Williams House in Northford, Connecticut; and the c.1763 Huntington House in South Coventry, Connecticut.¹⁹⁵

The dual chimneystack with a vaulted space is similar to the c.1790 Captain Johnson House in Hamburg, Connecticut. The paneled walls with the off-center fireplace are similar to the Mack House in Hamburg while the parlor paneling with its composition of rectangular panels and the inverse crucifix six-panel door are at the c.1740 Forbes/Barnes House in East Haven and the c.1790 Deming House in Wethersfield.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Congdon, Herbert Wheaton. *Old Vermont Houses*. Borzoi Books, Alfred A. Knopf: New York, 1946.

¹⁹⁴ White, and Dana Doane Johnson, Hugh S. Morrison, editor, *Early Houses of Norwich, Vermont*, Dartmouth College: Hanover, New Hampshire, 1933.

¹⁹⁵ Kelly, Frederick. *Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut*.

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During his later years, Olcott continued to work on his house. In 1800, Edward Tarbell wrote Olcott: "I inform you that I conclude to live in the house with you this winter. I think that it is best not to lit up the chimne (sic) this fall."¹⁹⁶ Tarbell may have been a mason who worked on the fireplaces. Nathaniel Bissell performed "three days and half of work on my wood house in 1806."¹⁹⁷

Daniel Johnson made several changes to the farmhouse in the mid-nineteenth century. He added a new front door with sidelights, removed the western entrance, removed the east woodshed, added a woodshed on the north, and removed the large kitchen fireplace. He also added an extension to the rear ell, using existing timbers from the Meeting House. After the last service at the Meeting House in 1817, it was "purchased December 24, 1817, by Constant Murdock for one hundred dollars at auction."¹⁹⁸ Constant Murdock was related to the Olcott family through marriage. Murdock also used part of the Meeting House timbers for his barn on Union Village Road. Johnson also moved the backstairs in the kitchen from the northwest corner to the southeast corner.

Agricultural Buildings

Soon after building his house, Olcott hired Ebenezer Broughton and Silas Carpenter, to build his barns. The two were credited for 32 and 42 days work "on my Cow house" in November 1789.¹⁹⁹ Lemon Fisey of Norwich provided "one day of work on my cow house" and "Simeon Carpenter 1/2-day work on my cow house" in November 1789.²⁰⁰ Ebenezer Broughton was from Mansfield, Connecticut. Many of the earliest proprietors, including Edmund Hovey, Jacob Fenton, Ebenezer Smith, and John Slafter, came from Mansfield. Before there were any settlements in Norwich, the original proprietors held their town meetings in Mansfield between 1761 and 1768. Broughton was a fifer during the revolutionary war serving at the battles of Germantown, Valley Forge, and Monmouth. Broughton married Lois Sargent in 1786 and they had three children together. The 1790 census had Broughton living in Norwich and he owned property in Hartford as well. By 1803, Broughton had moved to Pawlet and Irasburg. He spent his final years in Fort Anne,

¹⁹⁶ Olcott Family Papers, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ 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.

¹⁹⁹ Olcott Family Papers, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

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New York.

At the time of barn's construction, Olcott had two horses, five cattle, four cows, and ninety acres of pasture. He most likely had Lineback cows, which was a popular breed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as it "was a dual-purpose animal, fulfilling the owners' needs for both milk and meat."²⁰¹

In 1790, Azahel Percival of Norwich was credited for "Framing my Cow House "and "setting up my barn frame."²⁰² Percival was born in East Haddam, Connecticut. In 1781, he served in Captain Abner Seely's Vermont militia as a sergeant. Following the war, in 1785, Percival purchased 50 acres of land in Norwich for 40 Pounds. He married Susanna Blake four years later in Strafford, Vermont, where they lived together and had ten children in 17 years.

During the twentieth century, Albert and Louse Johnson Johnsons built new structures such as the large dairy barn, hen house and corncrib. Between the 1930s and 1950s, large-scale commercial poultry raising was at its peak in Vermont while the Johnsons maintained a modest flock. The corncrib, a long-time fixture on Vermont farms, was specially designed for the quick, safe drying of the corn.

The Johnsons also improved the existing structures. They installed the gravity-fed grain bin in the East Barn, the heifer stable in the West Barn, and the manure track leading from the dairy barn, across the south elevation of the East Barn and to the manure spreader. As the Johnsons focused on their dairy farming, they built a milk house to meet their needs.

Attached to their new garage, the milk house, a small building, was separated from the stable areas for the clean storage of fresh milk until it was collected. It was next to the water spring so that "the milk pans were placed in a stream of cool running water."²⁰³ The milk room was situated closest to the main road or driveway for easy loading on to milk wagons and, later, trucks.²⁰⁴ According to the *Agricultural Resources of Vermont Multiple Property Form*:

²⁰¹ "Lineback," *The Cattle Site – Cattle Health, Welfare and Diseases News*. Accessed June 5, 2018

²⁰² Olcott Family Papers, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

²⁰³ Gilbertson, Elsa and Suzanne Jamele, *Agricultural Resources of Vermont Multiple Property Form*, United States Department of Interior, National Park Service, 1991.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

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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.²⁰⁵

During early twentieth-century, health officials and milk handlers were concerned problems in the handling of milk on the farm. Farmers were encouraged to construct separate milk houses designed following minimal sanitation requirements. 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.²⁰⁶

Criterion D: Archaeology

Maple Hill Farm meets National Register Criterion D for the Porter Lot, located on the western edge of the property, which may yield important archaeological resources about Peter Olcott's first home in Norwich.

Olcott initially built a simple cape style home, choosing the high ground along the road leading from the ferry on the Connecticut River. Medad Benton bartered services with Olcott "by framing my barn" and "framing my house" in 1773.²⁰⁷ Olcott also paid Phillip Smith of Norwich "1/2 day work framing my barn" and "3/4-day work on my barn."²⁰⁸ A hundred and fifty years later, Louise Johnson often drove with her grandfather, who "pointed out the place of Peter Olcott's first residence and the rose bush that came up each year where he thought the front door had been."²⁰⁹ According to the present building owner, the ell on the Lupien House, east of the Norwich Center graveyard, is likely a portion of Olcott's 1773 house.

Following the death of Peter Olcott, Martha Porter obtained her farm, located on the western portion of the Olcott farm, closer to Norwich Center. It consisted of a "small house" plus a large acreage on the west side of Union Village road. Martha also received the barn

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Olcott Papers, Peter Olcott Ledger, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

²⁰⁸ Johnson, Louise. "About Peter Olcott." Peter Olcott Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

²⁰⁹ Johnson, Louise. "Norwich Center." Coleman Family Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

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“which stood near the small house on the way to the big house” and “the manure about but not the land it stood. The land went to the homestead farm now belonging to Mills.

The Martha Porter parcel had a profitable apple orchard. Louise Johnson recalled:

Apple trees were brought in and set out on most farms. I can remember when there were some growing in every field and four in the front yard. People dried apples made apple cider and apple jelly – also used cider for making vinegar. There were many varieties: Porter, Bellflowers, Sheep noses, Tolman sweets, Northern spies, Russets, Baldwins to mention a few names. Maple trees were also important and I well remember the sugar place opposite our woods.²¹⁰

Referred to as Martha’s Farm, the surviving Olcotts also looked for tenants or buyers of this farmstead. In 1809, Ben Porter wrote Mills Olcott: “Wish you dispose of Martha’s farm (rent) for this year – let the pasture for a price and have the hay cut on shares half and half and put in the barn.”²¹¹ In 1810, Porter wrote to Mills that a family might be interested in the Martha Porter parcel. Knowing him from a previous relationship, Porter endorsed the family “as quiet, decent people with two children.”²¹² Ben added that if they did not like Martha’s property, they “may do well in the barn house as the woman is very neat and good for caring.”²¹³

Porter also suggested a man by the name of Silver “may have the use of Martha’s place, he paying all the taxes for one year on his producing good.”²¹⁴ Ben Porter wrote to Mills Olcott in 1812 – “do write me if any offers for the farm are made.”²¹⁵

On many instances, the Porters wanted to include the building of a wall around Martha’s property as part of a tenancy agreement. They wanted Silver to “build 120 rods whole wall,” which was “to be completed this fall and to be five feet height and three feet thick.”²¹⁶ Ben Porter wrote again: “Wish to hear if the wall man applied to you for Martha’s farm or if

²¹⁰ Johnson, Louise. “The Coleman-Johnson House.”

²¹¹ Peter Olcott Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

²¹² Mills Olcott Papers, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH

²¹³ Letter, Ben Porter to Mills Olcott, March 26, 1810, Mills Olcott Papers, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Peter Olcott Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

²¹⁶ Letter, Ben Porter to Mills Olcott, March 26, 1810, Mills Olcott Papers, Olcott Family Papers, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire
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there is prospect of doing better than to let it lay common this season.”²¹⁷ He followed up with another letter “if the wall plan doesn’t work, plan to have farmer carry it on and have our 1/3 beside hay in cellar and mow – ½ pasture – and all grain and potatoes.”²¹⁸

By 1817, Ben Porter was ill, prompting Martha to write to Mills: “Ben is ill – owes 9,000 – wishes Mills to take farms he holds – 6,500.”²¹⁹ Another potential tenant was a man by the name of Aynsworth, and “should his character for industry and honesty be tolerable. I would let him Martha’s Place if he come up.”²²⁰

Conclusion: The Zea Home

In 1978, Philip Zea took ownership of Maple Hill Farm. Combining a personal experience of regularly visiting Maple Hill Farm and by having a career working for preservation organizations such as the Society for Protection of New England Antiquities, Colonial Williamsburg, and Historic Deerfield, the Zea family ushered in a period of preservation fueled by anecdotal and professional experience. The Zea family renovated the ell of the house extensively for modern living.

Louise Johnson considered Philip Zea as a “Hovey cousin” as Zea’s mother was a descendant of the Hovey family, one of the earliest Norwich families. Two of Zea’s great-great Hovey aunts married two of Louise Johnson’s great-grandfathers. One of those great-great aunts was Martha Hovey Coleman, who lived at Maple Hill in the 1870s.²²¹

The house retains many preservation features that highlight the history of the home, such as removable wall panels that reveal original wall coverings or carefully preserved and presented markings left by original tradesmen. The owners retained many historic features such as the original sash, barn doors and molding profiles, allowing for future research and preservation. In 1993, the family repaired the East Barn through the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation’s Barn Grant program. The Zeas maintain an extensive archive of family papers documenting the property through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

²¹⁷ Peter Olcott Research File, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich, Vermont.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Letter, Ben Porter to Mills Olcott, March 5, 1813, Mills Olcott Papers, Olcott Family Papers, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire
Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

²²¹ Interview with Philip Zea, July 2018

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Due to its rich history and intact historic resources, Maple Hill 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, Maple Hill 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.

In addition to depicting Norwich's rich history, Maple Hill Farm's significance also lies in its intact historic architecture. The farmstead and outbuildings retain a high degree of integrity of design, workmanship, setting, and materials.

The barns associated with the farmhouse are excellent 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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Name of Property

Windsor, Vermont

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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 # HABS VT,14-NOR.V,1-
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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☐ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State agency

☐ Federal agency

☐ Local government

☐ University

☐ Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 232

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:** 43.73653° N **Lon:** 72.30471° W

B. **Lat:** 43.73386° N **Lon:** 72.29962° W

C. **Lat:** 43.73730° N **Lon:** 72.29616° W

D. **Lat:** 43.73871° N **Lon:** 72.30034° W

E. **Lat:** 43.73756° N **Lon:** 72.30264° W

F. **Lat:** 43.73628° N **Lon:** 72.30278° W

G. **Lat:** 43.73699° N **Lon:** 72.30384° W

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐

1927 or

☐

NAD 1983

Maple Hill Farm

Name of Property

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- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

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

The boundaries of Maple Hill Farm are the legal boundaries of the parcel of land identified in the Town of Norwich tax maps as Parcel #11.141.000.

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 Maple Hill Farm and that have retained historical integrity

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Brian Knight

organization: Brian Knight Research

street & number: PO Box 1096

city or town: Manchester state: VT zip code: 05254

e-mail brianknight@fastmail.fm

telephone: 201-919-3416

date: August 6, 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.)

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: Maple Hill Farm

City or Vicinity: Norwich

County: Windsor State: Vermont

Photographer: Brian Knight

Date Photographed: August 2018

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

Photo 1 of 22: View looking northeast at Building #1: Farmhouse

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Photo 2 of 22: View looking north at front door of Building #1: Farmhouse

Photo 3 of 22: View looking west at Building #1: Farmhouse

Photo 4 of 22: View looking south at Building #1: Farmhouse

Photo 5 of 22: View looking northeast at Building #1: Farmhouse

Photo 6 of 22: View looking northeast at Building #2: Garage

Photo 7 of 22: Looking southwest at Building #3: Henhouse

Photo 8 of 22: View looking southeast at Building #4: Corn Crib

Photo 9 of 22: View looking southwest at Building #5: East Barn

Photo 10 of 22: View looking north at Building #6: Dairy Barn

Photo 11 of 22: View looking northwest at Building #7: West Barn

Photo 12 of 22: View looking southeast at Building #6: Dairy Barn

Photo 13 of 22: View looking northeast at Building #7: West Barn

Photo 14 of 22: View looking west Building #8: Barn

Photo 15 of 22: Building #1: Farmhouse Interior View:Parlor

Photo 16 of 22: Building #1: Farmhouse Interior View: Wine Closet door in dining room

Photo 17 of 22: Building #1: Farmhouse Interior View: Front stairs

Photo 18 of 22: Building #1: Farmhouse Interior View: Dining room

Photo 19 of 22: Site #14: Potash Site

Photo 20 of 22: Site #9: Dooryard

Photo 21 of 22: Site # 10: Porter Lot looking west

Photo 22 of 22: Site #10: Porter Lot looking east

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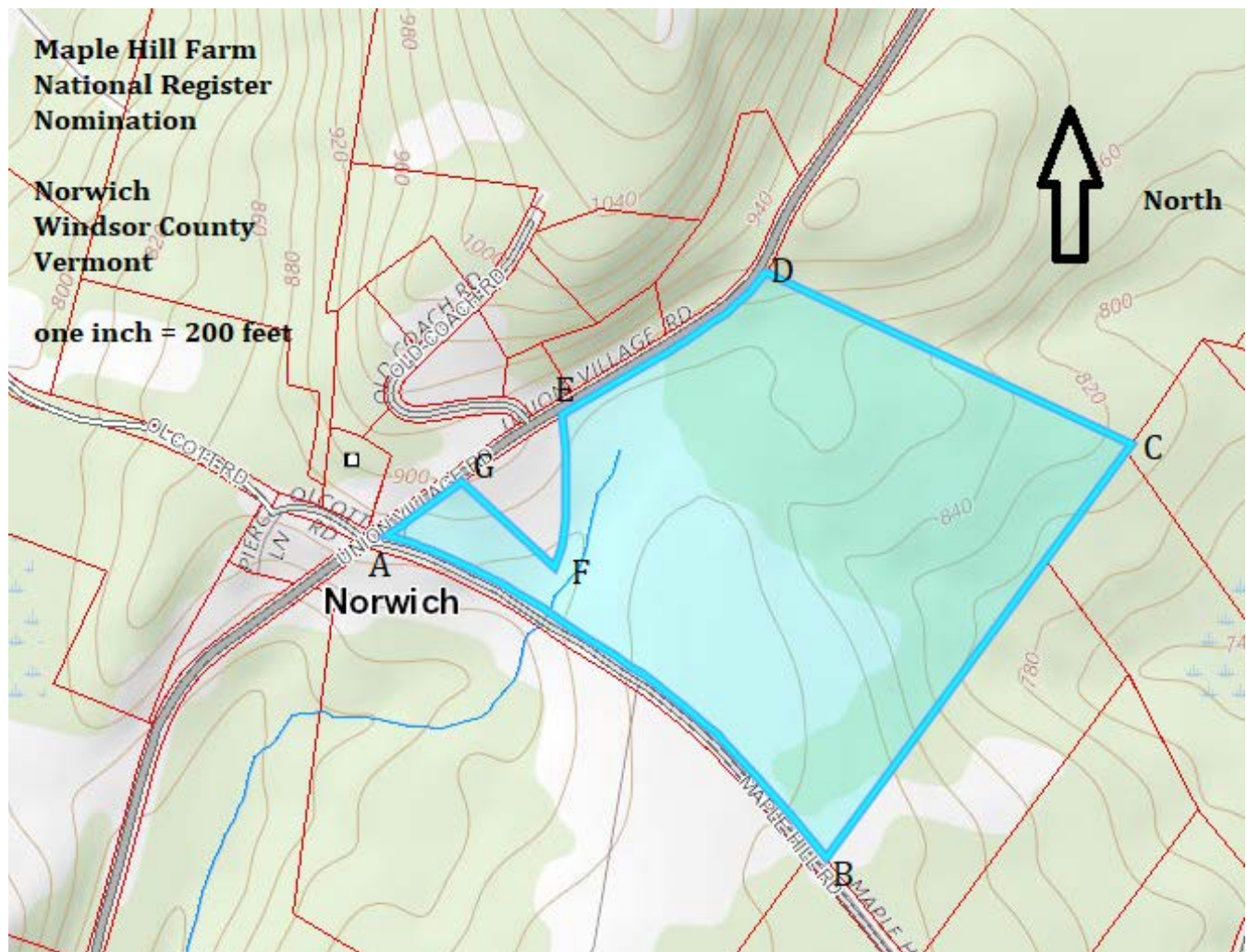
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain 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.

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Location Map



- A. **Lat:** 43.73653° N **Lon:** 72.30471° W
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C. **Lat:** 43.73730° N **Lon:** 72.29616° W
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Map

