

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Metcalf - Franklin Farm

other names/site number Franklin Farm

2. Location

street & number 142 Abbott Run Valley Road not for publication

city or town Cumberland vicinity

state Rhode Island code RI county Providence code 007 zip code 02864

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is: Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

- entered in the National Register
 - See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
 - See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet.
- other (explain) _____

Metcalf-Franklin Farm
Name of Property

Providence County, Rhode Island
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.)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing
4	buildings
3	sites
1	structures
	objects
8	total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: agricultural field,
animal facility, agricultural outbuilding

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: agricultural
field, agricultural outbuilding

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

COLONIAL: Postmedieval English
MID - 19TH CENTURY: Greek Revival
EARLY 20TH CENTURY

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation STONE: Granite, Fieldstone
walls WOOD: Weatherboard, Shingle
METAL: Aluminum
roof ASPHALT: Shingle
other BRICK (chimneys)
WOOD (trim)

Narrative Description

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

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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.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Agriculture
- Architecture
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Period of Significance

ca. 1810 – ca. 1930

Significant Dates

ca. 1810
ca. 1860
ca. 1930

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository
Rhode Island Historical Society Library

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 63.38 acres

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	9	3	0	1	0	9	8	4	6	4	8	7	1	2
	Zone		Easting					Northing							
2	1	9	3	0	1	4	2	7	4	6	4	8	8	5	3

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

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth S. Warren, Preservation Consultant

organization _____ date January 12, 2007

street & number 18 Homestead Avenue telephone (401) 433-4592

city or town Barrington state Rhode Island zip code 02806

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Town of Cumberland

street & number 45 Broad Street telephone (401) 728-4200

city or town Cumberland state Rhode Island zip code 02864

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 amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Metcalf-Franklin Farm

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DESCRIPTION

The Metcalf-Franklin Farm is a small farm complex with elements dating from the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries, set amid twentieth-century suburban plats. It encompasses 63.38 acres of land on both the west and east sides of historic Abbott Run Valley Road in the northeast corner of Cumberland. The west lot contains 43.38 acres (A.P. 24, lot 409) and the east lot contains 17.85 acres (A.P. 25, lot 22). It is located about 1-1/4 miles south of the Village of Arnolds Mills and is bounded on the east by the right-of-way of the former Rhode Island and Massachusetts Railroad, abutting Rawson Pond; on the south by Rolling Green Drive, Johnson Road, Barn Lane and Hayfield Drive; on the west by Tanglewood Drive, Circuit Dive and Abbot Valley View Drive, and on the north by Sun Valley Road, all now developed for medium- to high-density residential use.

The Metcalf-Franklin Farm contains the following components: the William E. Franklin House (ca. 1857), a late Greek Revival Farmhouse; an adjacent Garage (ca. 1930); the Liberty Metcalf/ William E. Franklin Barn Complex and Franklin Cow Stable (ca. 1810, ca.. 1860, ca. 1930); and an adjacent Equipment Storage Shed (ca. 1940), plus dry-laid stone walls, dating from the 18th and early 19th centuries, that are found in the northern and western sections of the fields and along both sides of Abbott Valley Run Road. Mid 19th-century stonewalls define the south side of the Franklin Farmhouse. Sites include the location of the ca. 1930 Franklin Silo, at the southwest corner of the Cow Stable; two early 19th- century small structures, west of the Barn Complex; and a Well House, built over the stream that runs southwest of the Farmhouse. Fields and meadows slope from west to east from about a 250-foot elevation on the east face of Thompson Hill, to meet Abbott Valley Run Road, then continue east from the road, with rises and dips, to about a 140-foot elevation, just west of Rawson Pond. Franklin Farm lies within the Abbott Run and Pawtucket Reservoir Watershed.

The Franklin Farmhouse and Garage are in excellent condition. Sections of the Metcalf/ Franklin Barn Complex and Cow Stable range from good to fair to poor condition. The Franklin Silo has recently been demolished, though its foundation remains.

In use until 1994 as one of the last dairy farms in Cumberland, the architectural components and historic landscape of the Metcalf-Franklin Farm document the early settlement of Abbott Run Valley and the development of its agriculture from the early 19th century until the end of the 20th century. Survival and preservation of this farm complex and open space, with its high scenic value, makes Franklin Farm a major cultural resource for the Town of Cumberland, its current owner.

Cumberland is a triangular section containing 28.4 square miles in the northeast corner of Rhode Island. It is bounded on the north and east by the Massachusetts towns of Wrentham, Plainville, North Attleboro and

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Attleboro; on the west by the Rhode Island towns of Lincoln and Woonsocket and on the south by Central Falls, Rhode Island. The Blackstone River defines the west and south boundaries of the town. Prehistoric Native American settlement, early Colonial settlement, transportation routes and industrial development (beginning in the 18th century and peaking in the early 20th century) all were informed by the Blackstone River.

Abbott Run, the most important tributary of the Blackstone River, rises in the northeast corner of Cumberland, flowing southerly from the Arnold Mills Reservoir for about 21 miles, then easterly into Attleboro, Massachusetts, and then re-entering Cumberland at the south end of town. Rawson Pond was formed in the late 18th century by erecting a dam for a grist and sawmill across Abbott Run, just southeast of the Metcalf-Franklin Farm site.

Abbott Run Valley Road, described in early 19th century deeds as “the road to Wrentham,” is a narrow, 2-lane, country road, now asphalt-covered, that skirts the eastern foot of 300-foot Thompson Hill on the west side of Abbott Run. This road runs southerly from the Village of Arnolds Mills for about 5 miles to end at its intersection with Bear Hill Road, just south of Interstate 295. This historic road connected at least six water-powered mills along Abbott Run that appear on the 1838 Map of Cumberland by Newell Nelson.

Landscape Features

The Franklin Farm has approximately 1000 feet of frontage along Abbott Valley Run Road, which bisects the resource. Dry-laid fieldstone walls are found on both sides of the road near Franklin Farm. Cedar posts, formerly used for wire fencing, remain along the west side of the road. Similar fieldstone walls are found in the northwest “upland” section of the farm. Mid 19th-century stone walls are part of the man-made landscape around the Franklin Farmhouse. A narrow stream of primary importance to the use of this land for cattle runs from through the western and southern part of Lot 409, then under Abbott Valley Run Road and easterly to Rawson Pond. This stream forms a small pond, approximately 540 feet west of the Franklin Farmhouse. Citation of this stream, essential for agricultural practice, appears in early deeds. The gently-rolling, open fields of the Metcalf-Franklin Farm have been used for over 200 years for grazing cattle and growing hay, English hay, meadow hay, oats, corn, and apples. A 1995 aerial photograph shows mowing of the fields and pasturage in alternative stripes to prevent erosion. Bi-annual mowing of these fields has preserved the contours and openness of the land.

The Franklin Farmhouse (ca. 1857 et seq.)

The Franklin Farmhouse faces east and is located about 40 feet from Abbott Valley Run Road. Built by William E. Franklin after 1857, it is a late Greek Revival, one-and-one-half story, flank-gable-roof, 5-bay, clapboarded

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house with an original one-and-one-half-story kitchen wing attached to the south end of the house. A 20th-century, nine-bay, enclosed porch across the full width of this kitchen wing obscures the original, east, exterior wall and kitchen entry. Intact façade detailing includes a handsome, flat-head, trabeated entry with wide entablature and narrow, five-pane sidelights. Original window frames with slightly molded lintels are found on all elevations. Double-hung, six-over-six window sash has been replaced with modern, double-pane sash that replicates the original design. The hillside site allows direct entry into the south end of the kitchen ell. On the west side of the house, a small half-hip-roofed ell has been added to provide a second entry to the kitchen and space for a modern laundry.

The Franklin Farmhouse is partially enclosed by a fence; an opening on the north side provides easy access to the Barn complex. A low stone wall on the south edge of the front lawn has a built-in step near the entry to the cellar, that also provides access from the lawn to the asphalt-covered driveway that leads from the road directly to a 20th-century Garage. Just south of the Franklin Farmhouse, there is a new organic vegetable garden . This town-run project produces food for the local food banks. On the west side of the house are two large, mature maple trees that provide shade; former gardens are now dormant.

The Franklin Farmhouse has a modified five-room floor plan. The main entrance opens to a generous center stair hall. The staircase has a handsome mahogany newel post on the lower level and double smaller newels post on the second level. On the first floor, the northeast front parlor, opening to the right, retains more elaborate detailing than the other first floor rooms; molded panels appear below each window and doors have shallow entablatures. An original wooden fireplace surround has a double-curved design. The woodwork has been painted over with a light gray wash that obscures original faux-marble graining. No evidence of a wood-burning fireplace exists; cast-iron coal stoves likely originally heated this house. This parlor opens to a small northwest bedroom. The southeast front parlor shows the ghost of a fireplace mantel on the inside north wall. Installation of cast-iron steam radiators, probably in the early 1930s, has resulted in the removal of original fireplace mantels. Two small rooms across the west side, including one most recently used by William Rhodes "Rhodey" Franklin for an office, complete the plan of this main section. Simple, original, four-panel, wooden doors are found in all rooms; many of these doors have Victorian mercury glass knobs.

On the second floor of the main section of the Franklin House, minor alteration of a basic five-room floor plan has resulted in two generous front bedrooms: the northeast bedroom and the southeast bedroom, that each have dormer windows facing Abbott Valley Run Road. Of architectural interest in both of these chambers is the pedestal framing of the front dormers and innovative use of storage space under the stairs in the southeast bedroom. Access to the attic is through a scuttle, located in the central staircase hall. All window casings are original and four-panel doors with Victorian cut-glass knobs are found on this floor. At the rear of the second

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floor, a full-width hall opens to a storage closet with original, wide, wood floors and to a modern bathroom, created under the sloping roofline; this hall leads to the upper floor of the kitchen ell.

The kitchen ell is divided into two large rooms on both levels. On the first floor, a ca. 1930, colored-stone fireplace has been installed in the dining room and a new staircase to the second floor installed on the west wall of the kitchen. State-of-the-art 1950s stainless steel Frigidaire kitchen appliances exist in the kitchen. Of special interest is a stainless steel wall oven with grill and warming elements. A drop-down pass-through permits easy service of food to the enclosed porch. Direct access to the cellar (which includes a second kitchen stove) is located behind the staircase to the second floor and another exit to the garage and garden is located in the small laundry ell, attached to the west side of the house. Above the kitchen is a large family room/bedroom that has excellent light, provided by a front dormer and two south-facing windows with a view of the organic garden and fields.

The cellar, with granite walls and approximately an eight-foot ceiling, offers excellent working space. Large, eight-foot to 12-foot, dressed-granite blocks form the cellar's foundation. The north end has a patterned brick floor; this space was reputed to be used for preparation and storage of seeds. A 20-foot, primitive carpenter's bench is located near an interior wall. The original chimney system has been replaced with a cinder-block stack tied into a ca. 1930 coal-fired furnace, now converted to oil.

Garage (ca. 1930)

A two-bay, front gable roof Garage is located to the southwest of the Franklin House. The building is constructed with a wood frame atop a concrete slab foundation. The exterior walls are clad with wood shingles and the roof is clad with asphalt shingles. The two garage doors are modern, wood, overhead models with one row of six glass panes in each. The garage has a single, three-over-three, wood sash window on each elevation.

Barn Complex (ca. 1810, ca. 1860, ca. 1940 and ca. 1930)

The barn complex, comprised of the Liberty Metcalf-William E. Franklin Barn and attached Franklin Cow Stable, was built on grade about eight feet west of a slight bend in Abbott Valley Run Road and approximately 350 feet north of the Franklin House. The Metcalf-Franklin Barn measures approximately 100 foot by 32 foot with an attached Cow Stable, measuring approximately 68-foot by 40-foot. The free-standing Equipment Storage Shed measures 40-foot by 20-foot. These gable-roofed buildings form a U-shaped courtyard with the west side open to the hillside field. Built in four sections, from ca. 1810 to ca. 1930, this barn complex is a virtual textbook of Rhode Island barn technology

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Liberty Metcalf Barn (ca. 1810) – Middle Section

An original, 1854, hand-drawn map by H. F. Walling, made for the sale of the farm by the heirs of Liberty Metcalf to Alvin E. A. Fisk, shows only this original 32-foot by 38-foot section of the Barn complex (Walling, H.F., 1854, Arnold Mills Archive). Structural analysis of the interior reveals that the framing is traditional post-and-beam construction with hand-hewn, vertical, approximately 8" x 8" oak posts extending a full 20-feet in height to meet the plate. Diagonal, hand-hewn, 4" x 6" braces or struts are pegged with treenails into the posts to prevent wracking of the frame. Rough-sawn, wide, pine boards form the walls and the rafter-framed roof is covered with horizontally-laid rough-sawn boards. There is no ridgepole. The original main door (now closed) on the east side and drive floor was built to allow a larger area for the haymow on the north end and a stable on the warmer south end. An interior post in the north part has ladder holes that indicates that a hayloft was originally located here; no ladder rungs have survived and this space is today open to the peak. On the west side, a large sliding door of vertical planks, hanging from metal rollers on an outside track opens to the courtyard. Light is obtained through a small triple-framed transom with 9 glass panes (some now missing).

William E. Franklin Barn (ca. 1860) — South Section

By the early 1800s, the practice of expanding an older English barn by simply adding extra bays at either end had become common in New England as farmers developed larger herds in response to economic competition from western regions (Visser, 1997: 68). William Franklin probably added this south section shortly after his purchase of the farm in 1857, as the first step in his development of a larger dairy farm.

This section has 6" x 6" hand-hewn posts and diagonal braces on the south wall. The east wall has 2" x 6" sawn wooden posts and no diagonal braces, indicating a later repair of the original fabric. Some horizontal girts show evidence of use of a broad ax or broad hatchet and some interior post are small tree trunks that have not been hewn on all sides. A few vertical wallboards ranging from 10" to 17" in width exist. Along the east wall is a partitioned heifer stall with seven crude wooden stanchions. These stanchions, or "tie ups," pivot open on a treenail near the bottom of the board to allow a heifer's head to come in or out. The northernmost stall has a low gate with 2 iron-strap hinges with 3 large rose-headed nails, in common use about 1800, that were probably re-used from an earlier structure. A narrow flathead door opens on the southeast corner to the driveway. A hayloft extends over this entire section. Use of 2-1/2" x 6-1/2" rough-cut floor joists indicate that the hayloft was added to this space. Evidence of whitewash exists on both the floor joists and the under side of the floorboards. Surviving on the south end wall is a poster titled "Eastern Federated Genetics Proven A.I. Series 1989-90," witness to the importance of breeding cattle by artificial insemination in the 20th century. The west wall of this section leads directly into the ca. 1920 Cow Stable, attached at a right angle to the south section.

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William E. Franklin Barn (ca. 1860, added after 1895?) — North Section

This three-bent barn was added to the middle section at an unknown date: barn framing is nailed, not pegged, to the shingled, exterior north wall of the middle section. This north wall of the middle section now serves as an interior wall and has simply been cut to create a 39" wide opening from floor to the peak of the roof, providing access between the two barns. Post-and-beam framing is similar to the middle section, but lighter in scale; 6" x 6" oak posts exist and 2" x 4" sawn framing is found on the exterior walls that have vertical pine boards ranging from 9" to 12" in width as exterior wall cover. The drive-through door on the east side has been closed with 1½" x 3½" studs and horizontal, 8" tongue-and-groove, wood siding on the exterior. A large sliding drive-through door on the west side, hung on metal rollers, is intact. Double-hung, 6-pane, mid-19th-century windows in the north and south gable ends provide a small amount of light.

It is possible that this north section was built as a Field Barn, located uphill a short distance west of the middle section. The 1895 Map of Cumberland shows a structure in this location (Beers, D.G., 1895). When William E. Franklin purchased the Metcalf farm from an intermediary in 1857, he may have built this barn, which was then moved and attached (after 1895) to the middle section, improving access to the eastern fields of the farm and to Abbott Valley Run Road for transport of hay and produce.

Waldo F. Franklin Cow Stable (ca. 1930) – attached to the South Section

In the construction of his Cow Stable, Waldo F. Franklin, who acquired full title to the farm in 1928, took advantage of the use of electric power and current technological improvements in materials and design for dairy barns. The Cow Stable floor is concrete over a rubble stone/concrete foundation, allowing for easier cleaning. Fifteen metal pipe stanchions were installed on each side of a center aisle to accommodate a herd of 30 cows facing inwards to a tiled feeding trough. A shallow gutter to facilitate collection of manure runs the full length of the stable at the tail ends of the cows on each side. A metal grain cart on casters is still intact. Constructed about five feet from the floor, a metal water line and a rubber vacuum line, installed at the head of the stanchions and extending the full length of the Stable, are intact. A vacuum-powered milking machine was probably used to pump milk into a milk can for transport to a metal bulk tank in the Dairy. The Dairy is located in a small shed-roof addition, abutting the northeast corner of the Cow Stable at its intersection with the early 19th-century Metcalf Barn. The Dairy has white paint on the east wall of novelty wood siding and applied vinyl panels on the north and south walls. A small door opens to the courtyard at the northeast corner. The west wall, sided with metal siding, is in poor condition.

The Cow Stable is offset from the original, wooden English barn and runs from east-to-west. Originally covered with tongue and groove "novelty" siding, it now has corrugated metal siding. Two distinctive, pre-fabricated, conical, steel ventilators rising from truncated pyramidal bases are located on the roof. These popular, mass-produced ventilators were designed to draw stale air out of the Stable, keep out birds, and prevent back draft.

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Bands of triple-unit, four-pane windows are located on both the north and south sides to provide fresh air and light as “animals require light to be healthy” (Visser, 1995:38). Doors include the large sliding main door on the west end, facing the uphill fields, and small wood-plank doors on both the west end and southwest corner. The east wall fronting Abbott Valley Run Road has a sliding metal-sided door on the southeast corner of the Cow Stable, directly in line with the south side interior floor gutter to facilitate cleaning of the Cow Stable.

Equipment Storage Shed (ca. 1940)

An Equipment Storage Shed is located just to the west of the Barn. The building has a rectangular plan with a front gable roof. A concrete slab foundation supports the wood frame, which is clad with corrugated metal sheet material. Modern overhead garage doors are located in the west and south elevations of the building.

Site of the Franklin Silo (ca. 1930, demolished ca. 2005)

From the 1890s through the 1930s, wooden stave silos were constructed by dairy farmers throughout New England to provide airtight storage of silage. Silage is a chopped, compressed feed made of field corn. In general, the round form, made of vertical grooved wooden staves, held together by adjustable steel hoops, superseded earlier square silos. After a round silo was filled in the fall, the hoops could be loosened to accommodate swelling of the wood and then tightened as the silage dried. A herd of twenty-five cows would require 86 tons of silage for six months, that could be stored in a typical, 24-foot high, 16-foot diameter silo (Visser, 1992:136).

A 1990 photograph, before dairy operations ceased in 1995, shows the Metcalf-Franklin Farm Silo with its conical roof, located at the southwest corner of the Cow Stable (Adams, RIHPC report, 1990:10). Recently, the Town of Cumberland demolished this structure as a safety hazard. The concrete, round foundation of the Silo is visible on site. Its existence indicates that part of the Franklin Farm fields was used to grow corn.

Other Features

Site of Franklin Well House (ca. 1860?, demolished 2005)

A small, one-story, shed-roofed structure, built south of the stream, about 350 feet southwest of the Franklin House. This utilitarian structure was used to store milk, meat and food. It was demolished, due to its poor condition, by members of the Franklin family in 2005 (Brindle, interview: 2006).

Stone Walls (ca. 1800–1860)

Rubblestone walls, dating from the early 19th century to the 1860s, line both the west and east sides of Abbott Run Valley Road. The highest stone wall is found at the northeastern corner of the Franklin Barn, which is sited on a slight rise in Abbott Valley Run Road. Along the south side of the Franklin Farmhouse is a low, stone,

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mid-19th-century retaining wall, running from Abbott Valley Run Road to the house; it has a step built into the wall at its western end, near the entrance to the lower level of the Farmhouse.

Sites of Two Storage Sheds (ca. 1860? demolished at an unknown date) The 1939 aerial photograph of Cumberland, on file at the Statewide Planning Program, shows the existence of two small structures just west of the Barn Complex. These may have been a Wood House and Tool Shed.

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List of Photographs

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Information below for photographs #1 – #8

Photographer: Elizabeth S. Warren

Date: November, 2006

Negatives on file at: Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission
150 Benefit Street, Providence, Rhode Island

Photo #

Location/Description

- 1 View looking east from the hillside field to the Barn Complex and Abbott Valley Run Road. The Franklin Farmhouse is on the far right and hay fields across the road are in the background. (Roll A, #2)
- 2 View showing east and south elevations of Farmhouse with stone walls in the foreground, looking northwest. (Roll B, #4)
- 3 View showing south and west elevations of Farmhouse with two large Maple trees and the Barn complex in the background, looking north. (Roll B, #12)
- 4 Interior of Farmhouse, showing staircase in entry hall. (Roll D, #17)
- 5 Interior of Northeast Parlor, showing detail of door frame. (Roll D, #24)
- 6 East façade of Metcalf/Franklin Barn, showing shingled-over Drive-through Door in Middle Section, looking west. (Roll B, #35)
- 7 Interior of Middle Section of Metcalf Barn, showing hand-hewn posts, diagonal braces, rafters and horizontal-laid roof boards. Door to heifer stall in the South Section is to the right of the center post and a haymow exists on the second level. (Roll C, #20)
- 8 Interior of North Section of Franklin Barn, showing sawn rafters and shingled North wall of Middle Section in background, looking south. (Roll C, #19)

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9 Section of 1939 aerial photograph of Cumberland with Metcalf-Franklin Farm in the upper right corner. Courtesy of Statewide Planning Program, Rhode Island Department of Administration.

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SIGNIFICANCE

The Metcalf-Franklin Farm is significant as one of the last farm complexes in Cumberland, a town whose economy was once the scene of many small agricultural enterprises. The buildings of the complex, especially the barns, have significance as documents of farming building types to the agricultural, architectural and developmental history of Abbott Run Valley in northeastern Cumberland, Rhode Island. Metcalf-Franklin Farm has been in the ownership of only two families, the Metcalfs from the early 1800s until 1853 and the Franklins from 1857 until 2005. In 1994 it was described as “one of the last operating dairy farms in Cumberland” (Fitch, 1990: 23). Today, this former dairy farm, now in town ownership, is a rare example of early 19th century to the end of the 20th century agricultural practice, in a valley that has been dramatically altered by 20th century economic factors and post-World War II suburbanization.

The intact fields and meadows, buildings and structures, stone walls, barnyard and house yard, that compose Franklin Farm, have a remarkable degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Research has revealed that use of the land for cattle and cropland, beginning in the early 1800s, has not changed for over 200 years. The Barn Complex, built in four stages from ca. 1810 to ca. 1940, presents an extraordinary record of barn building technology. The Franklin Farmhouse, ca. 1857, is a handsome example of a vernacular late Greek Revival house that has been slightly altered for installation of a ca. 1930 oil-fired heating system, and a ca. 1950s kitchen and bathroom. Unfortunately, a small tenant dwelling, corncrib, icehouse, wood house and two sheds, shown on 19th-century maps and mentioned in deeds, no longer exist. Taken together, the architectural components are particularly significant for their superior craftsmanship, use of local granite and rubblestone, hand-hewn and sawn timber and for the simplicity of design and siting in response to environmental factors. The survival and preservation of this farm, which represents the longevity of the family-farm tradition, is of major importance to the heritage of Cumberland.

Historical Background:

The history of Franklin Farm is intimately tied to the settlement of Arnold Mills and Abbott Run villages and the development of Abbot Run Valley. In 1734 three-quarters of the mill privilege (of what would become Arnold Mills) was sold by Richard Atwell of Attleboro, Massachusetts, to William Walcott, Samuel Street and Daniel Wilkinson for the erection of a sawmill. By 1745, Amos Arnold, of Smithfield, purchased the sawmill and mill privilege, added a gristmill and gave the village his name. This land, part of Attelboro Gore, Massachusetts, was ceded to Rhode Island in 1746 and incorporated as the Town of Cumberland. Important early settlers included the Metcalf, Walcott, Bishop, Richards, Foster, Razee, Peck, Davis, Sheldon, Gould, Aldrich, Smith and Ide families (Simpson 1976: 28).

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Ebenezer Metcalf, the progenitor of a large family, moved to Arnold Mills from Attleboro in 1775. In 1776, he married his first wife, Asenath Davis (d.1783), who had five sons. Their eldest son, Liberty, born on August 8, 1776, became the key figure in the development of today's Metcalf-Franklin Farm (Record of Births and Deaths, Book 2:3). Two of Ebenezer's other sons, Joseph and Ebenezer, established the Metcalf Mill for the manufacture of textile machinery and marine hardware at Arnolds Mills in 1828; unfortunately this landmark burned in 1978 (NR, Arnolds Mills, 1976).

Ebenezer's life was typical of these self-sufficient settlers. He conducted a blacksmith shop, a small machine shop and a large farming operation. In 1801, he purchased 100 acres of land from Nathan Aldrich (Deed Book 9:144) and two 12-acre parcels from Rufus Arnold (Deed Book 10:466). This land extended south from the Metcalf cemetery on both sides of Abbott Valley Run Valley Road. Ebenezer also purchased two lots at an auction of the estate of Simeon Thayer, held on April 22, 1803 (Deed Book 9:391-392). These two lots were sold on May 1, 1809, by Ebenezer to Liberty and his brother Davis, a boatbuilder. Liberty acquired 18 acres and 54 rods, bounded "by the west side of the Highway leading from my dwelling house to Providence (Deed Book 10:316) and Davis acquired 12 acres on the east side of the same highway (Deed Book 10:340).

The 1838 Map of Cumberland by Nelson Newell shows Liberty's house on the west side of the cross road (now abandoned) between Hillside Road and Abbott Run Valley Road and Davis's house on the east side of the same cross road, just south of the Metcalf Cemetery and about 1/2-mile north of the Franklin Farm. Ebenezer's House was farther north and is part of the Arnolds Mills National Register District (NR, Arnolds Mills, 1976). Ebenezer died intestate on October 23, 1820, at age 72. Liberty and his brother Joseph were appointed administrators of Ebenezer's estate (Probate Records 12, 1817-1821:339). The Inventory of Ebenezer's estate shows that his land was used for cattle and diversified crops (Probate Records 12, 1817-1821: 349).

Liberty had already begun to assemble his own farm by 1806. Land records show that just south of Ebenezer's farm on the west side of the road was a 50-acre farm, purchased by Simeon Thayer from Nathaniel Newman in 1797 (Deed Book 8:370). After Simeon's death, his son Stephen sold this land for one thousand dollars to Liberty Metcalf in 1806, "bounded northerly on Ebenezer Metcalf, westwardly on Joab Wilkinson & others, southwardly on Land lately belonging to Nathan Streeter and on a Highway and eastwardly on a Highway (Deed Book 9:384). Three years later Liberty gained an additional 18 acres and 54 rods from his father Ebenezer, lying north of the 50-acre lot.

Liberty, at age 33, owned a total of 68 acres, including the 1806 and 1809 purchases, which would become the basis for today's Metcalf-Franklin Farm. He could easily oversee operations at his farm by walking or riding from his house on Hillside Road. Liberty may have acquired more land from his father's estate by "Right of Progeniture" as the 1850 United States Census of Agricultural Productions lists Liberty Metcalf as the owner of

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100 acres of “improved land” and 10 acres of “unimproved land.” (Seventh Census of the United States, 1850: Schedule 4, p.165). This census documents that Liberty had developed his farm for “2 horses, 8 milch cows, 6 swine...and 20 bushels of Rye, 120 bushels of Indian corn, 250 bushels of Irish potatoes, 1280 lbs. of butter and 30 tons of hay.” The 1851 Map of Providence County Rhode Island further documents that Liberty owned this land (Walling, H.F., 1851).

Like his father, Liberty died intestate in 1853. His eldest son, Whipple Metcalf (b.5/17/1800), was appointed Administrator (Probate Records Book 20:109). Liberty’s estate inventory lists extensive farm equipment including “2 horse sleds, 1 horse sleigh, 3 harrows, 4 plows...3 manure forks...4 scythes & sticks...1 lot tools in woodhouse...1 lot empty casks in Ice house...1 carryall, 1 top buggy...I hay wagon, covered wagon, about 40 bushels corn...1 horse wagon, 1 horse, best horse, 8 cows, 6 hogs... (Probate Records, Book 20, 1852–1857:124,125). No woodhouse or icehouse now exists at Franklin Farm. In addition to his farm equipment and produce, Liberty’s substantial wealth was also documented by listing of shares in 13 Rhode Island banks.

After Liberty’s death, the land that forms the present Franklin Farm was quickly sold in two transactions (Walling, H.F., 1854). In 1854, Liberty Metcalf’s heirs sold 43 acres and 56 rods “on the highway leading from Wrentham to Attleboro by the house of David Cargill” for \$1,350 to Alvin E .S. Fisk. The deed mentions the “privilege of using the water running from the spring now on land of these grantors as it now runs from said spring onto the above described lot for purpose of watering his cattle...” (Deed Book 24:73,74). Two months later, on January 10, 1855, Fisk sold the same property to James M. Sheldon (Deed Book 24:101). Then on March 31, 1857, Sheldon sold the farm “with all the buildings and improvements thereon...” to William R. Franklin of Cumberland (Deed Book 24:481 and Walling, H.F., 1854 Plat).

A picture of how William R. Franklin (1824–1909) diversified agricultural products at Franklin Farm is gained from the 1880 United States Census “Production of Agriculture, Cumberland...” It shows that Franklin owned “30 acres of tilled land...in rotation whether pasture or meadow...20 acres of permanent meadows...2 horses, 12 milch cows, 12 calves dropped and 12 sold living...plus 6000 gallons of milk sold or sent to butter and cheese factories...plus 2 swine and 30 chickens (U.S. Census, 1880, Schedule 2: 7). Franklin then expanded the farm’s acreage in 1883, buying “17 acres and 140 rods on east side of road,” from Mary Metcalf et al, the heirs of Davis Metcalf (Deed Book 36: 676-677). This purchase established the limits to today’s Metcalf-Franklin Farm, totaling 63.38 acres.

William Rhodes Franklin died intestate on September 30, 1909 at the age of 85. His wife Mary Ellen (Brown) Franklin (1825–1901) had predeceased him by eight years. Heirs-at-law included their son Henry H. Franklin and an unmarried daughter Mary, who lived in the Franklin Farmhouse. Henry died suddenly on November 4, 1917, of a cerebral hemorrhage. The administration of his estate was granted to Henry’s son, Waldo E. Franklin

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(Probate Docket No. 2, Feb. 1910 to June 1924, Cumberland: 135). After Henry's death, two of his sons, Waldo E. and Harold E., acquired title to the farm through a quitclaim from Mary Franklin, single, Clifford T. Franklin, single, Louise F. Carpenter, and Ellen E. Franklin, widow of Henry H. Franklin. This deed included the "land with all the buildings and improvements thereon...on the highway leading from Adamsdale to Diamond Hill, now known as Abbott Run Valley Road." Mary, the daughter of W. Rhodes Franklin, reserved to herself a life existence in the Farmhouse (Deed Book 60:395-396).

By 1928, Waldo and Harold had a falling out and Harold quitclaimed "His undivided half interest" in the Franklin Farm to Waldo (Deed Book 76:473 and personal interview, David Brindle, November 2006). Waldo was responsible for the last expansion of the Barn Complex, adding the Milk Stable to the southwest corner of the old Metcalf Barn. Waldo was active in the Cumberland Grange and was a member and Secretary of the North Cumberland Detective Society (1894-1931) considered a forerunner of the Rhode Island State Police (Simpson: 43, 44). Waldo, who was married to Helen S. Franklin, died in 1938. Helen survived for fifty years, oversaw the farm and made renovations to the Farmhouse before her death in 1988.

Waldo and Helen had four children: Amy (Franklin) Brindle (d.1998) and sons Henry Franklin (d.5/5/1992), Arnold Franklin and William Rhodes "Rhodey" Franklin (d. 2/26/2005). Arnold still lives in Cumberland. "Rhodey," a bachelor, was the last of the Franklins to live in the Franklin Farmhouse. After his brother's death, "Rhodey" ran the family dairy farm until 1994, when changing economic factors and ill health made it necessary to stop operations. Negotiations with the Town of Cumberland, the Cumberland Conservation Commission, and the Planning Department led to two deeds: in August of 1994, Amy F.(Franklin) Brindle, as Administrator of the Estate of Henry H. Franklin, granted a one-quarter undivided interest in the Metcalf-Franklin Farm in an administrator's deed to the Town of Cumberland (Deed Book 613:436-438); then Amy with brothers Arnold and William R. Franklin granted a three-quarters undivided interest in the same property in a warranty deed to the Town of Cumberland (Deed Book 613:436-439). These deeds set off about two acres around the Franklin Farmhouse for the continued use of "Rhodey" Franklin. "Rhodey" Franklin lived in the Farmhouse until his death in February, 2005. His executor, David R. Brindle, son of Amy (Franklin) Brindle, then sold the house and house lot in an executor's deed to the Town of Cumberland (Deed Book 1282:177). The town now owns the total 63.38 acres of historic Metcalf-Franklin Farm.

Community Planning/Development

Far from being an isolated agricultural area, Abbott Run Valley developed an integrated, complex economy, based on agriculture and late-18th-century to early 19th-century water-powered mills on Abbott Run. The 1838 Map shows five mill sites between Arnold Mills village and the pond just north of Bear Run Road (Nelson, N., 1838). These early industries included the Metcalf Machine Shop and Saw Mill at Arnold Mills, J. M. Walcott's

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Factory, Wm. Hawkins Factory (at Rawson Pond), and E. Fuller's Cotton Factory. By 1870, a small village called Abbott Run, which included a water-powered textile and gristmill, post office, boarding house, store and icehouse, developed at the south end of Rawson Pond, (Beers, D.B., 1870).

By 1877 the Rhode Island and Massachusetts Railroad from Central Falls, Rhode Island, to Franklin, Massachusetts, had opened and a depot was established at the intersection of Rawson Road and the railroad right-of-way, shown on the 1895 map (Everts & Richards, Atlas, 1895, Volume One: 129) This railroad was an important stimulus to the developing economy of the valley, providing easy transport of goods and people to Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts markets (Simpson, 1976: 111). In 1884, the mill estate at Rawson Pond was sold by William M. Rawson to his son Halsey C. Rawson and David Olney Cargill, who opened the Abbott Run Creamery (Connors, Rawson Bridge Report: 3). Of significance to the development of the Metcalf-Franklin Farm is that W. Rhodes Franklin, William Rawson's neighbor, had easy access to this creamery, the icehouse and the railroad for his expanding dairy farm, which produced 6000 gallons of milk as noted in the 1880 Census (U. S. Census, Schedule 2:7).

The Abbott Run Creamery was chartered by the Rhode Island General Assembly to "deal in cattle, swine, grain, feed and milk and to manufacture butter, cheese and ice-cream.

The Rawson Road Bridge (State Bridge No. 460) report by Edward Connors contains a detailed account of this enterprise, which had closed by 1901. Connors notes the capacity of Rawson Pond to produce ice and the formation in 1901 of the Abbott Run Ice and Grain Company, which became the dominant commercial activity at Abbott Run. Originated by David O. Cargill, William E. Bowen and Halsey Rawson, Bowen became head of the company by 1905 (Connor, Rawson Bridge Report: 4). Bowen was a statewide wholesale dealer in ice, based in East Providence, who developed two ice houses here, making daily shipments of up to four train loads of ice from the Abbott Run operation. Bowen died in 1929, and in 1932, the old textile mill (last in use as a machine and tool storehouse for the ice business), gristmill and Bowen icehouses were demolished (Simpson, 1975:47 and 49).

The demise of manufacturing at Abbott Run and throughout the Abbot Run Valley was caused by a number of factors, including the onset of the Great Depression, the shift of textile operations to the American south, development of inexpensive refrigeration, and the removal of the railroad tracks for scrap metal during World War II. However, dairy farmers maintained operations, as milk became a more profitable business than beef (Griffiths, 1965:34) and milk could be shipped by refrigerated trucks to markets provided by the nearby mill villages of Ashton, Berkeley and Lonsdale and heavily populated Central Falls. In fact, demand led to the building of the new Franklin Cow Stable, ca. 1930, making it possible to double the herd at Franklin Farm.

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Of importance to the future was the decline in the number of Rhode Island farms that was already evident. In One Hundred Years of Rhode Island (Statistics and Trends), Lucy W. Griffith documents the steady decline from 6216 farms in 1880 to less than one quarter of this number, or 1400, in 1960 (Griffiths, 1965:19). Of even greater importance was the “more than ninefold increase” in the average value per farm of farmland and buildings rising from \$4,200 in 1880 to almost \$37,500 in 1960 (Griffiths, 1965: 77). By 1990, there were only 39 dairy farms left in Rhode Island (Greenwood, n.d.: 4). Franklin Farm ceased its dairying operations in 1994, due to economic factors and the ill health of the last occupant of this family farm.

After World War II, the valuable farmland around Franklin Farm began to be sold for suburban development. The construction of Interstate 295, two miles to the south, and building of new access roads opened Cumberland to the explosive exodus from the congested urban centers of Central Falls, Pawtucket, Woonsocket and Providence. In 1940, the population of Cumberland was 10,625; it more than doubled between 1950 and 1980 (Fitch, 1990:15). The impact of automobile use, availability of low-interest mortgages, and demand for single-family homes created a tremendous demand for house lots. A series of aerial photographs at the Rhode Island Department of Statewide Planning shows the residential encirclement of Metcalf-Franklin Farm on three sides. In 1939, no houses existed on the east side of Abbott Run Valley Road, from the former Davis Metcalf acreage south to Rawson Road. By 1966, bulldozers were clearing this land for a suburban plan, bounded on the south by Sun Valley Drive. By 1988, Rolling Green Drive, abutting the south bound of Metcalf-Franklin Farm’s eastern fields was built up and Lonesome Pine Road connected Rawson Road westerly uphill to Diamond Hill Road (Route 114). New houses were built along appropriately named Barn Lane and Hayfield Road, abutting the south bound of Metcalf-Franklin Farm’s western field. To the west of Metcalf-Franklin Farm, former apple orchards and fields lining Hillside Road were filled with house lots.

It is significant that Cumberland officials, the Conservation Commission, and the Department of Planning recognized that Metcalf-Franklin Farm, with its great scenic views, was of important historical, agricultural, and environmental value to the town and worthy of preservation. The Barn Complex and farmland were purchased from the Franklin family in 1994, using funds from the Rhode Island Water Resources Board. Subsequently, the house and its surrounding 2.15 acres were purchased in 2005 from the estate of William R. “Rhodey” Franklin, using the Town Open Space Fund. To support uses of the farm “to include historic, educational, recreational, and agricultural and conservation activities” (Conservation and Management Plan, February 2006: 2), the town’s finance department has set up a Historic Franklin Farm Restoration Fund. The Metcalf-Franklin Farm is worthy of listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C and its listing will be an important step in carrying out the town’s restoration and conservation goals for this unique historic property.

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Brindle, David, Administrator of W. Rhodes Franklin's Estate, Nashua, N.H.

Geary, Frank L., Co-Chairman, Cumberland Conservation Commission

Johnson, Craig S., Archivist, Arnold Mills Archive, Cumberland, RI

Underwood, Charles, Antique Dealer, Cumberland, RI

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the Metcalf-Franklin Farm are shown on the attached Map from the Town of Cumberland, showing Plat 24, lot 409 (43.38 acres) and Plat 25, lot 22 (17.85 acres).

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Metcalf-Franklin Farm encompass all the land purchased by the Franklin family from 1857 to 1883. The original western parcel contains 43.38 acres and the eastern parcel contains 17.85 acres, plus the 2.15 acre house lot, for a total of 63.38 acres. Dry-laid stone walls line most of the boundaries of both parcels. The western lot contains all of the surviving buildings and structures associated with the farm. Both parcels are now owned by the Town of Cumberland.

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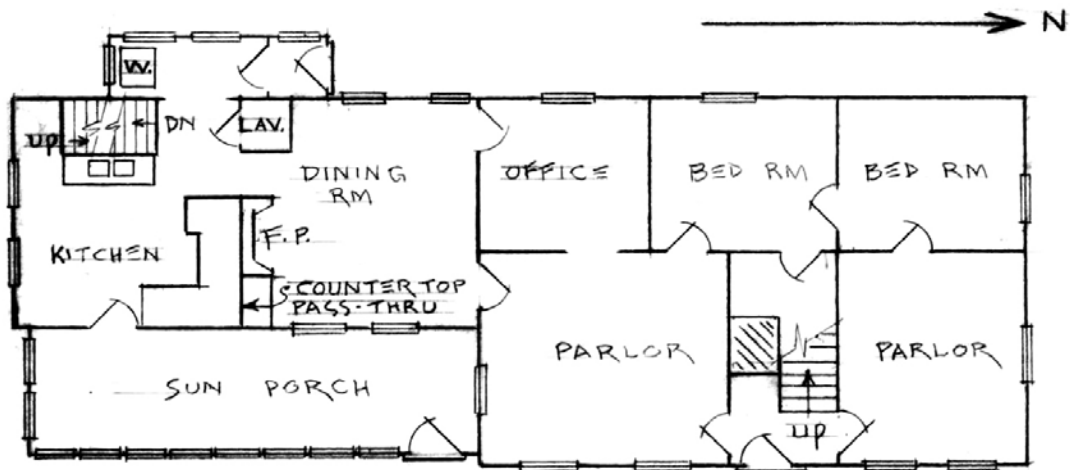
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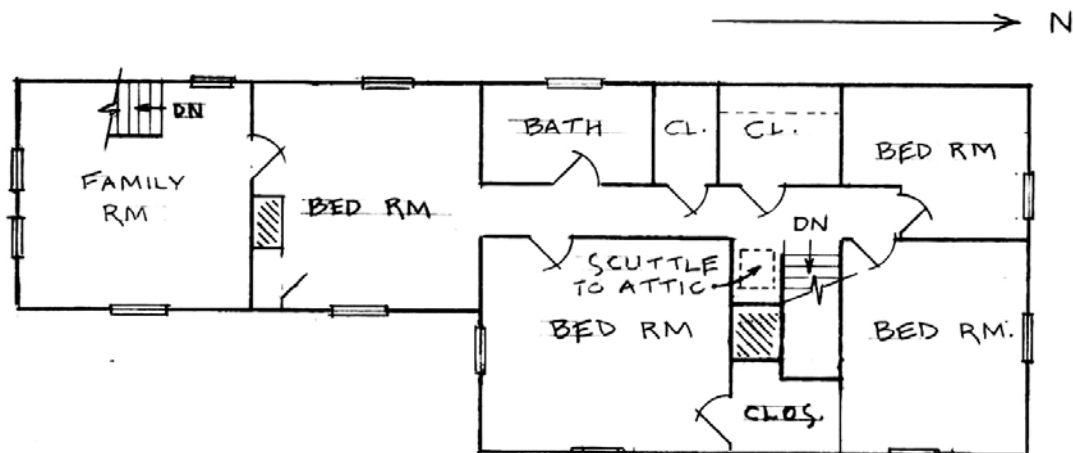
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FARMHOUSE FLOOR PLANS



FIRST FLOOR PLAN
NOT TO SCALE



SECOND FLOOR PLAN
NOT TO SCALE

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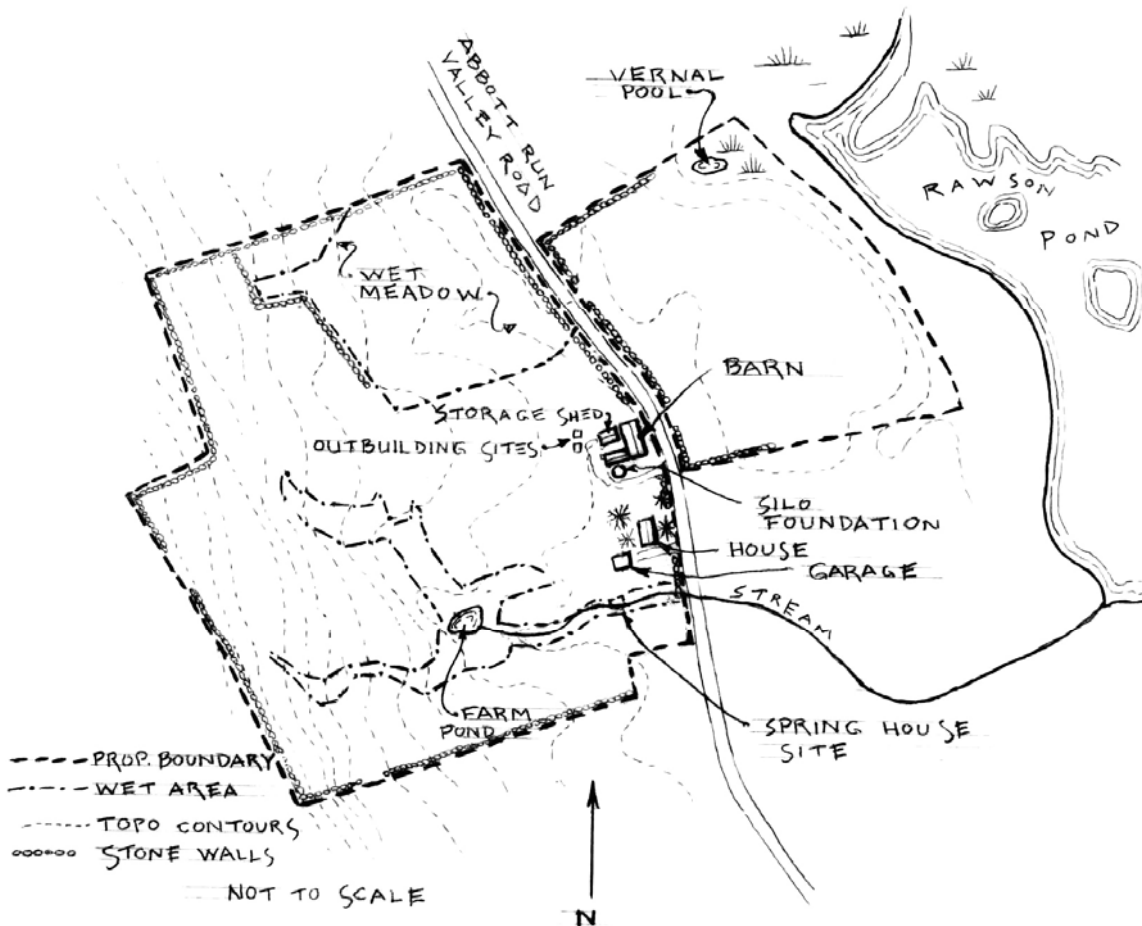
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SITE PLAN



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1854 PLAT OF LIBERTY METCALF'S FARM:

