

HARRISVILLE HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY
INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM

DISTRICT: SITE #:
IP-25

PROPERTY NAME (HISTORIC): Silver Lake Farm	OWNER (ORIGINAL): Paul Whitcomb Breed
PROPERTY NAME: Silver Lake Farm	OWNER: Paul Geddes
LOCATION: On a hilltop between Silver Lake Road and Seaver Road near their intersection with Old Nelson Road	ADDRESS: Seaver Road Harrisville, NH 03450
UTM REFERENCES: 18.73393.475878	ACREAGE: .87 RANGE/LOT: N/A
USGS QUADRANGLE: Monadnock	VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION/JUSTIFICATION: See site map.
DATE: c.1820	
SOURCE: Deeds, Charles Bemis Papers	

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: Silver Lake Farm's dwelling house is a 1-1/2 story white clapboarded building built c.1820 to which a number of accretions and alterations have been made. An original central chimney, supported by a large brick arch in the cellar, has been replaced with a smaller version. A one-story 19th century (but later than the main house) ell to the north features an additional chimney, two dormers, and an enclosed porch. In the 1930s, owner Edgar Seaver added a broad porch to the principal facade of the main house. The entire complex enjoys a spectacular hilltop setting with a view of Mount Monadnock. The residence, which is sited specifically to take advantage of (See continuation sheet.)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: Silver Lake Farm's considerable significance to Harrisville's architectural and cultural development is derived from its physical cohesiveness and intact survival while in continuing agricultural use from its establishment c.1820 until the late 1970s. Even today, it remains virtually unaltered since the 1930s, one of Harrisville's best visual catalogs of incremental change to a farming complex from the turn of the 19th to the early 20th centuries (cf. also IP-3, the smaller scale Eaton/Richardson Homestead and IP-19, the Smith Farm).

Although the land is not currently being worked, the farmhouse is occupied year round in much the same manner as it has historically been, including the absence of central heat. Auxiliary structures, some of which replaced burned predecessors, continue to display the locally traditional "house with barnyard" pattern of building arrangement (cf. #HRD-1A, the Abijah Twitchell Homestead, and IP-10, the Clymer Homestead). (See continuation sheet.)

REFERENCES:

- Bemis, Charles A. "Collected Papers". Nelson (NH): Olivia Rodham Library, unpub.
- Farwell, James. Telephone interview, 1/5/84.
- Geddes, Paul. Personal interviews, Oct. 1983-Jan. 1984.
- Seaver, W. W. "Ledgers," 1855-1890.
- Struthers, P. H. History of Nelson

MAP: SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

DESCRIPTION OF VIEW:

Side elevation (east facade)
Facing West

PHOTOGRAPHER: L. Shonk

NEGATIVE FILE #: 12-14.

RECORDED BY: M.Meath/H.Taves/M.Cini

SPONSORING ORGANIZATION:
Historic Harrisville, Inc.

DATE: February 1984



United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
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Continuation sheet

Silver Lake Farm

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION (continued):

the spectacular view, is approached from Seaver Road below by a driveway which curves past the house's ell and ends in the barnyard to the north. This rectangular yard is defined by a series of auxiliary agricultural structures of varying vintage. These include: a small, gable-roofed poultry shed west of the ell; an extremely large gambrel-roofed, white clapboarded barn which dates from the 1920s; a small, gable-roofed early 20th c. barn; and a long, narrow modern tractor shed.

Although Silver Lake Farm is not in agricultural use at present, its current condition reveals the type of wear associated with a century and a half of intense farming activity.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued):

The property's spectacular mountainview setting is typical of the siting chosen by many early local farmers (cf. IP-17, the Adams Farm, and IP-23, Wellscroft).

This complex's contribution to Harrisville history is greatly enhanced by the large amount of documentary material (ledgers, diaries and even a Civil War era wedding gown and contemporary band uniform) related to its activities which survives.

This farm derives historical significance from its occupation by and association with several important founding families of the formerly Packersfield-Nelson section of Harrisville: the Breeds, the Farwells, and the Seavers. Established by Paul Whitcomb Breed, for whose family nearby Breed Pond (Silver Lake) was named, it was later occupied by the Farwells. Farwells took an active part in town government and two members of this family distinguished themselves at the Battle of Bennington. William Seaver, Jr. settled here shortly after his marriage in 1823. The farm would remain in his family until the death of his descendent Edgar Seaver less than a decade ago. The Seavers were among the most prosperous local farmers, selling meat, poultry, eggs, and butter to hotels in Keene, stores in Keene and Harrisville, and to private customers in the summer at Silver Lake and in the winter in Keene and Marlborough. They also did much buying and selling of land. In addition, they operated an active sawmill near Seaver Road at the outlet of Silver Lake over a long period of time.

Silver Lake Farm demonstrates the locally typical evolution from subsistence to profitable production farming to interaction with the summer visitor, in this case through commercial enterprise rather than take-over settlement. The farm, however, has not continued to enjoy great prosperity into the later years of the 20th c. and like other underutilized local resources (cf. IP-16, Fasnacloch) stands endangered. It qualifies for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C.

REFERENCES (continued):

Tolman, Rodger. Telephone interview, 1/16/84.
Whitney, Wallace. Personal interview, January 12, 1984
Upton, Richard. Telephone interview, January 6, 1984
Deeds and Tax Records.

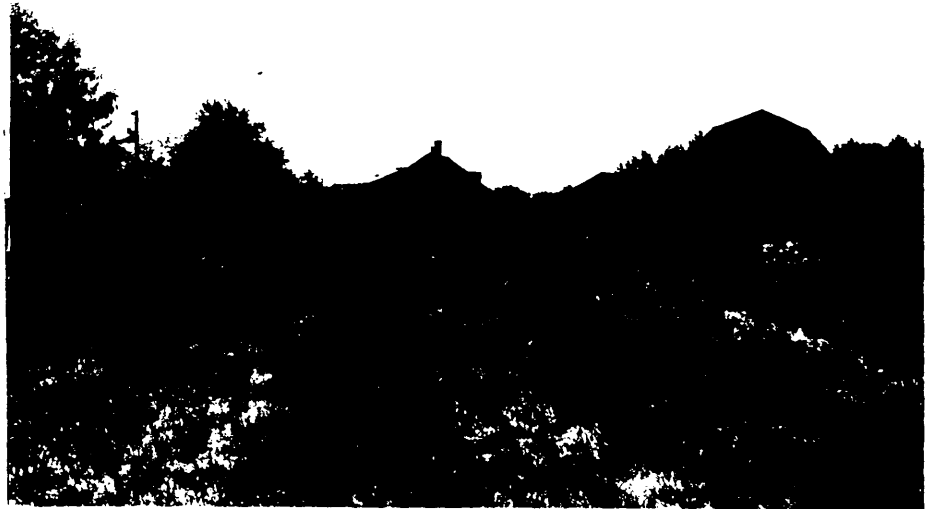
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Continuation sheet Silver Lake Farm Item number IP-25 Page

DESCRIPTION OF VIEW: Rear (west facade)
PHOTOGRAPHER: L. Shonk
NEGATIVE FILE #: 12-17



DESCRIPTION OF VIEW:
PHOTOGRAPHER:
NEGATIVE FILE #:

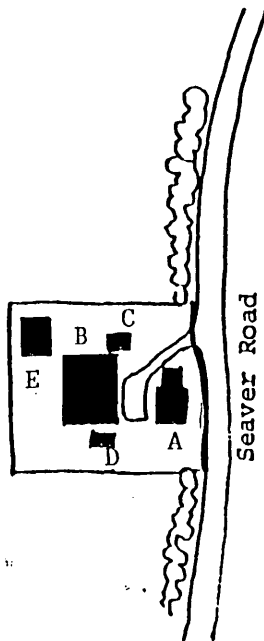
INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM

IP-25

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LOCATION: On a hilltop between Silver Lake Road and Seaver Road near their intersection with Old Nelson Road.	ADDRESS: Seaver Road Harrisville, NH 03450
	ACREAGE: .87 RANGE/LOT:

- A - House
- B - Barn, 1920
- C - Garage, 1920s
- D - Poultry Shed, early 20th c.
- E - Gable-roofed Barn, early 20th c.

- - Contributing
- - Non-contributing



SCALE 1"=200'

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION / JUSTIFICATION:

Bounded on the north by an arbitrary line 50 feet from the northern edge of the barn and 200 feet from the west edge of Seaver Road. Bounded on the east by Seaver Road, on the south by the road on an arbitrary line 50 feet south of the house and 200 feet from the road. Bounded on the west by an arbitrary line connecting the southern and northern boundaries.

Includes the immediate visual surroundings incorporating the features contributing to the property's architectural and historical significance.

Designated as IP-25 on Town of Harrisville Map.

The boundaries of the property are indicated by a heavy black line on the sketch map above.

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Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Harrisville MRA
State Cheshire County, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

21. Clymer House ✓

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Patrick Andrus 1/14/88

Attest

Betty L. Sarge 1/14/88

22. Farwell, Corbin C., Homestead ✓

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Patrick Andrus 1/14/88

Attest

Betty L. Sarge 1/14/88

23. Fasnacloich ✓

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Patrick Andrus 1/14/88

Attest

Betty L. Sarge 1/14/88

24. Kendall Cottage ✓

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Patrick Andrus 1/14/88

Attest

Betty L. Sarge 1/14/88

25. Needham House ✓

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Patrick Andrus 1/14/88

Attest

Betty L. Sarge 1/14/88

26. Point Comfort ✓

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Patrick Andrus 1/14/88

Attest

Betty L. Sarge 1/14/88

27. Raubold House ✓

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Patrick Andrus 1/14/88

Attest

Betty L. Sarge 1/14/88

28. Silver Lake Farm ✓

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Patrick Andrus 1/14/88

Attest

Betty L. Sarge 1/14/88

29. Smith--Mason Farm ✓

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Patrick Andrus 1/14/88

Attest

Betty L. Sarge 1/14/88

30. Willard Homestead ✓

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Patrick Andrus 1/14/88

Attest

Betty L. Sarge 1/14/88