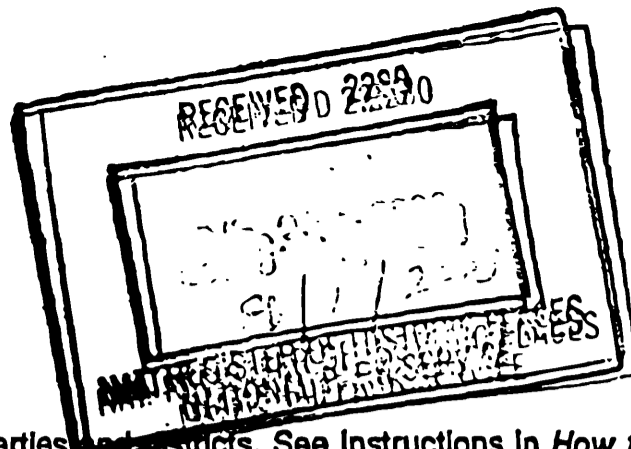


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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 an 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 Robie's Country Store

other names/site number "N/A"

2. Location

street & number 9 Riverside Street  not for publication N/A

city or town Hooksett  vicinity N/A

state New Hampshire code NH county Merrimack code 013 zip code 03106

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.)

Nancy C. Dutton 7/28/00  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
NEW HAMPSHIRE  
State of 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:
- entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
  - determined eligible for the National Register  
 See continuation sheet.
  - determined not eligible for the National Register.
  - removed from the National Register.
  - other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Edson H. Beall 8/31/00  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Robie's Country Store  
Name of Property

Merrimack New Hampshire  
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	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(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)

COMMERCE/department store

GOVERNMENT/post office

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/department store

CULTURE/museum

"WORK IN PROGRESS"

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE\_VICTORIAN

ITALIANATE

"other" "BOOMTOWN" COMMERCIAL

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls weatherboard

wood

roof asphalt

other concrete

**Narrative Description**

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

(See Continuation Sheet: Section 7, Pages 1 - 5)

**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 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

ARCHITECTURE

COMMUNITY PLANNING

**Period of Significance**

1907 - 1949 (A)

1907 (C)

**Significant Dates**

"N/A"

1907

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

"N/A"

**Cultural Affiliation**

"N/A"

**Architect/Builder**

"N/A"

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository:

Files of Robie's Country Store Historic Preservation Corp.

Robie's Country Store  
Name of Property

Merrimack New Hampshire  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property Less than one acre (9435 square feet)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 | 1 | 9 | | 2 | 9 | 9 | 2 | 8 | 5 | | 4 | 7 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 0 |  
Zone Easting Northing  
2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |  
Zone Easting Northing  
4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.) See Continuation Sheets 10 - 1, 10 - 2

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.) See Continuation Sheet 10 - 1

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Janet McAndrew, volunteer; and Christopher W. Cross, consultant volunteer

organization Robie's Country Store Historic Preservation Corporation date May 19, 2000  
Robert W. Schroeder, President

street & number 100 Granite Street telephone 603 485-3881

city or town Hooksett state NH zip code 03106-1438

**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. See Continuation Sheet 11-1

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

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property. See Continuation Sheet 11-2

**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 Lloyd B. & Dorothea B. Robie

street & number 7 Main Street telephone 485-3075

city or town Hooksett state NH zip code 03106

**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. 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 Continuation Sheet

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Robie's Country Store  
Hooksett, NH

### Description

Robie's Country Store is located upon a narrow terrace along the west bank of the Merrimack River, in the north village section of Hooksett, New Hampshire and was erected in 1907, following loss of the previous store on the site, which burned October 19, 1906. The property is situated on Riverside Street at the intersection with the railroad tracks of the Guilford Transportation Company (originally Concord & Montreal Railroad), and lies across the street (south) from the Village Fire Station, and below the Hooksett Municipal Building and Hooksett Historical Society. To the east, across the railroad tracks and toward the River, lies the Old Village Fire Station and, to the northeast, the recently constructed American Legion Hall (Merrill Follansbee Post), which occupies the site of the former Hooksett Depot.

Three bridges span the Merrimack River immediately south and west of Robie's Country Store. These include the 1909 three-span, Pratt steel truss Old Main Street highway bridge (now closed); the 1931 Boston & Maine Railroad's Pratt steel truss triple span railroad bridge; and the 1975 NH Route 3-A curvilinear, steel girder and concrete highway bridge. The terrain south of the Country Store slopes steeply down to the river's edge, where a dock for canal boat traffic plying the Merrimack River (c. 1807 - 1844) once stood.

Robie's Country Store is an example of Late Victorian Style architecture, with Italianate features adopted for commercial use ("Boomtown" facade) in a rural setting, and typifies this rapidly disappearing genre of commercial architecture. The Country Store is a freestanding, clapboarded, gable-roofed, wooden framed structure, rectangular in plan and one and one-half stories in height. A one-story, gable-roofed storage shed, extends the length of the building at the south end. The building is characterized by a distinctive "Boomtown" style storefront, which is expressed on the north elevation, the principal facade, and faces the aforementioned municipal buildings noted above. The exterior clapboards and decorative trim are painted red and white respectively (original color scheme was yellow), while the asphalt shingle roof is light green in color. The site around the building footprint includes paved parking areas on the north and west sides; the narrow lawn area on the east is closely overshadowed by the railroad tracks and bridge portal. The steep river embankment on the south is covered with brush.

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The facade (north elevation), 24'4" in width, is expressed with the most formal architectural composition, and includes the falsefront or "Boomtown" facade which extends above the apex of the simple gable roof behind. Two stories in height and with rectangular form, the three-bay storefront is enframed by pilasters and organized around a recessed front porch with entry vestibule, flanked by two large, wooden-framed, divided plate glass display windows with three-light transoms. Kick panels below the glass are filled with vertical matched boards and moldings. The open board floor of the porch consists of treated boards and is a recent replacement of the wearing surface. The original wooden, center-appointed 42" wide, front entry door with original brass hardware, has three panels and one large light, framed within bolection moldings and surmounted with a single-light transom light. A pair of Dietz oil lamps with purple-tinted globes are mounted on the pilasters and flank the porch and vestibule, although disconnected for illumination purposes.

The entry vestibule, contained beneath the porch, is of more recent (mid-20th Century) origin and consists of wooden framing, vertical matched boarding in the openings and a two-paneled, wooden entry door with single light, on the east side.

The second story of the facade consists of two bays and is enframed with paneled corner pilasters which rise full height to support an Italianate-Style projecting wooden cornice on sawn brackets, instead of capitals, at the top of the elevation. The heavy cornice rests upon additional sawn brackets, further articulated with a full course of dentils below. Beneath the cornice are five reticulated panels containing alternating horizontal and diagonal courses of clapboarding. The spandrels of the second story are clapboarded and punctuated with two rectangular windows containing one-light over one, double-hung sash. Window openings have projecting ornamental cornices as well.

Dividing the first and second stories is a large sign entablature bearing a cornice with a crown molding and dentils below, an architrave, and a smaller crown molding at the base. Directly above this feature is the historic sign which identifies the business. Gold lettering on a long, black rectangular field denotes "Geo. A. Robie & Son." This feature was saved from the previous store on the same site, which was built in 1857.

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The east elevation of the main block (along the railroad tracks) is largely unadorned; there are two window bays on the south half of the first story, now boarded up with plywood for security purposes (original sash remain in place). The northerly window served the portion of the store which contained the Hooksett's US Post Office between 1887 - 1965; when railroads carried US Mail. The close proximity of the building to the railroad tracks facilitated delivery and pickup of the mail from moving trains, utilizing heavy canvas and leather bags. Above, the asphalt surface of the roof is in poor condition on this elevation. The east elevation of the storage shed at the south end is also clapboarded but with blind fenestration. This structure rests upon a full, one-story foundation of random, cut granite ashlar, laid up dry, upon which rest three brick piers. The interstices are filled with T-111 plywood, painted white, affording wind and water protection beneath the shed:

The south elevation is of utilitarian design as well; the reverse side of the falsefront facade exposed above the gable roofline is covered with clapboards, typically, while only the upper story of the main block is exposed above the storage shed's lower, gabled roof. In this composition, a single window bay with one-light over one sash punctuates the center of the gable; this triangular form is enframed with deeply projecting raking eaves with partial cornice returns which rest upon plain corner pilasters with caps. Below this, the clapboarded storage shed repeats the same fenestration, with a one-light over one window in the center of the wall plane, typical eave and fascia, all supported on three, evenly-spaced brick piers at the foundation level.

The west elevation, prominent from NH Route 3-A, extends along Riverside Street for a distance of 82'7" (main block 64'7;" shed 24'). There is a change in roof planes visible from this elevation at the transition between the gable roof of the main block and the lower, gable roof of the one-story storage shed. A rectangular brick stove chimney with a three-course corbelled cap rises from the west plane in the central position, off the ridge. The eave of the main roof features a crown molding and a deeply projecting overhang.

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The west elevation of the main block is dominated by a long, projecting one-story bay covered with a hipped roof which extends about one-half of the length of the structure. The purpose of this feature is to provide additional room for the store kitchen. One by two bays in fenestration, the window openings are filled with two-light over two double-hung sash on the north and west elevations respectively (no opening on south elevation). Plain corner pilasters, with caps, enframe the wall plane of the bay; a fascia and crown molding adorn the deeply projecting eave above, on all three sides. Weather exposure of clapboarding on this, and all other elevations, is four inches.

The brick foundation of the main block is visible only along the west (and east) elevation(s); it consists of common red brick laid in plain lime mortar. Two former windows, or loading bays, have been bricked in along the west side.

South of the projecting bay is a loading dock consisting of a 5' by 5' concrete platform covered with a wooden, gabled pent roof, supported on simple 4" x 4" wooden brackets. A sliding door comprised of vertical matched boarding is recessed within the rough opening and contains a single horizontal window. The bay is finished with plain casings and a projecting head with cornice. A basement loading door with (four) granite stairs stands adjacent; the basement level door is also of vertical matched boarding, now covered with T-111 plywood to protect the original from the elements. This entry leads to the backroom of the Store, the second floor and basement.

The west elevation of the storage shed is unremarkable; the lower gabled roof covers a wall plane articulated with a single bay and loading dock, but lacking a platform. The vertical matched board sliding door is enframed within plain, flat wooden casings; the sill is deteriorated and sagging. There are corner pilasters without caps; the eave is comprised of a simple fascia board. The foundation, typically, consists of three exposed brick piers, but infilled with concrete block on this side. A large, 4' by 4' commercial sign dominates the western roof plane at the southwest corner and reads, "Robie's Country Store" over "Coca Cola." The vertical plane of the sign is supported on steel brackets guyed to the roof.



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Interiorly, Robie's Country Store is organized from north to south. The Country Store and kitchen are located at the north end, immediately behind the storefront and formal entrance. This area appears original from the 1907 period and contains decorative tin ceilings, painted; flush boarded walls; wooden counter with cash register; exposed wooden floor; and, in the southwest corner, the former Hooksett Post Office, with counter and mail boxes intact. Near the center of the room is a cast iron, wood-fired box stove (No. 36) of Gothic design manufactured by the Ford Foundry in Concord, NH, and still in service. There are large glass and wood display cases on the floor as well as a number of old telephones and historic utensils on the walls. The kitchen area has electrified oil lamps. In this area are also many photographs of local interest and of events associated with the store, including memorabilia pertaining to all of the US Presidential candidates who have visited the store since 1952 "stumping" in the NH Primary.

The full basement and second story are unfinished and used for storage and utilities only. The simple truss roof framing is exposed and consists, typically, of a threaded steel rod suspended from the ridge and fastened to the center of the horizontal ties below, which also serve as ceiling joists for the first floor, and allow a clearspan within the Country Store retail area.

The "backroom" is finished in wood sheathing in its entirety and contains a collection of calendars, broadsides and advertisements, some dating to 1896, and additional historical memorabilia associated with Hooksett, the Merrimack River and notable personalities. The storage shed, also of frame construction and located at the extreme south end, is unfinished. Part of this structure was used for the storage of ice, prior to the introduction of mechanical refrigeration in the late 1930s.

Robie's Country Store retains integrity of its original design, construction, setting, materials and interior appointments, and continues to convey the multi-purpose use of the facility, while evoking an accurate representation of late 19th - early 20th century rural village commercial architecture.

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### **SIGNIFICANCE**

#### **Summary Statement of Significance**

Robie's Country Store is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for significance in Commerce, as the longest continually operated commercial property in Hooksett, New Hampshire. As such it retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, for the period 1907 - 1950, the date of construction to the 50-year cut-off. Robie's is also eligible under Criterion C for significance in Architecture as a well-preserved example of turn of the (20th) century, vernacular Late Victorian Style commercial architecture with Italianate influence, and the only example of the "Boomtown" facade in Hooksett. It possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association for the years 1907 - 1950. The property also qualifies under Community Planning and Development as the center for civic and social discourse within the town, with full integrity for the period 1907 - 1950.

#### **Criterion A - Commerce**

Robie's Country Store has been in continual operation as a commercial, general merchandise enterprise, throughout the period of significance (1907 - 1950), and moreover, has operated as a general store between 1887 and the present under the uninterrupted management of a single family (doing business under the name George A. Robie & Son). The property also served as the U.S. Post Office for the Town of Hooksett between 1887 - 1965, with each of the Robie proprietors serving successive terms as Postmaster, prior to construction of the new Post Office in the latter year. As a business, George A. Robie & Son was the oldest commercial proprietorship in continuous operation (1887 - 1997) in Hooksett.

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### Criterion C - Architecture

Robie's Country Store is a virtually unaltered example of turn of the (20th) century, Late Victorian Style commercial architecture, which combines vernacular Italianate design influence with the popular "Boomtown" facade of the period. It is well preserved and the only example of its kind in Hooksett. The distinctive architectural signature is expressed with a rectangular facade adorned with a deeply projecting cornice supported upon sawn brackets with a dentil course; and massive panelled pilasters enframing the clapboarded wall plane and decorative, reticulated panels above. The windows, with projecting heads, rise above a classical sign entablature, which caps the composition of the first story storefront, also enframed with heavy pilasters. The actual storefront, recessed within a full open entry porch, is comprised of large, divided plate glass windows with transom lights and kick panels below, which flank the original, broad entry door. The interior of the store also retains integrity, with its original, three-room, front to rear plan intact, and original finishes such as decorative tin ceiling, flush board walls, wooden floor, sales counter and cash register - and the original Post Office and mailboxes. Many original features also remain, including the cast iron woodstove, pickle barrel, chairs and checker board; oil lamps and the first electric lighting fixtures and original wiring; the original telephone; and a significant collection of utensils, tools and memorabilia pertaining to the usage of Robie's Country Store and the history of Hooksett. Finally, the property site remains largely unchanged from the period of significance, including the surrounding street pattern and Old Main Street bridge, approaches and entrances, and the presence of the railroad and bridge, and the dominant feature, the Merrimack River.

### Criterion C - Community Planning and Development

Robie's Country Store served as the center for civic and social discourse for the Town of Hooksett, before, during, and after the period of significance (1907 - 1950) by virtue of its central location adjacent to the seat of local government in Hooksett Village; its stock of essential general merchandise and foodstuffs; and dual configuration as the U.S. Post Office between 1887 - 1965. A general store was first established on the site of Robie's store in 1822 - the year in which Hooksett was incorporated as a town - and the property has been used for this purpose since that time. For nearly two centuries Robie's has been located at the convergence of evolving transportation and communication systems, and provided the physical intersection for a thriving social and economic community - Hooksett Village - which it contributed in creating. These factors all conspired to establish, upon the premises of Robie's Country Store, a forum for exchange of political thought and policy; the point of delivery, and subsequent discussion, for national and international news; commercial trade and barter, and local commodity pricing; and a setting in which to incubate informal communications and personal relationships which accompany all who live in a close-knit rural community.

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## Historical Background

Prior to contact with European settlers in the 17th century, Native Americans - the Nashuans, Souhegans, Naticooks, Namoskeags, Penacooks and the Winnipisaukees - known collectively as the Penacook Confederacy, a part of the Abenaki, inhabited the Merrimack River Valley, including the region where the present Town of Hooksett is now situated. The environs of Hooksett Village were identified on numerous early surveys between 1638 and 1746, principally because of two prominent topographical features - the Isle au Hooksett and the Falls of the same name just downstream; and the Pinnacle, a rocky promontory immediately west of the Village which rises sharply some 460' above the River's elevation. Hooksett Falls was a traditional fishing location for the Penacook Confederacy, the River being abundant with salmon, alewife and shad. The Pinnacle was known to have been used as an observation post for communication and defense of the Valley.

The Town of Hooksett was originally part of the Town of Chester, which had been granted its Charter by Sam Shute, Provincial Governor of the Province of New Hampshire, on May 8, 1722. Initial settlement occurred in the White Hall section, so-called, and at Martin's Corner, both in South Hooksett, the latter area soon extended westward to Martin's Ferry (1782) on the Merrimack River. Samuel Gault, however, is regarded as being the first recorded settler in Hooksett (1721-22), then north Chester.

The Merrimack River served as the first highway north for the vanguard of the new pioneers - most from existing settlements in Massachusetts. In 1726, road clearing began for the First Path to Penacook (modern-day Concord, NH) from Haverhill, MA. The right of way for this first overland route passed just east of Hooksett Village, intersecting with present NH Route 3, the Daniel Webster Highway. Nearby, on Pleasant Street, where the Garo property stands today, Samuel Gault erected the first house in the vicinity in 1722, a fortified structure which became known as The Gault Garrison.

The development of Hooksett Village in the late 18th century gained momentum with the close of the French and Indian War (1763), and the end of colonial rule at the conclusion of the American Revolution (1784), and subjection and dispersion of the Native American populace. The eagerness of settlers, entrepreneurs and returning soldiers to exploit and settle New Hampshire's mineral and timber-rich interior, initially stimulated the extension of roads, and later, state-chartered turnpikes; a canal system along the Merrimack River; and finally in the 1840s, the railroad network. The steep terrain of the interior offered abundant rivers and streams with vast potential for driving

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industrial enterprise at numerous falls. Along with the fertile agricultural lands of the river valleys and the growing network of roads, growth of villages and new towns proceeded apace.

Beginning in 1792, several petitions for an independent town charter were filed by residents of the northwestern section of Chester, who had settled along the Merrimack, in the area of the Isle au Hooksett and the Falls, principally because of the hardship of traveling 17 miles south to worship, or attend Town Meeting, or other functions in Chester. After four petitions, the Town of Hooksett was incorporated July 2, 1822, its land area having been derived by partition from the adjoining Towns of Chester, Dunbarton and Goffstown. In the same year, it is recorded that the Gault Store, the predecessor of Robie's Country Store on the same site, was in operation. The location of the seat of the new town's local government at Hooksett Village was assured when the Town Hall was erected in 1828.

The forces of westward expansion, transportation improvements, manufacturing, waterpower and steam technology, which would characterize the social and economic phenomenon which would later become known as the American Industrial Revolution, began to converge rapidly at Hooksett Village after the 1780s. In 1782, a ferry service was chartered below the Isle au Hooksett Falls, near the future site of the Gault Store, and operated until c. 1805 when the first bridge was erected across the Merrimack River. This bridge, a toll structure, was a vital link in the new Londonderry Turnpike (1804 - 1806), which extended travel from Methuen, MA directly to Concord, NH. Martin's Ferry had been declared to be an unsuitable location for a river crossing, while conditions at Hooksett Village offered a superior site and promise of a more economical span - a fortuitous circumstance for the future growth and prosperity of the Village.

In 1794, stagecoach service was initiated from Concord to Boston, passing through Haverhill, MA. The journey required two days travel, one way, with an overnight stop at Prescott's Tavern in Hooksett Village. In 1804, construction of the Chester Turnpike from Concord was begun when the two communities were competing for designation as New Hampshire's permanent state capitol. This corridor passed to the east of Hooksett Village, through the section known as Rowe's Corner and carried brisk commercial trade until c. 1839. Whitehall Road (1805) and Mammoth Road (1831), connecting Hooksett to Lowell, MA soon followed. Because of construction design limitations, lack of adequate drainage and suitable materials, none of these roads facilitated rapid or long-distance movement of heavy freight traffic. Canals were regarded as more efficient for this purpose, following successful European examples already constructed in England and France.

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Commencing in the 1790s, wealthy capitalists from the Boston area began to implement plans for developing the Merrimack River as part of a region-wide canal system, which would link interior settlements - including Concord, NH - with Boston. At Chelmsford, MA in 1793, the proprietors began to build the Middlesex Canal, a 27.5 mile passage which would connect Lowell, MA on the Merrimack River, with Boston. When this segment opened in 1803, the proprietors next turned their efforts to completing a navigable route between Concord and Boston - 80 miles overall. Numerous obstacles in the River had to be overcome with a system of locks and canals, notably the Amoskeag Falls at Manchester with its 50' head, the Isle au Hooksett Falls (16' head) and Garvin's Falls at Bow. Judge Samuel Blodgett of Derryfield (Manchester) labored for 14 years building the canal around the Amoskeag Falls which became his namesake, completing the task on May 1, 1807 shortly before his death in October of the same year. The Hooksett Canal and the Bow Canal were completed over the next eight years; through service by canal boat between Concord and Boston was finally inaugurated in 1815.

The canal boats, some 20 in number plied the Merrimack's waters during the peak of activity (1815 - 1842), and were operated by the Merrimack Boating Company and, after 1814, the Concord Boating Company. The full utilization of the canal was short-lived, although it significantly stimulated the economy of New Hampshire's wilderness interior, and accelerated the accumulation of wealth for capital investors and owners. Timber and lumber, bricks and granite, agricultural products and furs were shipped downstream to the seaport and other burgeoning cities along the route, in exchange for manufactured goods, tools, clothing and liquor on the return voyage.

The Gault Store, along with Hooksett Village overall, benefited from the increase in economic activity, as taverns and inns were built, and shops and stores were erected at the intersection of the Hooksett Canal and the Londonderry Turnpike. The Village became a popular stop on the canal system for overnight lodging and victuals, and, in 1822 became the center of communications with the establishment of the first Post Office in the store opposite Gaults (where it remained until 1887). The predecessors of Robie's Country Store, who included Seth H. Jones, and later, Joseph T. Goss, maintained a wharf along the riverbank behind the store where merchandise and replacement stock were delivered by the canal boat fleet. The arrival of the railroad in 1842 quickly ended the era of canal boating and soon led to the U.S. Mail being carried by rail. The last through passage on the Merrimack River - Middlesex Canal between Concord and Boston occurred in 1844.

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While river commerce and overland trade drove the development of Hooksett Village into the 1840s, industrial development of the Isle au Hooksett Falls along the eastern bank of the Merrimack River did not languish. The first sawmill was built by Thomas Cochrane below the Falls in 1770, which was soon followed by a grist mill. In 1823 the Hooksett Manufacturing Company was established for the manufacture of cotton cloth in what became a sprawling, linear complex of brick and wood frame buildings which extended several hundred feet along Merrimack Street. One of the first cotton mills in New Hampshire, it was acquired by the Amoskeag Manufacturing Company in 1835, and was managed as part of that company's operations until sold in 1865. Between 1865 - 1929, the property was operated as the Dundee Mills, producing crash toweling and growing to become one of the largest employers in Hooksett, providing 300 jobs. The mill closed under the name Emerson Manufacturing Company after severe damage from flooding in 1936 and 1938. While the mill has been removed, the extensive worker housing which supported employees of the mill survives and extends to the south end of the Old Main Street Bridge, which has connected this residential area to Hooksett Village since construction of the first bridge on the site in 1805.

Hooksett possessed other significant industries which contributed materially to the economy of the area and stimulated canal and railroad traffic between 1815 and the mid-1930s. Five brick yards emerged in the Town, the first commencing in 1810 and capturing advantage of the fine grade of clay found along the bottom lands of the eastern side of the Merrimack River. The most important of these was owned by Nathaniel Head, later Governor of New Hampshire (1879-80), whose business began in 1850 and prospered until c. 1936. Each yard, at peak production, produced from five to seven million bricks annually. The industry employed over 700 men, and bricks from these yards were used to construct many of the mills and commercial buildings in Manchester, including City Hall (1846).

The Head interests also operated a large sawmilling operation, where over 1,000,000 board feet of lumber were produced annually, with a work crew of about 75.

Granite was quarried in substantial amounts in Hooksett and exported for use as structural material, architectural components and monuments. Moses D. Stokes opened the first quarry in 1854. Five quarries were once in operation, the Shirley Quarry on the west side of the Merrimack River being the most extensive. Here, a wharf was maintained to ship the rough stone by barge to Manchester and points further south.

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Since 1889, commercial electric power has been produced at Isle au Hooksett Falls. The present, automated hydroelectric station along Merrimack Street is maintained by Public Service Company of New Hampshire.

In 1842 the steam railroad, the transportation innovation which had already begun to revolutionize industry and shape the nation's westward expansion, reached Hooksett Village. By 1868 three railroads passed through Hooksett - two of them converging at Hooksett Village. With the arrival of the Concord Railroad from Nashua in 1842, the Hooksett Village Depot was built - across the tracks from the predecessor to Robie's Country Store. This line later became the Boston, Concord and Montreal Railroad, and eventually emerged as the Boston & Maine Railroad (now Guilford Transportation Company). The Concord and Portsmouth Railroad, chartered in 1845 and operational by 1852, briefly passed east of the Village but terminated operations between Candia and Pembroke in 1860, due to high operational costs and lack of business. The Suncook Valley Railroad, chartered in 1848 and 1863, was completed in 1869 and extended rail service from Hooksett Village to Pittsfield, and later to Barnstead. Branching northeasterly off the Concord Railroad just above Hooksett Village Depot, this line was required to cross the Merrimack River - and did so with three distinctive covered wooden bridges which spanned the River (and the dam) on a skewed path, utilizing the Isle au Hooksett as a natural masonry pier. This railroad carried freight and passengers to communities along the valley of the Suncook River until discontinued in December, 1952.

Until 1887, two U.S. Post Offices were operated in the Town of Hooksett - the aforementioned one at the Village, and the station at Martin's Ferry which was added when a depot was built there after 1842.

On September 20, 1857 the wooden covered bridge (also three spans) carrying the Concord Railroad across the Merrimack River burned, consuming both the 1805 Londonderry Turnpike Bridge and the general store of Joseph T. Goss, adjacent (predecessor to Robie's Country Store). Both bridges were rebuilt, as was the store, but a freshet carried away the new highway bridge on March 20, 1859. Reconstructed once more, the third Main Street Bridge served until its removal and replacement in 1909 with a Pratt, three-span steel through truss designed by John W. Storrs. The Concord Railroad bridge was rebuilt with another covered wooden span, which was subsequently replaced in 1896, also with a Pratt, three-span steel structure. Hooksett's importance as a railroad depot and telegraph station, situated at the junction of two railroads, resulted in 20 trains a day passing through the Village until



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the decline of the 1930s. Damaged in the flood of 1936, the Hooksett Village Depot was shortly removed; passenger service on the line was discontinued in 1962.

On the opposite side of the Merrimack River, local passenger traffic between Concord, Pembroke, Hooksett Village and Manchester was accommodated by the Manchester-Concord Electric Railway, which traversed Merrimack Street and the old Londonderry Turnpike with trolley cars from 1902 - 1932 as part of the larger, interurban system.

In March, 1887 Frank C. Towle, having acquired the rebuilt general store of Joseph T. Goss, sold the property to George A. Robie. Born in Hooksett June 21, 1840, the son of Henry E. Robie, one of the early settlers of Chester, George A. Robie took up the practice of blacksmithing in the Village and is recorded as operating the Village blacksmith shop in 1877, with his brother. Upon acquiring the store, Robie was appointed to Postmaster and the Martin's Ferry Post Office was closed, consolidating operations at Hooksett Village, in his store. Later, Robie conferred the name "George A. Robie & Son" to the business, when son Arthur G. joined the business. George A. Robie served as Town Clerk for nine years; as Selectman; two terms in the NH Legislature; as School Board member; and was an organizer of the International Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) Friendship Lodge of Hooksett. He was appointed as Postmaster and served under the administrations of Arthur, Harrison and McKinley.

On October 17, 1906 the store of George A. Robie & Son burned along with the contents, ignited by flames from the Bonney Tavern opposite, on the west side of Riverside Street. The store was rebuilt in its current configuration and opened for business in the Spring of 1907.

In 1909, the Riverside Inn, a modern, picturesque hotel of Tudor Revival Style was erected on the site of the Bonney Tavern by Manchester investors. A wharf was maintained on the River by the Inn to serve steam launches which carried guests by boat from Manchester to Hooksett seasonally. Carriage roads, a dance pavilion, picnic areas and a boating facility around Pinnacle Pond were constructed upon the Pinnacle as a visitor and recreational attraction, joining the 62' observation tower previously constructed in 1892. The Riverside Inn burned in April, 1918 and was not rebuilt. The Pinnacle's timber-framed observation tower was taken down in 1923. In spite of these setbacks, the Village continued to develop as a community center. In 1910 the Arah W. Prescott Memorial Library was dedicated adjacent to the Town Hall - the Town's first building for such a purpose. In 1924 the Village Fire Department No. 1 was organized and a firehouse constructed just east of Robie's store (now the Village Water Precinct).

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George A. Robie died December 21, 1913 and the operation of the store was assumed by his son, Arthur G. Robie, who also served as Postmaster. Arthur G. Robie died February 11, 1933 leaving the store to his son, George W. Robie.

The Merrimack River Valley was ravaged by severe floods in 1927, 1936 and again in 1938. On March 20-21, 1936 Robie's Country Store measured four feet of water inside, but was not dislodged from its foundation. The three covered wooden Suncook Valley Railroad bridges were destroyed, one span being swept downstream and taking out the southern span of the 1909 Main Street Bridge. The Boston & Maine Railroad replaced its railroad bridge in 1931 with a heavier structure, which remains extant. Extensive damage occurred along Merrimack Street, with loss of several homes and businesses and the IOOF Hall.

George W. Robie had worked in the store with his father and grandfather since 1908; he would not retire until 1965, having also served as Library Trustee (1910); First Chief of the Village Fire Department (1924 -31); Postmaster in 1931, and again as Assistant Postmaster 1957 - 61. He put up the last mail bag for the final U.S. Mail car through Hooksett Village. George W. Robie died October 8, 1967.

Lloyd B. and Dorothea B. Robie took over the Country Store in March, 1965 and operated the business together until retiring in 1997. Mr. Robie was the fourth generation to operate this general store and Post Office in Hooksett Village, and also serve as Postmaster. Roger Hebert was the last Postmaster to serve at Robie's; the facility was subsequently moved to a modern location on Hooksett Road in 1965 where significant, automobile-based commercial expansion had been underway since the 1950s. Since 1952, virtually every major candidate running for the office of President of the United States has stopped at Robie's Country Store to "stump" and take the pulse of the populace in anticipation of the New Hampshire Primary. The property remains a focal point of local - and every four years - national dialogue.

The 1909 Old Main Street Bridge was closed in 1975, with completion of the new Veterans Memorial Bridge just downstream from Robie's along the Merrimack. The old structure is planned for rehabilitation and re-use as a pedestrian bridge serving the Heritage Trail. Robie's Country Store is currently managed by a local preservation organization which opens the store for business on a periodic basis, while efforts are underway to find a permanent operator for the business. In recognition of the importance of Robie's Country Store in the planning and historical development of Hooksett Village, the Hooksett Town Council designated the property a Town Historic Site on October 14, 1998.

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

- Boundaries of the nominated property are indicated on the attached Sketch Map, and are co-extant with Lots 39 and 38, Map 8 of the Hooksett Property Tax Map.

**Boundary Justification**

The nominated property comprises the original site on which Robie's Country Store was constructed and operated (1907 - present).

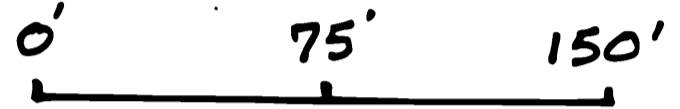
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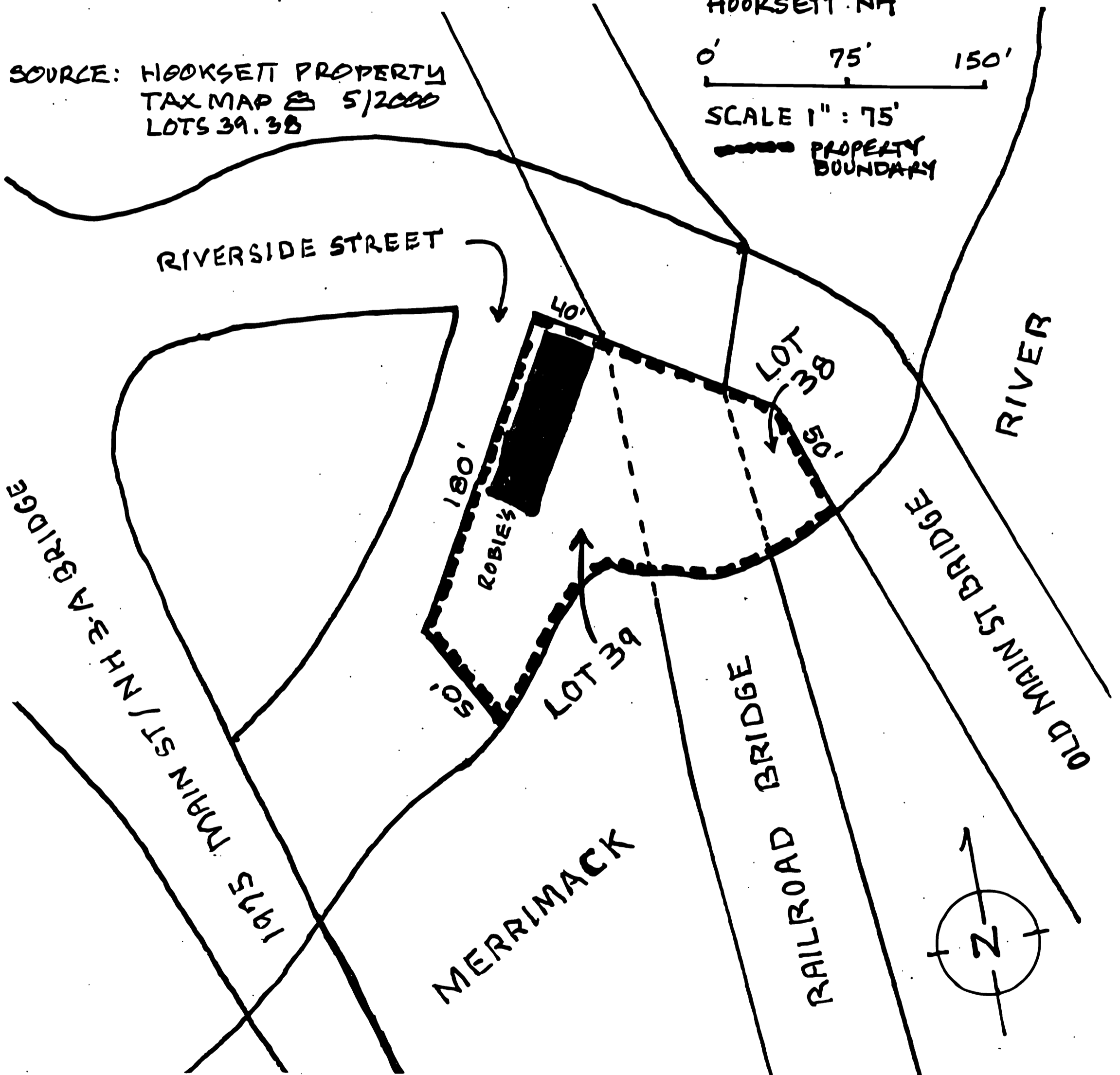
Verbal Boundary Description (SKETCH MAP)

SOURCE: HOOKSETT PROPERTY  
TAX MAP 5/2000  
LOTS 39, 38

ROBIE'S COUNTRY STORE  
HOOKSETT, NH



SCALE 1" : 75'  
PROPERTY  
BOUNDARY



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Verbal Boundary Description (PHOTO KEY)

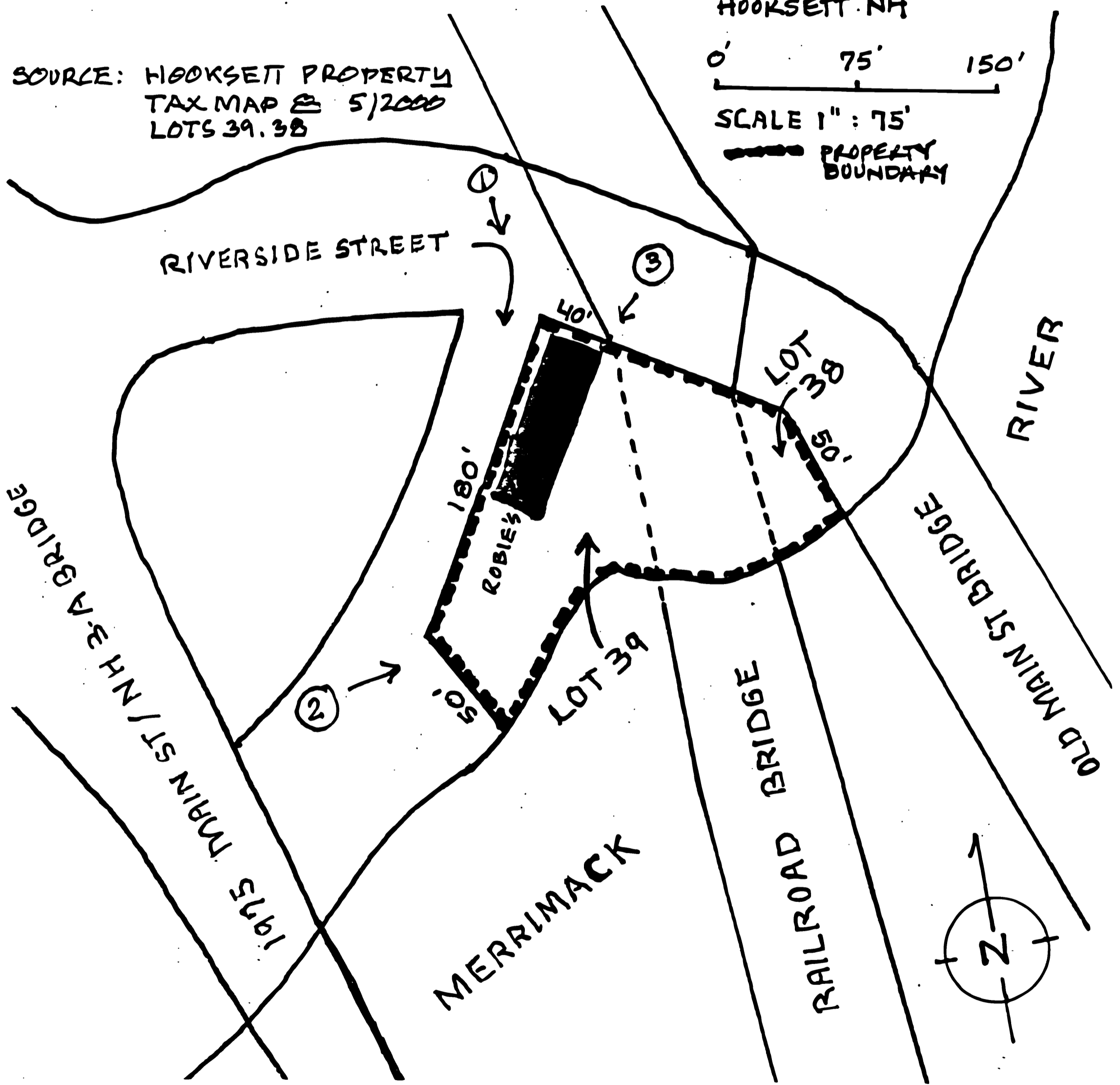
ROBIE'S COUNTRY STORE  
HOOCKETT NH

SOURCE: HOOKSETT PROPERTY  
TAX MAP 5/2000  
LOTS 39, 38

0' 75' 150'

SCALE 1" : 75'

PROPERTY  
BOUNDARY



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United States Geological Survey Map, 7.5 Minute Series

Manchester North Quadrangle, New Hampshire



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Black and White Photographs of Robie's Country Store

October, 1999

(There have been no changes in the structure or its appearance since 10/99)