

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NOV 9 8 1989

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name McClure-Hilton House  
other names/site number N/A

### 2. Location

street & number 16 Tinker Road N/A  not for publication  
city, town Merrimack N/A  vicinity  
state New Hampshire code NH county Hillsborough code NH 011 zip code 03054

### 3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.  See continuation sheet.

[Signature]  
Signature of certifying official

OCT. 26 1989  
Date

NEW HAMPSHIRE  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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:)

[Signature]

12/1/89

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

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

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

AGRICULTURE/barn

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

AGRICULTURE/barn

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

NO STYLE

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Granite

walls Weatherboard

roof Asphalt

other

**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

The McClure-Hilton property consists of a 1.8 acre tract of land consisting of two pieces of land separated by Tinker Road. A one and one-half story, gable roofed Cape Cod Style structure with wing is located twenty feet from the road on the eastern side, while across Tinker Road is a gablefronted post and beam barn structure. The house is located on a fairly level, grassy lot. The areas behind the house and surrounding the barn are largely wooded. The nominated property possesses a high level of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

The clapboarded main house measures five bays wide by three bays deep and faces south above a granite block foundation. Centered on the ridge of the asphalt-shingled roof is a large brick chimney. A later, secondary brick chimney rises from the northeast corner of the roof slope. The structure is sheathed with wooden clapboards painted white and has plain cornerboards and trim on the raking eaves which are flush with the sidewall. Clapboards extend nearly to the ground, largely obscuring the stone foundation.

The off center entrance contains a four panel door capped by a four light transom. The door probably dates to c. 1840, replacing the original door. Sheltering the entrance and dating to the twentieth century is a low gable porch with lattice sides. Windows on the building predominantly contain 9/6 doublehung sash with 2/2 exterior storm windows. On the facade, the window sash extends nearly to the eaves, typical of the 18th century. An historic photograph belonging to Mrs. Hilton shows that by 1903 the original windows had been replaced by 2/2 sash and were flanked by wooden blinds. During the Hilton's ownership, in the 1940's, the 2/2 windows were replaced by 9/6 sash, undoubtedly more in keeping with the smaller-paned windows which would have originally been on the structure. The Hiltons also removed wooden blinds which formerly hung on the structure.

On the west elevation of the building the first floor of the building is punctuated by three irregularly spaced 9/6 windows with lipped lintels. A wooden trellis has been added between the second and third windows. Two 6/6 windows light the attic. The north side of the building displays two 9/6 windows with a single 2/2 window. The east elevation of the building is largely fronted by a wing. To the south of the wing, the east side is punctuated by a single 9/6 window and a 2/2 window; with two 6/6 windows and a small squarish modern casement window to the rear.

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Extending to the east of the main house is a single story wing, formerly a woodshed, which now contains a kitchen and a work area. Like the main house the wing is clapboarded with an asphalt-shingled gable roof. The wing rests on a granite foundation which is more visible than that of the main house. Owing to the excavation of a full cellar under this section, basement windows punctuate the foundation line.

The south side of the wing is punctuated by a series of doors and windows. Beginning with the opening closest to the main house, there is a four panel door echoing that of the main entrance, capped by a four light transom and sheltered by a low gable, latticed porch. Adjacent to this is a single 9/6 window and a set of three 12/8 windows. The 12/8 windows were added by Mr. Hilton, to replace the original set of carriage doors. Adjacent to these are a 9/6 window while a wooden door completes the elevation.

The east gable end of the wing displays two 9/6 windows. The rear wall of the wing is punctuated by a single 9/6 window and a set of modern casement windows.

Beyond the shed area there once stood another barn; however it was damaged extensively during the hurricane of 1936 and had to be torn down.

Interior Description

In a typical full Cape Cod floor plan, the interior arrangement of the rooms is grouped around a central fireplace/chimney block. To either side of the small entry are two squarish rooms, virtually identical in size, each with its own fireplace, two front and one side windows. These two front rooms were typically known as the parlor and hall. The parlor with the best furniture, was used for funerals, weddings, visits by the minister and the like. Extending along the back of the house is the kitchen, dominated by a larger fireplace suitable for cooking. At each end of the kitchen is a small room, one of which functioned as a buttery for storage, separating milk and churning butter and for food preparation. The other room was a bedroom, which often housed the sick and infirmed as well as the newborn. The second floor was reached by a steep stairway. The living space upstairs in the garret was often left open. As shall be seen, the interior of the McClure-Hilton House closely conforms to this typical floor plan. The house was without a modern heating system, electricity, running water and bathroom facilities until the 1940s.

Extending the length of the first floor, the central east-west partition and most of that of the rear wall are built of handplaned, horizontal, tongue and groove boards which vary in width up to 19 inches, and are attached by handwrought nails. It is possible that the original construction was confined within this area and that additions were made over a period of time. Remaining walls in the house, with the exception of the old kitchen ceiling which has been replaced, are finished with original plaster.

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As has been described, the small center entry hall is accessed by a front door displaying four raised panels, undoubtedly replacing an earlier, less decorative wooden door. The hall retains its wide floor boards and displays a simple bottom molding. Backing against the chimney block, a closet has been added.

The southwest room is significant for the stenciling it retains. The stencils are applied over all four walls above a painted, wide board horizontal wainscoting which is outlined by a lipped top molding and a plain bottom molding. The cornice stencil consists of flowers and leaves; a border of leaves also encircles the room, above the wainscoting. The remaining wall area is ordered by a vertical pattern consisting of diamonds alternating with leaves. Each diamond is formed by four diagonal lines; alternating diamonds feature lines running in the opposite direction. Arranged between the lines featuring the diamonds and leaves, stencils in six different geometric patterns, circular in shape and a stencil featuring five oak leaves fill in the area in a somewhat random fashion. A single "wedding basket" design stencil appears on the south wall, between the two windows. The stenciling in this room was found by the Hiltons under many layers of wallpaper and restored. It is believed that this bedroom was given to a newly married couple as their bridal suite because of the stenciled wedding basket. Mrs. Hilton believes the stenciling to be the work of Moses Eaton, a New Hampshire artist, who traveled around the state.

In addition to the stenciling and wainscoting, the southwest room retains unpainted wide board floors. The fireplace in this room has a shallow brick hearth framed by a wooden surround with an entablature shelf supported by two plain wooden supports. A closet is located to the south of the fireplace and considering its alignment with the entry closet may have been added at that time. With the exception of the four raised panels of the closet door, the other two doors in this room each have four shallow panels.

The southeast room displays similar features, excepting the lack of stencil work. Unpainted, wide board wainscoting and floorboards survive in the room. The fireplace displays a brick opening and hearth with a simple wooden surround capped by a shelf. There is a small wooden built-in cupboard set high in the wall to the north of the fireplace. It has HL hinges and was reportedly used for storing medicines, preventing their freezing in the winter yet safely out of the reach of children. The closet door to the south of the fireplace has a raised, four panel door. Two wrought iron hooks hang from the ceiling. The owner believes that these were used to suspend lanterns.

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The northwest room is thought to have functioned as the burning and death room. Historic photographs indicate that originally one of the two window openings on the west wall of this room was occupied by a door opening. According to a 1903 photograph, the doorway had been removed by that time. Mrs. Hilton recalls that for many years a granite step fronted the exterior of the house at this point, marking where the door was. The northwest corner of the room has been partitioned off for a closet. One of the doors leading into the room has four panels, the other is made of vertical planks reinforced by a pair of horizontal boards. The wide board flooring is of soft pine. The planking of the north wall ends at the at the left side of the window, the area to the west is plastered.

The kitchen, as is typical, is dominated by a great brick fireplace surrounded by wooden paneling. Two large, horizontal recessed panels cap the fireplace. To the side of the main fireplace opening are a side oven and below this, an additional oven with a hinged cast-iron door, which are fronted by a granite slab. The hearth is constructed of brick in front of the main fireplace opening. There is a three foot long crane from which cooking kettles were suspended. The ceiling in the kitchen has four rows of four handmade, wrought iron hooks with two additional hooks over the fireplace. The Hiltons carefully recorded the exact location of these hooks and replaced them after the original kitchen ceiling was replaced. According to Mrs. Hilton, sticks were extended between the hooks to dry various foods and herbs. These same hooks reportedly also held up blankets so that family members could bathe in front of the fireplace. As has been described, the rear (north) wall is of plank construction. Wide wainscoting sheathes the remaining walls. Opening outward from the north part of the east kitchen wall is a wooden door constructed of two wide vertical boards with HL hinges accessing the steep stairway leading upstairs. The door was apparently designed to stem the flow of warm air upstairs. To the south of this door is a shallow pantry cupboard with a two part door displaying raised panels, pegs and HL hinges.

A narrow hallway extends eastward from the original kitchen. The south wall is of plank construction, the north wall is broken by an opening with a wide vertical board door leading down to the cellar. The northeast corner of the main house, east of the stairway, was formerly occupied by a buttery, which in the 1940s was converted for use as a bathroom. An entrance off the north wall of the hall accesses the bathroom, which retains its plank walls and wainscoting, despite the addition of modern conveniences.

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A level change downward marks the transition to the shed wing attached to the east end of the house, measuring approximately thirty feet by fifteen feet. This section remained a woodshed until the twentieth century. Work was begun to convert the fifteen by twelve foot area closest to the main house into a new kitchen in the 1940s although it was not complete until the early 1960s. This room also retains much wide board paneling. The area beyond the east door opening is largely unfinished although several alterations have taken place. The northwest corner of the room has been partitioned off for a bathroom and three 12/8 windows replace the original carriage doors on the south wall. The post and beam construction and five sided ridge pole are still visible.

The area which has seen the greatest changes is upstairs. Although the original narrow and steep back stairs survive, the open loft has been converted and partitioned for two bedrooms and a bathroom. The rooms retain their wide floor boards. Hand planed rafters and purlins with pegs are still visible overhead. According to Mrs. Hilton the old, wide vertical board doors with two horizontal boards on their back and HL hinges are from Maine. What is now the west bedroom has a small brick fireplace capped by a shallow shelf. The area north and south of the central chimney block, under the sloping eaves, has been partitioned off for closet and storage area.

The cellar under the western part of the main house is largely a crawl space with a dirt floor. The area beneath part of the main block and under the ell has been dug out to a full cellar and has granite walls. A cement pad has been added under the furnace and deep freezer.

Site Features and Barn

The McClure-Hilton House is located on a fairly level, grassy lot. The area to the east of the house was once cultivated for farming but has now grown over. The upgrading of Tinker Road, originally a dirt road, over the years has left the house today little more than twenty feet from the road. The road runs along the west side of the house, at an angle to the house and separates the house and the barn. Southeast of the house is a large tree. Considerable tree growth behind the wing largely obscures its north elevation. A hand water pump is located some distance south of the main house.

Like the main house, the barn is located quite close to Tinker Road and is oriented with its gable front facing northeastward. Measuring approximately thirty feet by forty feet, the barn is of post and beam construction. It is sheathed in wide horizontal barn board, capped by an asphalt-shingled gable roof and rests on a fieldstone foundation. Horizontal flushboard fills the front gable which is punctuated by a single 1/1 window. Entry is through the large sliding door on the gablefront. The north side of the barn has no openings. On the south side, nearest the front is a vertical board door. The remaining elevation is punctuated by a single 3 x 2 window opening and two joined pairs of the same configuration. The area around the barn is fairly densely overgrown with vegetation. According to Mrs. Hilton, it is believed that the barn across the street from the house is older than the house and also served as the first residence, as well as the barn for the animals.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 1.8 acres

UTM References

A 

1	9	2	9	3	2	1	0	4	7	4	2	7	4	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Lisa Mausolf, Historic Preservation Specialist  
organization Nashua Regional Planning Commission date September, 1989  
street & number 115 Main Street telephone (603) 883-0366  
city or town Nashua state New Hampshire zip code 03061

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

C. 1741  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1741  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder

Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The McClure-Hilton House is significant under National Register criterion C as an excellent example of the Cape Cod house type of the early-mid 18th century. Dating to the early-mid 18th century, the McClure-Hilton House is one of the earliest houses in Merrimack and is unique for remaining on its original site with relatively few alterations over the years. Adding to the integrity of the house is the fact that it was occupied by the same family for over two hundred years and has had only two owners over the course of its history. An excellent example of the Cape Cod house form, the structure is also significant for its early stenciling, possibly the work of Moses Eaton of Hancock, New Hampshire.

The building's period of significance has been determined to be C. 1741, a date which coincides with the apparent construction of the house.

Characteristic of the Cape Cod house type, the McClure-Hilton House contains 1 1/2 stories, sitting close to the ground and facing south. Windows are placed close under the eaves and the eaves and rakes project only a few inches beyond the walls. The house retains its large central chimney which serves four fireplaces. Changes to the structure over the years have been extremely minimal and are generally limited to replacement of original plasterwork and the sympathetic introduction of modern conveniences such as a kitchen and bathroom.

The exact date of construction of the McClure House is not known. According to statements found in the genealogy of another branch of the family, William McClure I built the dwelling about 1722 and the acreage was reportedly part of a King's Grant. (1) However, according to the town history, court records suggest that no real settlement of land was done in town until after 1731 for the area north of the Souhegan River and after 1736 for the southern section, including the present McClure-Hilton House. The proprietors met for the first time in Boston in 1733 to divide the town into seven districts and the first lots were drawn for the first division in 1734. (2) The history also states that the first William McClure bought



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120 acres of land from Joshua Converse in 1741 and built a house on Tinker Road. (3) The house was almost certainly constructed prior to 1749 when William McClure appears on the first town tax list. (4)

William McClure is significant as one of Merrimack's earliest settlers. William McClure I was of Scotch parentage and was born in the city of Antrim or Down, province of Ulster, Ireland about 1700. The McClure family of Ireland came from Galloway in Scotland a generation or two before. Little is known of the immigrant, William. He married a woman named Elizabeth, who bore him three sons, William, James and Thomas. The eldest, William was born about 1730. McClures of the same stock were pioneers in southern New Hampshire and were doubtless near relatives. These included Robert McClure, the proprietor of a large family who settled in Acworth, NH and was born in Ireland in 1718, son of Richard McClure. Richard apparently came to America at the age of nine, settling first in Hillsborough and later with his sons in Acworth. The first settler in Candia, New Hampshire was David McClure. All these settlers were Scotch Presbyterians and all came from the same vicinity in Ireland. (5)

William McClure II, son of William McClure I, settled with his father in Merrimack. Born about 1730, he married Nancy Arbuckle about 1755. Nancy was the sister of William Arbuckle who settled in Merrimack in 1748 and became a prominent citizen. William McClure II was a soldier in the revolution, a sergeant in Captain Joseph Moor's company, Col. William Prescott's regiment at the siege of Boston in 1775. He was corporal in Capt. William Barron's company, Col. Isaac Wyman's regiment, which was raised for the armed expedition against Canada in 1776. William and Nancy McClure had two sons, William III and John. William III followed his father in ownership of the homestead. He was born in Merrimack on the homestead on August 12, 1762 and died November 16, 1824. On October 12, 1783 William III married Rebecca Danforth of an old Massachusetts puritan family. He too served in the Revolution, though for a short time. Children of William and Rebecca included Martha, William IV, and Capt. Samuel. William IV was born July 17, 1786 and died on the homestead April 12, 1876 at the age of 90 years. He had resided there all of his life. William IV married Polly Danforth in 1813; their children included Charles, George, Mary and Newton. William IV left the farm to his son, Newton McClure who remained at home with his father. Newton McClure was born January 7, 1823 and died October 1, 1899. He married Hepzibah Swain and had two children, Frederick and Mary Anna McClure. Fred McClure was the last family member to live in the house. When he died in 1942, Anna McClure Lockhead, the last family member, sold the house and acreage to George Hilton, Sr. (6)

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Within the region, the McClure-Hilton House is relatively unique in terms of its age and integrity. Based on information contained in the town history it is one of no more than a dozen pre-1800 Cape Cod type houses surviving in the town of Merrimack and it is certainly among the least altered. (7) The house is also distinguished from others in town by the stenciling which survives in one of the front rooms. The leaves, vines and geometric designs painted on an ochre background are virtually identical to designs appearing in other New Hampshire houses and which have been attributed to itinerant painter Moses Eaton, Jr. (8) Eaton was one of the best known stencilers in New England and was born in Hancock in 1796. He died in Dublin in 1886. His father, Moses Eaton, Sr. (1753-1833) was also a stenciler. When the stencils were added to the front room is not exactly known although the presence of a special "wedding basket" stencil between the front windows suggests it was to honor a newly married couple. Perhaps the room was stenciled for William III's marriage in 1783 or that of William IV in 1813. The next occupant of the house, Newton McClure married sometime before 1868 when his first child was born. (9)

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FOOTNOTES

1. Notes by Mrs. Hilton based on research on McClure genealogy at NH Historical Society, Concord, NH, c. 1940.

2. Merrimack Historical Society, The History of Merrimack, New Hampshire. (Merrimack, NH: Merrimack Historical Society, 1976), p. 96.

3. Ibid, p. 44.

4. Notes by Mrs. Hilton on McClure genealogy.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Merrimack Historical Society, The History of Merrimack, New Hampshire.

8. Kenneth E. Jewett, "Moses Eaton and the Art of Stenciling", New Hampshire Profiles, (January 1973), p. 65-71.

9. Notes by Mrs. Hilton on McClure genealogy.

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Jewett, Kenneth E. "Moses Eaton and the Art of Stenciling", New Hampshire Profiles (January 1973): 65-71.

Merrimack Historical Society. The History of Merrimack, New Hampshire.  
Merrimack, NH: Merrimack Historical Society, 1976.

Stenta, Vesta. "Will progress force one of Merrimack's oldest houses to be demolished - The Hilton House", Village Crier, July 18, 1989, p. 12

Notes by Harold Thresher on the Hilton House, undated. Obtained from Mrs. Hilton.

Notes by Mrs. George Hilton on McClure Genealogy, based on research at NH Historical Society, Concord, NH, c. 1940.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property occupies Map 2B Lot 292 (House) and Map 2B Lot 293 (Barn) in local tax assessor's records. The house lot has an acreage of 1.8 acres and a frontage of approximately 350 feet along Tinker Road. The barn lot has a total acreage of 1.2 acres with a frontage of approximately 290 feet along Tinker Road. Boundaries of the nominated property are indicated by the heavy dashed line on the attached sketch map.

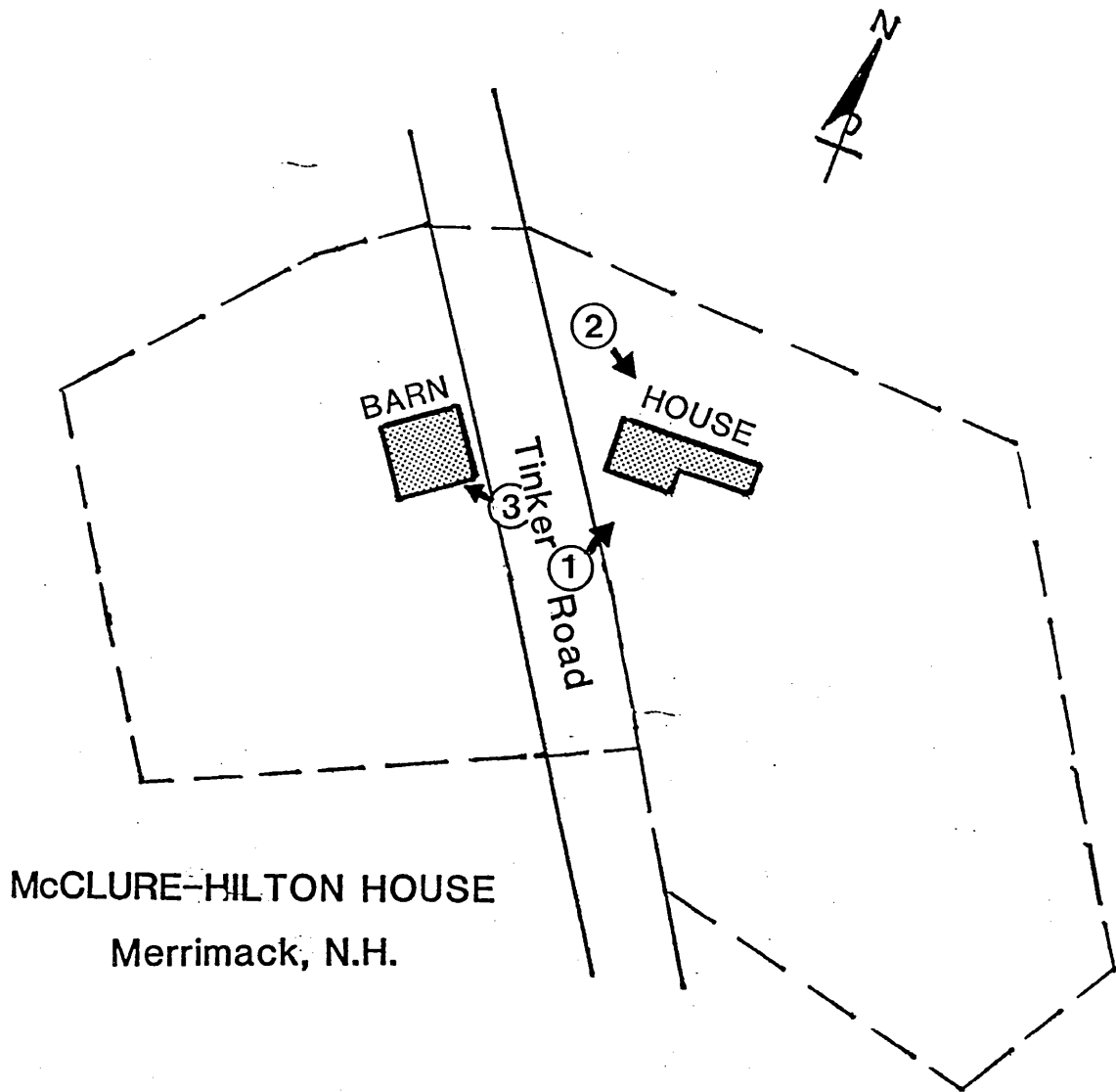
BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes all that remains of the original historic building lot. Additional acreage originally associated with the property has lost its historic integrity due to subdivision. Boundaries as drawn are sufficient to convey the historic context and also sufficient to protect it.

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McCLURE-HILTON HOUSE  
Merrimack, N.H.

----- PROPERTY BOUNDARY

← (#) PHOTO KEY

Scale: 1"=100'

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OWNER OF PROPERTY

Mrs. George Hilton  
16 Tinker Road  
Merrimack, NH 03054