

JUN 5 1984

NPS Form 10-900
(7-81)

OMB NO. 1004-0010

EXP. 12/31/84

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

received MAY 6 1984

date entered JUN 22 1984

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Samuel Emerson Farm

and/or common Back River Farm (preferred)

2. Location

street & number At the end of Bay View Road about 1/2 from
the intersection with Piscataqua Road. n/a not for publication

city, town Dover n/a vicinity of

state New Hampshire code 33 county Strafford code 017

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Elizabeth L. Huggins Trust

street & number c/o Strafford National Bank, Central Avenue

city, town Dover n/a vicinity of state New Hampshire 03820

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Strafford County, Registry of Deeds

street & number Strafford County Court House
County Farm Road

city, town Dover state New Hampshire 03820

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date N/A federal state county local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town N/A state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Samuel Emerson Farm, known today as Back River Farm for its location on the Bellamy (or Back) River, incorporates an original 30 acre tract within its 44.25 acre bounds overlooking the river near its junction with Little Bay and the Piscataqua River. It is a superbly sited farmstead of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with each of its buildings facing south along a rise above the river. The Samuel Emerson house is a two story, central chimney dwelling surrounded by nineteenth and twentieth century agricultural outbuildings and open fields. The farm is surrounded with modern residential development to the west but protected by lands conserved by the Audubon Society of New Hampshire on the southeast.

The farmhouse (a) is a five bay, central chimney, two story house with a central entrance of double doors and evenly spaced windows on the facade. The east side maintains the original fenestration pattern with restored 12 over 12 sash in two, nineteenth century lengthened windows on each floor and a single gable window. An original side entrance between the ground floor windows is surrounded by simple board trim with a flat projecting lintel. The west side retains its original windows in the same pattern above a porch added along the first floor in 1934 which relocated the original side entrance and added french doors from the SW dining room. The main block of the house is 40' by 35' to which was added a two story, shed roofed rear ell offcenter from the NW corner and projecting under a gabled roof the depth of the side porch built at the same time. The rear ell is of irregular fenestration and has a single door on the north and east walls, both reached by wooden steps. The exterior of the house and ell is covered with wooden shingles which replaced clapboards on the original house during the 1930s. The old house rests on a dry laid rubble masonry foundation with a celler under the eastern half, the central chimney is of brick in clay mortar, and there is a modern brick stove chimney in the rear ell.

The house contains significant interior features including a closed-string staircase opposite the restored two part front door, based on the original found in deteriorated condition in a reused location during the restoration of the 1930s. The front rooms on the eastern side are of feather-edged vertical sheathing, the upper room never painted and the lower room containing an original corner cupboard with arched opening and curved shelves in old red paint. The ceiling of the old kitchen in the center first-floor rear room is appropriately exposed based on the smokeblack of its ceiling beams. This room and the side hall are also sheathed, while a modern kitchen in the NW

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between the farmstead location, marsh or fields; and the tidal Bellamy River with its Frenchman's Creek tributary. The farm continues in agricultural use as pasturage.

Architecture: The Samuel Emerson farmhouse is of architectural significance not only as a fine example of eighteenth century domestic building, but as an example of the work of an otherwise unknown local rural joiner. In his 1785 will the second Samuel Emerson described himself as a "Joyner" and his inventory listed "Joyners tools" valued at 15 shillings.³ Although there was a house on the site since before 1716, the architectural evidence suggests a possible mid-eighteenth century date after he inherited the property in 1739. The only evidence of the earlier house is a door found in the attic when the present owners purchased the property in 1929. It is a rare example of the transition from the First Period to classical architecture through the use of applied bolection moldings to form panels. It is made of vertical boards with to applied panels of bolection molding on each side, painted red, and has both a wooden latch and an eighteenth century iron lock attached with wrought nails. Only three other examples of applied bolection used to create panels are known in New Hampshire.⁴ The size of this door (38" x 70") is larger than any opening in the house and suggests it may have been taken from the original Emerson house on the site.

The form of the house, a fully developed leanto plan raised to a full two stories beneath the gable roof, was a plan type found earliest in New Hampshire of all the New England states.⁵ The Emerson house illustrates its continued use through the eighteenth century for larger farms like Samuel Emerson's 130 acres. The dates on the attic beams as well as the later reduction in farmland dates the structure to his lifetime while the joiner's tools in his inventory suggest he may also be responsible for not only the feathered sheathing but the raised paneling of the second story SW chamber. The interior is significant to the history of rural house joinery

1. Charles Libby, et al, Genealogical Dictionary of Maine and New Hampshire (Portland Maine, 1933) pp. 220-221; Samuel Emerson Probate will and Inventory, N.H. Archives.
2. Mary P. Thompson, Landmarks of Ancient Dover (reprint, Durham, N.H. 1965) pp. 78-79; Strafford Co. Probates, Vol. 2, p. 218 (Samuel Emerson inventory, 1786).
3. Strafford Co. Probates, Vol. 2, pp. 182, 218.
4. These are the c.1719 door changes to the c.1664 Jackson House, a fragment of similar molding rescued by Strawberry Banke from the 1705 Rogers House, and the shadow evidence of applied molding in panels in the 1703 addition to the Sherburne House

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates c.1750 **Builder/Architect** Samuel Emerson (1726–1785)

Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

The Samuel Emerson Farm is an unusually well preserved agricultural complex occupying an original 30 acre site acquired by the Emerson family in 1696. It is the only eighteenth century farmstead surviving in Dover's Back River District, once entirely covered with several large salt water farms, that combines its original land and buildings without significant loss of architectural integrity. The house and farm buildings are representative of the vernacular building practices of southeastern New Hampshire and the importance of salt water farming throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is associated with five generations of the Emerson family who occupied the farm from 1696 to 1876. The first landowner was Samuel Emerson (1663 - 1739), a militia Captain and prominent community leader. His sister was Hannah Dustin, the noted Indian Captive, who is reputed to have lived here after her return from captivity in the 1690s. When Samuel Emerson wrote his will in 1716 there was a house on this land, possibly that inherited as "Land, House and Barn and Orchards at the back river" which passed to his grandson in 1739.

Agriculture: Captain Samuel Emerson's farm grew from the original 30 acres bounded by Frenchman's Creek on the east with additions to the north and east in 1700 and 1714. His grandson, Samuel Emerson (1726 - 1785), increased the farm before his death to 130 acres. The house and one quarter of the farm was inherited by his son, Joseph Emerson (1722 - 1860) who grew large quantities of flax and barley on the marshy lands as well as raising pigs and sheep. Chalk entries dated from 1780 to 1821 on the beams of the house attic document the farm produce and a surviving hogshead still located there. Other records for sheeps wool in 1808 and 1809 are chalked above a loom built into the attic.

Of the many eighteenth century farms along Dover's Back or Bellamy River, only the Emerson Farm retains its traditional agricultural complex and original land area. The only earlier extant building from the Back River District retaining its integrity is the 17th century Damm Garrison relocated from its salt water farm site in 1910. While the farm increased in size over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, its added woodlands have been donated to the Audubon Society of New Hampshire. The remaining land represents the residual core and preserves the historic relationship

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Deborah Blossom, "Dover, N.H. Home of the Month", New Hampshire Profiles Vol.IX, No.11 (November 1960), pp. 28-31
 Richard M. Candee, Wooden Buildings in Early Maine and New Hampshire (Ph.D. Univ. of Pa, 1976).

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 44.25

Quadrangle name Dover, East ME-NH

Quadrangle scale 1:2400

UMT References

A

19	349000	4778240
Zone	Easting	Northing

B

19	349290	4777990
Zone	Easting	Northing

C

19	349550	4777380
Zone	Easting	Northing

D

19	349230	4777340
Zone	Easting	Northing

E

19	348880	4777740
Zone	Easting	Northing

F

Zone	Easting	Northing

G

Zone	Easting	Northing

H

Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification

From a point at the unnamed creek along the Bellamy River N 08° 15' W along the property line of the Audubon Society of New Hampshire to the land of Wilmot Drapper N 81° 15' E (note: Boundaries are highlighted in yellow on sketch map page 6-10-3) -continued-

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
state	N/A	code	county	code

state	N/A	code	county	code
state	N/A	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard M. Candee

organization Preservation Consultant date September 26, 1983

street & number Route 1, Box 376 telephone (207) 363-6635

city or town Kittery state Maine 03904

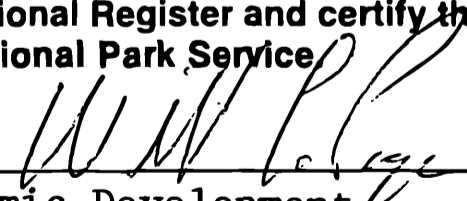
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

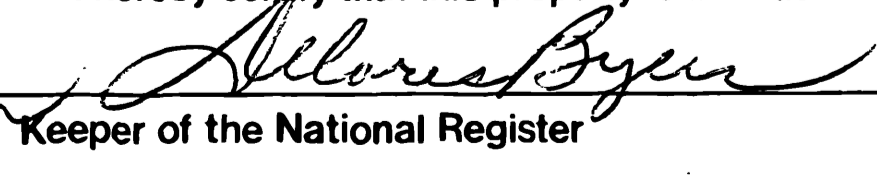


for Commissioner, Dept. of Resources & Economic Development

Deputy New Hampshire State Historic Preservation Officer date MAY 2 1984

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

for 
 Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the National Register date 6/22/84

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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g. A one story gabled frame used as a sheep house was built from the remnants of the bowling alley from the Dover Country Club which was relocated here in the 1930s. It is a simple rectangular structure of board walls located in the field east of the barn.

The farm buildings are clustered around the house on a ridge above the pastures which sweep to the river. The pastures are partially bisected by Frenchman's Creek, thought to be named for 17th century French settlers brought here to manufacture salt. The marshland along the creek and to the east have been allowed to seed into second growth trees. In the middle of the pasture is a farm pond constructed in 1948.

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corner is located above a sunken dairy or milkroom discovered during restoration. The SW front room appears to have been a second kitchen originally, with the first fireplace and oven reduced when a Federal period mantel was added. This was part of an early nineteenth century remodeling which added plaster walls and wooden dados to the walls. The chamber above this room contains a fireplace wall of raised eighteenth century panels and simple Georgian fireplace surround. The rear rooms of the second floor were originally left unfinished; the insertion of a small room at either end since 1929 leaves only the center space with exposed studs and ceiling frame.

The Emerson house is surrounded by several agricultural outbuildings and related features:

b. A large two and a half story English barn, five bays long and two wide, with the barn doors in the central bay of the south facade and a modern barn door added on the east gable end. A full two and a half story rear ell was removed since 1929, leaving an attic gable from above the main ridge facing north where the two tar-paper roofs connect. The barn is sheathed with plain boards and has a single window in each gable end and irregular window placement on two stories of the east end. The north wall has no windows.

c. A one story garage, probably built as a late nineteenth century workshop, with a low gabled roof and a 1950s leanto addition for a woodshed. Except for the rear addition it is shingled with openings only on the south facade. There is a center door with a projecting garage door to the west and paired six over six windows to the east.

d. A hen house leanto, clapboarded in unfinished condition, originally 26 feet long but reduced to 13 feet in 1980 due to deterioration. The south facade contains a nineteenth century door near the east corner and one oblong window of multiple small panes from its 1929 conversion to a guest cottage called the "chickery".

e. West of the hen house is a 1954 workshop built by G. Allen Huggins with solid, splined plank walls. It has a leanto profile for three bays with an irregular fenestration on front and rear walls, as well as a row of open windows along the east end. The west end protrudes and is covered by a gable roof with double doors on the south gable.

f. A foundation for an 1850s horsebarn destroyed before 1929 has been preserved as a garden and patio area.

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both for the amount of surviving interior finish, some of which has never been painted, as well as for the ability to attribute it to its builder/owner. The later enlargement of the window openings and the introduction of Federal style trim in the lower SW front room was apparently done during the occupation of his son Joseph Emerson.⁶ It is not known whether Joseph followed his father as a joiner, but the changes are important in documenting altered family and stylistic patterns.

The location of the house and all of its agricultural buildings on the highest ground above the tidal river and marsh lands along Frenchman's Creek is also significant. The south facing buildings are typical of the historic building practices in the region, but the house location along the north boundary of the original site reflects the importance of the river view toward the confluence with Little Bay when these bodies were the primary transportation networks.

at Strawberry Banke in Portsmouth, N.H.

5. Richard M. Candee, Wooden Building in Early Maine and New Hampshire (PhD Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1976), pp. 184-188 (Wentworth House, Portsmouth, 1699), and p. 35 (Doe House, Newmarket, c.1710).

Strafford Co. Probates (Joseph Emerson) #1789; E. Stackpole et al, History of Durham, N.H. (1913, reprint Somersworth, NH, 1973) pp. 178-182.

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to the SW corner of Draper's land, thence on a line parallel to the first line to the junction of land formerly of Brown and Akerman, thence turning WSW and running to the SE corner of land formerly Harnett now Callen 578 feet to a point behind the NE corner of the Samuel Emerson House, thence 493' NW and 289' SW along Harnett (now Callen) property to a driveway, then SE along the driveway to a second driveway, thence S 427' to a spring, then E 277 feet to land formerly owned by Fenn (now Valpey) and along the Fenn or Valpey line 1650' to the Bellamy River and along the waterline, crossing Frenchman's Creek, to the point of first beginning.

This to be shown on Dover City Tax Map, Sheet J, Lot #22 (44.25 acres). This includes the 30 original acres, approximately 10 acres added about 1700 and about 3 acres to the north of the house acquired in 1948 for a well. This is all the residual remain of the larger 18th century Emerson Farm.

The Emerson farmhouse has historically had a visual link to the Bellamy (or Back) River and the confluence with Little Bay. The construction of the house on the highest ground was influenced by the view to and from the water. This setting is described in section 7 of the nomination and the significance of the marsh lands and Frenchman's creek to salt water agriculture and the resulting setting is documented in section 8. The present boundaries of the property are included in the nomination to protect the historic setting and vista of the buildings with the open land and water.

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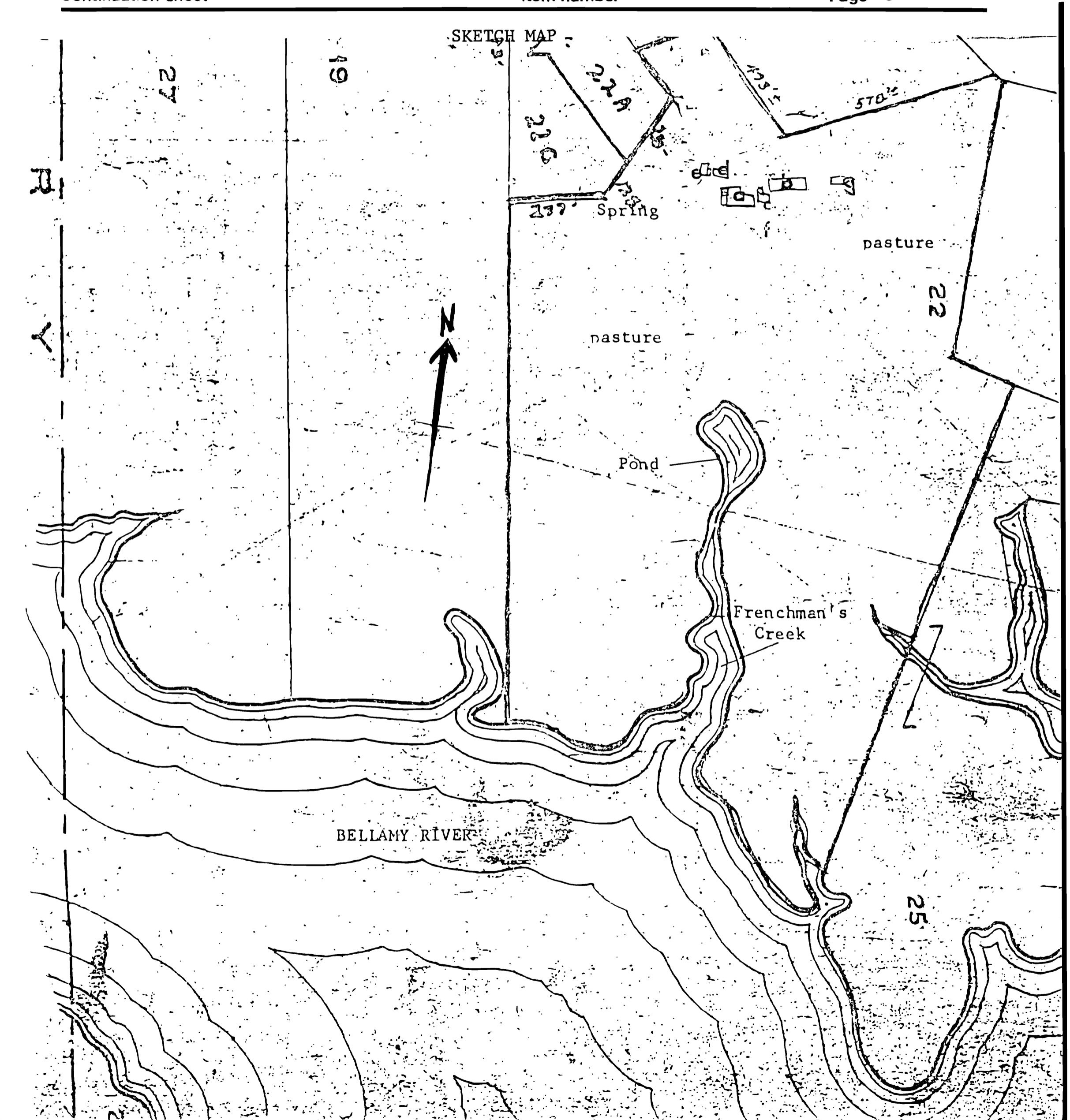
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This certifies that the appearance of the photographs has not changed.