

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

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**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received AUG 12 1985

date entered SEP 12 1985

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

1. Name

historic THE MOSES/KENT HOUSE (preferred)

and/or common The Kent House

2. Location

street & number 1 Pine Street n/a not for publication

city, town Exeter, n/a vicinity of

state New Hampshire code 033 county Rockingham code 015

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input 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 Jane Kent Rockwell

street & number 1 Pine Street

city, town Exeter, n/a vicinity of state New Hampshire 03833

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Rockingham County Courthouse
Rockingham County Registry of Deeds
street & number Route 101C - Hampton Road

city, town Exeter, state New Hampshire 03833

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Front Street Historic District has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1971 federal state county local

depository for survey records New Hampshire Historic Preservation Office

city, town Concord, state New Hampshire 03301

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input 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 Moses/Kent House is the most significant example of Victorian residential architecture in the town of Exeter, New Hampshire. It was constructed in 1868 by Henry Clay Moses, a prominent wool merchant and was substantially remodeled in 1901-02 when it was sold to George E. & Adelaïd Kent, owners of the Exeter Manufacturing Company. It is sited on 5.5 acres of landscaped grounds, and includes three outbuildings: a significant 1868 carriage house in the same style as the main house; a single bay garage, c. 1950; and a small potting shed, c. 1940.

Stylistically, the 2½ story house is most easily identified as French Second Empire, although in true Victorian eclectic fashion, the Italianate influence is extremely strong. It achieves a feeling of extreme verticality and complexity, through its use of irregularly spaced planes, multiple textures, and elongated vertical features. The core (main block) appears to follow typical, L-plan Italianate form with a 3½ story tower at one intersection of the two wings. The projection of this tower beyond the adjacent wall is shallow, as in a pavillion. The balloon frame structure is supported by a cut-granite foundation which is exposed about 3' above grade - adding to the vertical quality of the design. The house is sided in scored wooden ashlar which emphasizes its feeling of "substance".

The most significant individual feature of the structure is the steeply canted, mansard roof which is sheathed in grey slate in a scallop pattern. This roof is topped with a deck cornice, which is typical of the style after 1865 in Boston. Lighting the mansard area are peaked dormers with paired 1/1 windows with scroll jambs. Trimming the base of the roof, the cornice area is emphasized by a deep fascia board, detailed with dentils, heavy brackets and panels over the second story windows. Three, rectangular, brick, fire-place chimneys pierce the roof. They are decorated with corbel bands and corbelled caps.

The facade is divided in three parts/bays formed by the intersection of the tower with the two wings. The center entry is located in the tower section. The carved oak door (probably from a later remodeling) has panels of etched glass, and is topped by a molded surround with feet (echoing the Mansard dormer detail). The shallow, two-bay, covered porch was "bowed" in 1901. The "bowed" section has a railing with turned ballusters. The foundation is screened by wooden lattice work. The porch is approached by seven wooden steps flanked by urns on pedestals at the base. The roof is supported by three chamfered posts with an arched valence running between them, and brackets on the fascia under the projecting eaves. A ballustrade encloses the deck of this roof, with turned ballusters running between paneled pedestals which stack above the main posts of the porch. The windows are tall to accentuate the verticality of the house. They are framed by narrow blinds and topped by heavy Italianate hoods. The sills are supported by "feet". First story sash is 1/1 (replaced when the house was remodeled in 1901). The second story and mansard dormers have paired 1/1 or 2/2 sash. The tower rises one story above the main roof and has a curvilinear profile on the lower slope. Its 2/2 dormers on each elevation are topped by Gothic points. The pyramidal second roof of the tower is sheathed in copper and topped by a finial.

The north elevation faces Linden Street, and the bold modeling and juxtaposition of planes

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is particularly well displayed here. This elevation is divided in four sections which telescope in height downward from the main block to the kitchen el. The wing of the main block has two bays here, but only one dormer in the Mansard placed between them. A shallow, two bay porch (not bowed) is identical to the facade save for ballustrades. It is approached by six wooden steps. The foundation is screened by a panel of vertical, square posts which repeat the balluster and rail motif from the front porch. This wing has a side entry with an oak paneled door with two vertical glass panels. On the first story is a three-part, bow window which features leaded transoms in each section. This window was installed when the house was remodeled by the Kents in 1901. This 1½ story section is topped by a small, enclosed, slightly-pitched, gable roof sunporch, which was added in the 1920's. It is clapboarded and has a band of single paned windows. The kitchen el is also 1½ stories. It is entered by a cut in, one bay porch under the mansard, supported by one chamfered post. A wooden railing supported by square posts matches a similar foundation screen.

The west (rear) elevation has probably changed the most since the original construction. The gable of the third story sunporch is visible here, as is the unusual, two story elevator tower. This tower was built in 1940 and expresses the Kent's appreciation for the house. It is sided in scored ashlar to the level of the Mansard and then sided with slate in the same color and pattern as the roof. The foundation is brick about 3' high to match the brick of the foundation where the kitchen was extended. The flat roofed kitchen addition extends approximately 10' to the south.

The south elevation faces into the grounds. It is the most complex elevation and also features evidence of the Kent remodeling. Like the north elevation this side telescopes from the front (east) to the rear (west), but a monumental Queen Anne style brick exterior chimney, 2½ story Mansard roof bay, and single story polygonal bay alter the effect somewhat. The huge paneled chimney dates from the 1901 remodeling as does the single cell bay. This bay has no foundation, but its detailing was carefully executed to match the wooden detail of the original structure. The five panels of this flat-roofed bay have the same scale windows as the rest of the first story, but with thin, wooden muntins in an irregular, multi-paned Queen Anne pattern. Multi-paned transoms surmount these windows. Horizontal wooden panels at the top and bottom of these sections provide wall structure. The flat roof is articulated by dentils at the eaves. The shallow two bay porch matches the other porches, except that one bay was "bowed" in 1901 to reiterate the design of the single story bay; breakfast room. Other irregular features of this elevation occur in the mansard section of the kitchen el. These are a three-bay dormer with a peaked roof and a tiny dormer, with a peaked roof. These were created in the 1940's for light needs in the nursery and back bathroom.

The interior of the Moses/Kent House is remarkably intact and beautifully preserved.

Carriage House

The 3 x 3 bay, mansard carriage house was moved in 1901 from a site near where the present garage now stands, to the southwest corner of the grounds. The 30' x 30' main block

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has a 15' x 30', 2 x 3 bay el which was added at this time. The main block is supported by posts; the flat-roofed el by a brick foundation. The design and proportions of this structure are exceptional. Its detailing is the same as the main house, but its plan is symmetrical rather than balanced. The scored wooden ashlar wall surface is almost equal in proportion to the slate surface of the steeply canted mansard roof. The cornice area is decorated by a wide fascia and heavy brackets. A four sided cupola echos the tower motife. Rising from the center of the main roof, the slate covered mansard tapers to a deck cornice which separates the copper-clad, second hip roof, topped by a finial. Each side of this cupola displays a round ventilator which is framed by a heavy molded surround.

The facade is divided into three bays with the center bay emphasized. Vertically folding wooden doors, each with two vertical panels topped by a 3/3 light, fill each entry; three-part doors on the sides and a four-part door in the center. (These doors were installed when the family switched from horses to automobiles in the 1920's.) The wider center bay is topped by an arched fascia under a peaked hood supported by paired brackets which breaks the cornice line. This detail further emphasizes a mansard central gable, which is the focal point of the facade. The ashlar wall surface is repeated here and interrupted by double leaf doors with vertical, multipaned lights. The doors are framed by heavy molded detail, semicircular with keystone at the top, footed at the bottom.

Other elevations have windows with 6/6 sash, slightly smaller on the el. An arched central gable on each side is filled with a vertical, plank door.

Garage

The 12' x 15', single bay, c. 1950 garage was moved to its site in 1970. It sits on a concrete slab and has a truncated hip roof, sheathed in asphalt shingles. Exposed rafters detail the extended eaves. This structure is sheathed in clapboards with plain cornerboards. The garage door has square flat panels and four square, horizontal lights. The north and south elevations have windows with 6/6 sash and plain board surrounds. A small 3/3 window highlights the west elevation.

Potting shed

The 10' x 12', c. 1940 potting shed is sited in the woods behind the carriage house. It has a gable roof sheathed in asphalt shingles and no foundation. It is sheathed in wooden, shake-type shingles, with plain cornerboards. The "facade" in the east gable end has a Victorian era, paneled door with one square light, framed by plain boards. There are two, square boarded windows on the south elevation, and no openings at all on the north and west elevations.

Landscape features

Three acres of the five and one-half acre plot have extensively landscaped grounds. The remaining 2½ acres are in untended woods. The landscaping was done in 1878 by Henry Clay Moses, and local newspaper accounts followed the event closely. The resulting park-like

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setting was open to the public, and enjoyed by many. (Local rumor has always accredited the plan to the firm of Frederick Law Olmstead, but no evidence could be found to substantiate this belief.)

The perimeter of the property (up to the woods) is surrounded by a fence and hemlock hedge. The fence is a wooden picket one, running between cut-granite posts. There are three wrought-iron gates. The paths and drives are of crushed stone. The flower beds have been maintained, but there is no evidence to prove they are in their original configuration. There is a circular, 8' diameter, concrete pool on the south side of the main house. The foundation of a greenhouse is still evident in the woods to the southwest of the carriage house. The most important trees are the rare Cucumber Magnolia on the south elevation and the enormous Purple Beech in the west yard.

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 checked="" 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 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates	Builder/Architect
1868	Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Moses/Kent House in Exeter, New Hampshire is a handsome French Second Empire residence which still retains integrity of design, setting, materials and workmanship. Its architectural significance lies in its individual design, which is executed in an interesting and effective mixture of academic detailing and picturesque massing. It is the finest of the three mansard houses located in the Front Street Historic District (both a local and National Register Historic District), surpassing them in scale, quality of design and interpretation. The 5.5 acres of grounds associated with the Moses/Kent House survive as an excellent example of picturesque garden design at the end of the 19th century. The Moses/Kent House is historically significant because of its association with its two prominent owners, Henry Clay Moses and George E. and Richard Kent. Moses was a prosperous woolen merchant and the Kent family owned and operated the Exeter Manufacturing Company, both industries which strongly influenced the economy of the town of Exeter from the last half of the 19th through the first half of the 20th century.

Architectural and Landscape Significance

The Moses/Kent House is the finest example of Victorian residential architecture surviving in the town of Exeter, New Hampshire. Only two other residential mansard examples exist, and the Moses/Kent House far surpasses them in design and quality of execution. Two public examples of similar style were built at approximately the same time, the Merrill Block, 1868, a large, brick commercial block with a mansard roof, and the Robinson Female Seminary, 1869, a brick French Second Empire School (no longer extant). Both of these are the work of the architect, Rufus Sargeant of Newburyport, Massachusetts. While it seems possible that the Moses/Kent House may have been designed by him as well, no records exist to prove or disprove this conjecture. Clearly the house and carriage house are of a design quality that should be attributable to some architectural firm, unfortunately, however, all of Mr. Moses' papers were destroyed by his neice.

The same sort of conjecture has attributed the design of the finely landscaped grounds to the firm of Frederick Law Olmstead, but again, if any records existed, they were destroyed. The quality and variety of the plant materials utilized for these gardens strongly suggests a connection with some landscape firm. For instance, the Cucumber Magnolia is a very rare tree and indeed, there is another matching one of the same age planted next to the Olmstead House in Brookline, Massachusetts.

Even without proof of their creators, the quality of the Moses/Kent House and grounds are evidence of outstanding design and workmanship. Noteworthy, at the time of its building, it has been maintained in a remarkably intact state and stands today as an excellent example of the finest of 19th century construction and landscaping.

Historical Background

Henry Clay Moses, 1828-1901, was born in Exeter, New Hampshire. He was the son of John F. Moses who owned a large business in "wool pulling and sheepskin tanning". After the death of his father, Moses expanded the firm to Boston. He built the grand house in 1868 to publically testify to his success and was something of a local philanthropist. Besides

9. Major Bibliographical References

(see continuation sheet 5-9-1)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 5.5 acres

Quadrangle name Exeter, NH

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A	<u>19</u>	<u>340580</u>	<u>4759880</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

D			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

E			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

F			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

G			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

H			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification

(see continuation sheet 6-10-2)

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

state	code	county	code
<u>N/A</u>			

state	code	county	code
<u>N/A</u>			

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lynne Emerson Monroe

organization Preservation Company date January 14, 1985

street & number 121 Water Street telephone (603) 778-1799

city or town Exeter, state New Hampshire 03833

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 *Jaw T. Dun*

title New Hampshire State Historic Preservation Officer date 7/29/85

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

Shelores Byers date 9/12/85
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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being somewhat pretentious, he also suffered from delusions of grandeur. His will, written one year before his death, describes the disbursement of an estate, worth several hundred thousand dollars. After his death however, he was found to be about \$50,000 in debt, and his real estate was sold at auction on June 27, 1901. The "mansion" sold to Adelaid Kent for \$9,600.

Moses acquired .2 acres of land for the house in the spring of 1864. This land contained buildings which were demolished for the construction of the house and carriage house in 1868. Local newspaper accounts refer to the house as a "substantial and handsome residence" and "a credit to the community". In 1883 he purchased the abutting property on Linden Street, which contained 3½ acres and buildings. This purchase increased the parcel to its present 5.5 acre configuration.

Demolishing the structures on the newly acquired parcel, Moses undertook an extensive landscaping campaign. He seems to have been proud of his estate, and to have made efforts to open it to the public. In fact, newspaper accounts suggest that the grounds were used as something of a public park.

After Moses' death in 1901, the house and grounds were substantially remodeled to suit the needs of its new owners, George and Adelaid Kent. The Kents owned and operated the Exeter Manufacturing Company, a large cotton mill, and also mills in Pittsfield, New Hampshire. The remodeling was undertaken by the Head and Doust Company of Manchester, New Hampshire. (The exterior work is detailed in Section 8 of this application.) The interior was changed radically at this time. For instance, new plumbing and heating systems were installed, and up-to-date (Colonial Revival) stylistic woodwork was introduced in the parlor and dining rooms. The carriage house was moved to the rear of the property at this time and it seems likely that the grounds received some attention too.

George Kent died in 1905, leaving his widow and four children to live in the house. Their son Richard eventually took over directorship of the mills and made 1 Pine Street his home, until his death in 1970. Today the house is owned by his daughter, Jane Kent Rockwell. This continuous occupation by one family is responsible for the remarkable state of preservation in which the house now stands. Because of this the house is still viewed as a local landmark, and enjoyed by Exeter residents and visitors alike.

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Major Bibliographical References

Bell, Charles H., History of Exeter. S. E. Farwell & Company, Boston, MA, 1888.

Brown's Handbook. (Of Geneology). 1888. (Available at the Exeter Public Library, Exeter, NH)

Business Directory of Rockingham County. 1910. (Available at the Exeter Public Library, Exeter, NH)

The Exeter News-Letter. April 27, 1868, p. 2; May 4, 1868, p. 3; Nov. 6, 1868; July 12, 1883; August 28, 1883; August 31, 1883; June 12, 1885; August 12, 1892; Oct. 17, 1892; Jan. 8, 1902

"News-Letter" Handbook of Exeter. 1883. (Available at the Exeter Public Library, Exeter, NH)

Probate. Rockingham County Court House. #10780, Henry Clay Moses.
Will: Volume 214, p. 97.
Decree: Volume 212, p. 420

Registry of Deeds. Rockingham County Court House.
Gordon to Moses. Volume 401, 1864, p. 364.
Carter to Moses. Volume 492, 1883, p. 70.
Edwards to Kent. Volume 588, 1901, p. 10.

Rockwell, Jane Kent. Interview. December 12, 1984.

Woodman, Elizabeth. Interview. December 20, 1984.

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Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

The Moses/Kent House lies on the parcel designated 09.13.002 in the tax records of the town of Exeter, New Hampshire. This parcel contains the 5.5 acres historically associated with the property being nominated. The boundary can be traced as follows:

Beginning at the northeast corner of the parcel 002 (the intersection of Pine and Linden Streets), the boundary proceeds south on Pine Street to the intersection with the north boundary line of parcel 003. Turning west, the boundary traces the perimeter of parcel 003 to its northwest corner and turns south again tracing the western boundaries of parcels 003, 004, and 005 until it meets the north boundary of parcel 006. Here the boundary turns southwest tracing the northern perimeter of parcel 006 until it meets the eastern boundary of parcel 001. Turning north, the boundary follows this line until it meets Linden Street, where, turning east, it proceeds until it returns to its starting point at Pine Street.

Note: The boundaries of the nominated property have been highlighted in yellow on the attached sketch map (7-10-3).

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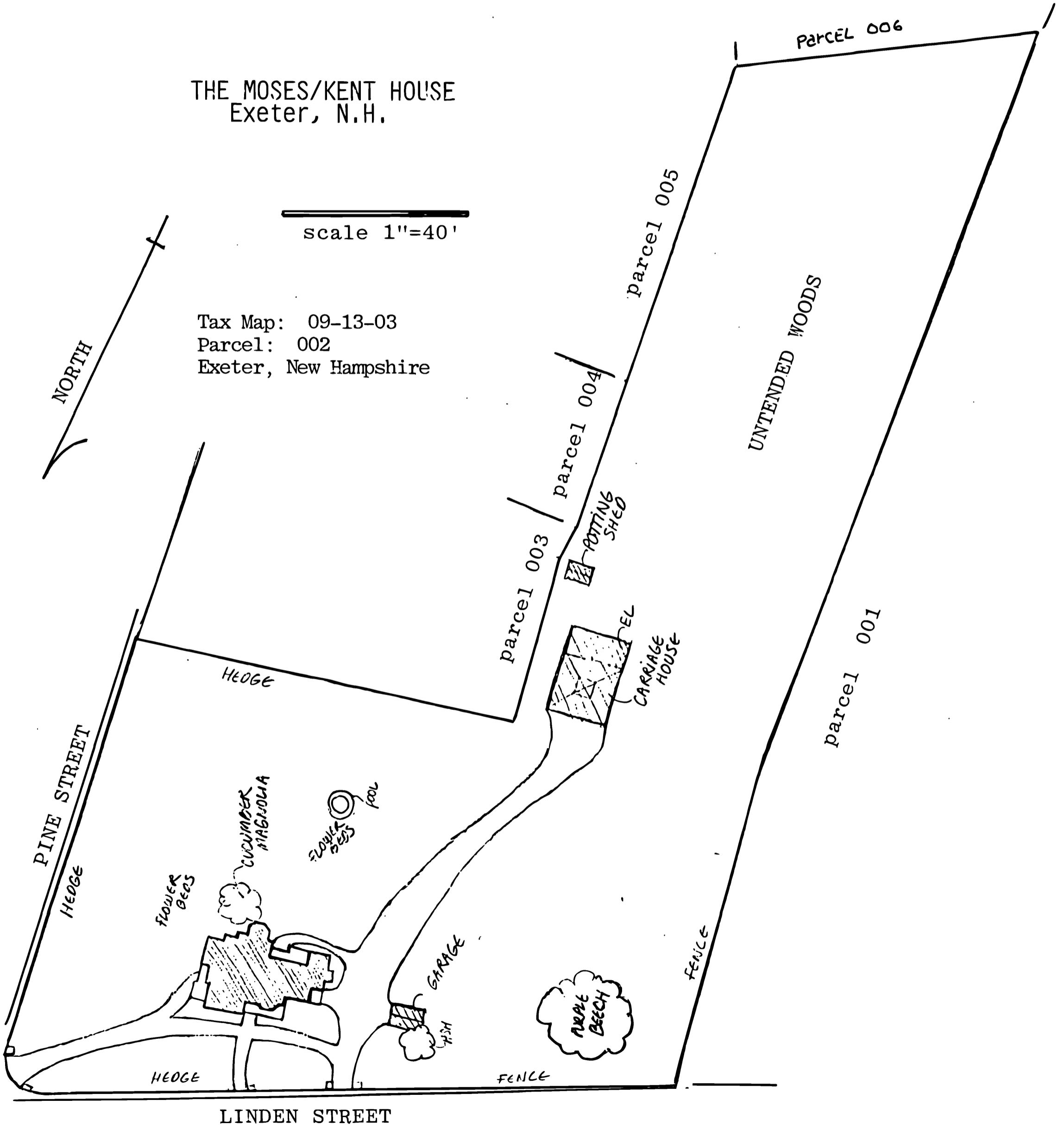
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This certifies that the appearance of the photographs has not changed.