

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received NOV 14 1984  
date entered DEC 13 1984

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

1. Name

historic Holderness Inn, Central House

and/or common Holderness Inn (preferred)

2. Location

street & number Route 3 ( 1/2 mile west of Rte 113 intersection) n/a not for publication

city, town Holderness n/a vicinity of

state New Hampshire code 33 county Grafton code 009

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<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 type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Vacant

4. Owner of Property

name The Science Center of New Hampshire

street & number Route 113 (PO Box 173)

city, town Holderness n/a vicinity of state New Hampshire 03245

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Grafton County Registry of Deeds (Book 1062, Page 488)

street & number Route 10

city, town North Haverhill state New Hampshire 03774

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Holderness Historic Resources Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1983  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Lakes Region Planning Commission

city, town Meredith state New Hampshire

## 7. Description

### Condition

excellent

good

fair

deteriorated

ruins

unexposed

### Check one

unaltered

altered

### Check one

original site

moved

date N/A

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Holderness Inn is a late 19th century hotel which stands on its own lot on the north side of Route 3 in Holderness village. The three and a half story main block is covered by a gabled mansard roof and set with its narrow south gable end facing the street. To the northeast of and perpendicular to the main block is a wing whose gabled mansard roof has been altered to a gable roof on its south side. (The gabled ends of both gable mansard roofs are so steep, almost vertical, that one is tempted to describe them as gambrel roofs disguised as mansard roofs.) The wing is three stories high, but, because of the slope of the lot, the lowest story is fully exposed only on the north and east, and the upper two stories correspond to the first two stories of the main block. The north (rear) facade of the wing is covered by a shallow two-story, shed-roofed addition. Part of the north facade of the addition is in turn covered by another small shed-roofed addition. A one-story veranda covers all but the rear (north) facade of the main block and is continued around the south and east facades of the wing at the same level.

Because of the veranda, the main block's brick foundation is visible only on the north facade. The main block's first two stories are clapboarded with cornerboards and topped by a box cornice with mouldings and frieze. The decoratively cut wooden shingles of the lower slopes of the gabled mansard roof are flared over the box cornice. Wooden shingles also sheath the pedimented gables. A shallow moulded cornice with frieze frames the gables and separates the lower roof slopes from the two asphalt shingled upper slopes. The same cornice also serves as the cornice for the shallow dormers whose shed roofs are extensions of the upper slopes of the main roof. One tall brick chimney with tapering cap breaks the upper western slope of the roof.

The veranda found on the three main facades of the main block has a slat base, wooden steps and floor. Ornate turned posts support a box cornice with frieze and mouldings. Between the turned posts are simple wooden railings, each supported by a short plain post in the center of each bay. Similar rails flank the steps. The beaded board ceiling is trimmed with ceiling mouldings and a frieze on the clapboarded walls of the main block. The asphalt shingled hip roof is interrupted by a small gable above the main entry steps in the center of the south veranda. Two more sets of steps are found on each side facade--in the southernmost bay of each facade, at the north end of the west veranda, and in the northernmost bay of the east veranda.

The main south facade of the main block contains in its central bay the main entry--double multipane glass doors with wooden frames, plain side trim and a simple entablature. The entry is actually located slightly east of the building's axis. This asymmetry is compensated for in the triple windows that flank the main entry. The eastern window has three six over one sash windows, while the slightly wider western window was a central eight over one sash window and flanking six over one sash windows. Both triple windows have the simple entablatures which grace all of the main block's windows (save for the dormer windows). The south facade's higher windows--four in the second story, three in the third story (the almost vertical lower slope of the mansard roof) and one in the gable--all have the same entablature, two over two sash and louvred shutters.

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The west (side) facade is four bays wide. The first story, sheltered by the veranda, has double six over one sash windows in the two southern bays, a six over one sash window in the third bay, and a two over two sash window in the north bay. The four second story windows all have two over two sash and louvred shutters. The four shed-roofed dormers in the third story also have two over two sash, as well as plain window trim and wooden shingled sides.

The east facade, although narrower because of the wing, is almost a duplicate of the west facade. The four bay first story again has double six over one sash windows in the two southern bays and a six over one sash window in the third bay. The northern bay contains a paneled door with double builtin windows and the usual simple entablature. The second story's three windows, like the western second story windows, have two over two sash. And the four dormers of the third story are identical to the four western dormers.

The windows of the rear facade, four in the first story, three in the second and third stories, and one in the gable, all have the usual simple entablatures and two over two sash. A metal fire escape leads down from a landing at the central third-story window past the western second story window to a folding metal ladder, which reaches to the ground.

(For the sake of clarity, we will speak of the three stories of the wing and the two stories of the additions as the lower, main, and upper stories. The main story corresponds to the first story of the main block and the upper story to the second story of the main block.)

The wing's brick foundation is visible only on the west facade. The hip-roofed veranda of the main block continues around the south and east facades of the wing's main story. The veranda has a latticework base, which, because of the slope of the land, is a full story high on the east facade. Basically of the same design as the main block's veranda, the wing's veranda has the same ornate turned posts, box cornice with mouldings and frieze, and beaded board ceiling with ceiling mouldings and inner frieze. The wing's veranda does differ in its railings, which are more elaborate balustrades with turned balusters. The only porch steps is a stairway at the north (rear) end of the eastern veranda.

The gabled mansard roof was converted to a gable roof on the south side of the wing. Partly as a result, the sheathing and roofs of the wing vary significantly from facade to facade. The lower and main stories of all visible facades are clapboarded with cornerboards, as is the now vertical upper story of the south facade, and the southern part of the east story's upper facade. Wooden shingles cover both gables and the upper stories of the west facade and the northern part of the east facade. The upper story of the north facade, still the lower slope of the mansard roof, is now sheathed with asphalt roll paper. The upper slopes of the roof are covered with asphalt shingles. A shallow moulded cornice with frieze tops the upper story of the

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south facade, frames the pedimented gable of the east facade, crowns the main story, where visible, on the east, north and west facades, tops the lower roof slope and dormers of the north facade, and finally ornaments the gable rakes of the west facade.

The doors and windows of the south facade's main story have simple entablatures, while the upper story windows, which are topped by the main cornice, can boast only plain trim. The five bay main story features from west to east--a multipane glass door with wooden frame, a triple window with six over one sash, a single six over one sash window, a multipane glass door with wooden frame and full sidelights, and, finally, a double six over one sash window. The four bay upper story, again described from west to east, has two double windows with louvred shutters, a small window, and lastly, another regular sized window with louvred shutters. All of the upper story windows have two over two sash, like their main block counterparts.

The wing's east facade is three bays wide. The lower story, hidden behind the latticework base of the veranda, has a central paneled door with builtin window and plain trim. Plain trim also surrounds the flanking two over two sash windows. Roughly in the center of the main and upper stories is found a shallow later addition--an enclosed stairway leading down from a paneled door with window, at the eastern end of the upper story's central hallway, to the veranda. The stairway addition's facades show a variety of sheathing--vertical beaded boarding on the main story, clapboarding with cornerboards on the south and east facades of the upper story, and wooden shingles on the upper story's north wall. The same shallow moulded cornice that ornaments the wing trims the stairway's asphalt shingled shed roof. The stairway's upper story has a two over two sash window in its eastern facade, while the lower story has a single pane eastern window, again with plain trim, as well as a vertical beaded board southern door serving the storage space under the stairs, and a northern screen door with plain trim, at the foot of the stairs. To the south of the stairway on the main story is a triple window with six over one sash, while to the north of the stairway is a paneled door with builtin window. To each side of the addition on the upper story is a two over two sash window. All of these windows and the door have simple entablatures. Decoratively cut shingles fill the blank pedimented gable.

The rear (north) facade's lower two stories are virtually covered by the two-story addition. All that is now visible is a short section of wall on the porch at the east end of the main story, which contains two small four-pane windows, one now boarded up. The upper story, although now sheathed with roll asphalt paper, still has its three dormers, whose shed roofs are extensions of the upper slope of the mansard roof. The dormers have two over two sash, plain trim, asphalt roll paper sidewalls, and the same cornice as the wing itself.

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The west facade's clapboarded first story is topped by the shallow moulded cornice with frieze. The wooden shingles that cover the upper parts of the facade flare slightly over the cornice. Unlike the east gable, the west gable is not pedimented, so the upper story and the gable are continuously sheathed with shingles. The facade is divided by a tall, large brick exterior chimney with concrete cap. To each side of the chimney in both stories is a single window. The main story windows have two over two sash and simple entablatures. The upper story windows boast the same trim, with the northern window having two over two sash, the narrower southern window having one over one sash.

As noted above, the two-story addition covers the entire north facade of the wing. Set on a concrete foundation, the walls are clapboarded with cornerboards. The low-pitched shed roof is trimmed by a shallow cornice with mouldings and frieze, and sheathed with asphalt roll paper. At the eastern end of the main story, the shed roof shelters a small screened porch. The lower story of the east facade is largely covered by the stairs down to the ground from the veranda and the screened porch's door. The stairs have a latticework base, wooden steps and simple wooden rails. The screened porch has low shingled walls, square posts, screened panels, a screen door, vertical beaded boarding in the transom panel over the door and in the eastern half gable. The western inner wall of the screened porch is clapboarded with a four panel door and a two over two sash window, both having plain trim. Three similar two over two windows are found in the main story of the north facade. Plain trim also surrounds the varied openings of the lower story, being from west to east, a three-pane window, an opening now covered by screening and plywood, a paneled door with builtin window, and a two-pane window. All but the latter are sheltered by a shallow shed-roofed hood, supported by simple braces and the roof of the other addition's small porch. The hood, which has plain close eaves and exposed rafters, covers a narrow concrete floor. The one bay wide west facade of the main addition has a short boarded up window in the lower story and another two over two sash window with plain trim in the main story.

The small addition to the rear of the main addition has only one room in each of its two stories. Set on a concrete foundation and clapboarded with cornerboards, the addition is covered by a low-pitched shed roof, sheathed with asphalt roll paper and trimmed by a simple box cornice with frieze. The windows all have plain trim and two over two sash. The east facade's lower story has a paneled door with builtin window and a window, which are sheltered by a small shed-roofed porch with concrete floor, square wooden posts, plain board ceiling, a simple lateral box cornice and close gable eaves. The main stories of the east and north facades each have a single window, while the lower story of the north facade has a double window. And the west facade can boast only one window--a single window in the lower story.

The interiors of the Holderness Inn basically served the following functions. The first floor of the main block was used for public rooms, while the connected main story of the wing and its additions housed a dining room and the kitchen. The upper stories of both the main block and the wing contained guest rooms. And the lower story of the wing and its additions were used for maintenance and storage areas.

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The first story rooms of the main block generally have hardwood floors, vertical beaded boarding wainscoating with moulded coping beneath plaster walls, and plaster ceilings. The windows and doors have moulded trim with cornerblocks. The main entry in the south facade opens into the Inn's largest room. Two square pillars and two pilasters supporting an entablature divide the room into two spaces--a long central passageway and the lobby to the east. The pillars and pilasters, ornamented with paneled sides, moulded bases and capitals, support a heavy entablature with mouldings and paneled soffit. A picture moulding encircles the room at lintel level. The room is well lit by the double entry doors and a triple window in the south wall, two double windows, a single window and the side door in the east wall. On the west side of the passageway are found double multipane glass doors with wooden frames into the parlor, a four-paneled door to what is now the women's restroom, a short stairway of three steps down to the similar door that serves the men's restroom, and just next to it, the main stairway to the upper floors. At the end of the passageway, double multipane glass doors with wooden frames open into the west dining room.

In the southwest corner of the first floor is found the former parlor, which like the lobby has a picture moulding at lintel level as well as the usual wainscoating. The parlor ceiling is distinguished by an ornate rosette for the lights. The northern end of the parlor was partitioned off by the Science Center to create a women's restroom. The new plaster board wall with baseboard was placed so as to divide a double window in the west wall, giving each room one of the two windows. The parlor still retains a triple window in the south wall and another double window in the west wall. The women's room is now finished with a linoleum floor, plain plaster walls, modern restroom fixtures, and a plaster ceiling with ceiling moulding. The window and the door do retain their original moulded trim with cornerblocks. The men's room is a two level space, as part of the room was lowered to fit under the main stair landing. The lower level has the usual vertical beaded board wainscoating, but the upper level has just plain plaster walls. Like the women's room, the men's room has a linoleum floor and one window in the west wall.

The west dining room which occupies the entire northern end of the main block's first story is well lit, with one window in the west wall and four windows in the north wall. Two ornate rosettes for lighting fixtures grace the plaster ceiling. In the east wall, double multipane glass doors with wooden frames and the usual trim open into the east dining room which occupies the southern half of the wing's main story. The east dining room has the same hardwood floor and vertical beaded board wainscoating with moulding coping beneath plaster walls as is found in the main block's public spaces. But the ceiling has a ceiling moulding; and the windows and doors have plain frames. Like the other public rooms, the east dining room is well lit, with a triple window in the east wall, a double window, a glass door with sidelights, a single window, a triple window, and another glass door in the south wall. In the northwest corner is a small builtin cabinet with outer walls of vertical beaded boarding, topped by a moulded cornice. Double five-paneled doors in the north wall open into the kitchen area which occupies the rest of the main story of the wing and its additions.



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The kitchen area includes four rooms, two in the northern half of the wing, one long room in the main addition, and one small room in the later addition. All four rooms have linoleum floors, plain window and door trim. The dining room doors open into an almost square room in the northwest corner of the wing proper. This room has plaster walls with baseboards, builtin kitchen cabinets, and a plaster ceiling with moulding. The room is lit by two windows in the west wall. Doors in the north and east walls lead into the addition and the other room of the wing proper. The large room in the northeast corner of the wing was converted by the Science Center into an animal holding facility. It now has numerous builtin cabinets and cages, plywood walls, and a modern suspended ceiling. A short, wide screened opening high in the north wall allows in natural light from the addition's windows. A door at the east end of the room opens onto the veranda. In the northeast corner is a small former pantry which, although it now has a linoleum floor, still retains its horizontal beaded board wainscoating, plaster walls and plaster ceiling. The pantry has a small window which looks out onto the screened porch. The main story of the main addition is devoted to one long room which was also renovated by the Science Center for animal displays. The walls are now sheathed with plywood and formica panels, and the ceiling is covered with plasterboard. The room has one window in both the east and west walls, and three windows in the north wall. A paneled door opens onto the screened porch to the east. A modern folding door in the north wall serves the small room of the later addition's main story. This last room has composition board walls and ceiling, and two windows.

The stairway serving the second and third floors of the main block begins on the west side of the central passageway on the first floor. The stairway has a balustrade with turned balusters, moulded railing, a lower square newel post with paneled sides, moulded base and cap, and other turned newel posts with pendants. The stairway's plaster walls have vertical beaded board wainscoating. Both landings are lit by diamond shaped windows with multipane colored glass and moulded trim with cornerblocks. The stairwell is now partially enclosed with plasterboard.

The stairway lands on the second floor at the north end of a central hall, which serves three guest rooms to the east, two guest rooms and a public bath on the west. Perpendicular to the central hall is another hallway that serves the three guest rooms on the north side of the main block. The opening between the central and north halls is distinguished by an "arch", actually composed of nine short, straight segments, and ornamented by decorative "impost blocks". Both halls have hardwood floors, plaster walls with baseboards, and plaster ceilings. Moulded trim with cornerblocks surround the four-paneled doors and the one window at the south end of the central hall. To provide ventilation to the rooms that had only one window, small ventilating doors with moulded frames were added above these rooms' hall doors. The guest rooms are treated like the halls, with hardwood floors, plaster walls with baseboards, moulded window and door trim with cornerblocks, and plaster ceilings. All of the guest rooms

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have closets. Two guest rooms on each side of the central hall are connected by doors to form suites. The guest rooms north and south of the stairway are further distinguished by having small private bathrooms located to the west of the stairway and the public bathroom south of the stairs. The three bathrooms all have vertical beaded board wainscoting on at least one wall. The southern private bathroom, which has no exterior window, is lit by a high, four-pane window in its north wall, which diffuses light from the northern bathroom, which does have a window.

The upper story of the wing is reached by turning the corner at the east end of the north hall, and then following the angled corridor to the wing's central hall. This central hall has the same hardwood floor, plaster walls with baseboards, and plaster ceiling. But, the doors and window have only plain trim. Again, small ventilator doors, here with plain frames, are found over the doors of guest rooms with only one window. The central hall has a narrow window at the west end and the door to the enclosed stairway at the east end. The four doors on each side of the hall serve three guestrooms and a shallow alcove to the south, three guestrooms and a public bathroom to the north. (Two of the northern guest rooms were combined by the Science Center to create a laboratory.) The wing's guest rooms and bath rooms have board floors, the usual plaster walls with baseboards and plaster ceilings, but only plain window and door trim. The north and south outer walls of the rooms slant to accommodate the pitch of the mansard roof. The northern guestrooms and the southeastern guestroom have single dormer windows, while two of the southern guest rooms have double "dormer" windows. (Of course, no sign of the southern dormers is now visible on the exterior.) Only three of the guest rooms have closets. All three southern guest rooms are connected, by a door between the western and central rooms, and by a narrow common bathroom, lit by a small window, between the central and eastern rooms. The new laboratory differs from the other rooms only in being larger and having a linoleum floor and some modern builtin cabinets.

The third floor of the main block is divided by a central hall, lit by a window at each end. The hall and guest rooms have the expected hardwood floors, plaster walls with baseboards, and plaster ceilings. But here, the plain frames of the windows and doors are distinguished only by simple cornerblocks. Small ventilator doors with plain frames appear again above the four-paneled hall doors of the one windowed rooms. The hall's east wall is indented three times to go around the closets of the five eastern guestrooms. (The two northern pairs of eastern guest rooms are connected by doors to form small suites.) Five four paneled doors on the west side of the hall serve three guest rooms, the public bathroom south of the main stairway, and the attic stairs. The two southern guestrooms on the west side, each with a closet, are connected by doors to form a suite with a private bathroom west of the public bathroom. The guestroom in the northeastern corner also has a closet, and a private bathroom west of the stairs. The three bathrooms all have vertical beaded boarding on two walls. Again, only the northern bathroom has its own exterior window. The southern private bathroom is lit by a four-pane window high in its north wall. The light from the northern bathroom is diffused



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through the southern bathroom, and through another high four-pane window into the public bathroom. As in the wing, the western and eastern outer walls are slanted, reflecting the pitch of the mansard roof.

Just north of the main stairway, is the attic stairway, with its plain plaster walls with baseboard. The unfinished attic, with its exposed rafters, and exposed studs in the end walls, is only partially floored. The attic is essentially one large space lit by a window in each gable. A small section is partitioned off with vertical boarding to house the Inn's metal water tanks.

The lower stories of the wing and its additions are used for storage, the furnace, and maintenance. They cannot be reached from the upper levels of the building and must be entered from the outside. The small room that occupies the lower story of the later addition is separated by a solid wall from the rest of the lower level. Used recently for animal display, this room, with its concrete floor, plaster walls, and composition board ceiling, is largely filled with cages and builtin cabinets. The five storage and maintenance rooms in the main addition and the wing have concrete or dirt floors, exposed ceilings, and, generally, unfinished walls of brick, stone, or boards. The largest lower level room does have two walls of horizontal beaded boards. And in the eastern room of the main addition, the wing's original clapboarded wall can still be seen complete with double exterior doors and a two over two sash window.

The area included in the nominated property is relatively flat, but slopes gently towards the rear, to the north and east. The grounds are largely grassed. Foundation shrubs are found around the building. And two small clumps of trees grow in the space north of the main block and west of the wing. Trees and shrubs form a screen along the eastern property boundary. The wide front lawn is dotted with trees. The flat rectangular lawn to the west of the Inn is outlined by rows of trees and almost divided by another row of trees. An unpaved drive leaves the street west of the building. The western branch of the drive crosses the west lawn to reach a parking lot to its west. The eastern branch passes in front of the building, around the eastern end of the wing, and then turns west to pass behind the building.

## 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 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 type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Tourism
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1895–96 **Builder/Architect** prob. John S. Davison

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Holderness Inn is significant in the area of tourism as one of the few early summer hotels to survive intact in the Lakes Region, an important tourist area. It is, in fact, the only 19th century hotel still standing in the Squam Lakes area. The Inn is also significant in the area of architecture, as a well preserved Victorian vernacular hotel, a pleasing building apparently designed and built by its owner.

Tourism. In the mid to late 19th century, the Lakes Region of New Hampshire developed as a major resort area. Easily accessible by railroad and already noted for their scenic beauty, the major lakes--Winnepesaukee, Squam, Wentworth, Winnisquam, and Newfound--attracted many summer visitors. The Squam Lakes, the second largest lake system in New Hampshire, were only less popular than the larger Lake Winnepesaukee. Served by the Boston, Concord & Montreal Railroad, the Squam Lakes began to develop as a tourist area after the Civil War, and flourished in the last two decades of the 19th century.

The summer visitors were at first accommodated in houses converted into inns and boarding houses. Later, hotels were built on the lakes specifically for the purpose of housing tourists in the summer months. Typical of the early boarding houses was the Central House, a two and a half story gable-roofed house in Holderness village. This former parsonage had been converted into a summer boarding house by John S. Davison. In the evening of June 3, 1895, the Central House was totally destroyed by fire, which was thought at the time to have been set by an "incendiary". A special Holderness town meeting, held a month later, voted not only to exempt Davison from taxes for ten years if he would rebuild, but also instructed the selectmen to offer a reward for the capture and conviction of the arsonist. The reward was never collected. But, Davison, encouraged no doubt by the tax exemption and the prosperity of the summer resort trade, was soon at work building a new Central House, larger than its predecessor. The recollection of Davison family members is that John S. Davison probably designed the new inn and supervised the construction himself. By September 7, 1895, work was under-way on the new building. The local newspaper reported continuous progress through the fall, winter and spring, as Davison strove to get the inn ready for the next summer season. By mid June, the Central House was "nearly completed".<sup>1</sup> The first guests registered on July 21, 1896. Although the name was later changed from the Central House to the Holderness Inn, the hotel continued to be owned and operated by the Davison family until 1967, when it was sold to the Squam Lakes Science Center.<sup>2</sup> The Science Center used the building for offices and exhibits until the construction of a modern headquarters building.

<sup>1</sup>Ashland Item, June 13, 1896.

<sup>2</sup>The Squam Lakes Science Center later changed its name to The Science Center of New Hampshire.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

(see continuation sheet)

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .80 acres

Quadrangle name Holderness, N.H.

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

### UMT References

A 

1	9	2	9	1	4	0	0	4	8	4	5	1	0	0
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)

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

state N/A code county code

state N/A code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title David L. Rue11

organization Lakes Region Planning Commission date May 30, 1984

street & number Main Street telephone (603) 279-8171

city or town Meredith state New Hampshire

# 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.

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer signature *William C. ...*

title New Hampshire Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date 10/26/84

### For NPS use only

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

*J. Wilcox Byer*  
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the National Register date 12-13-84

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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Now vacant, the Holderness Inn still appears much as it did in 1896. Major exterior changes have been limited to the wing. At some point, the wing's gabled mansard roof was altered to a gable roof on the south side. An enclosed stairway was added as a fire escape on the east end of the wing, sometime after 1924. A two-story kitchen addition appeared on the rear facade of the wing, followed by a smaller addition for a laundry room at the northeast corner in the early 1930's. Interior changes have also been limited. Modernization of the Inn in the early 1930's included a new steam heating system and the addition of a few small bathrooms. Although the Science Center used the building for quite different functions, notably the exhibition of animals, it made relatively few changes. Part of the parlor was partitioned off for a second restroom. The kitchen area was remodeled for the keeping of animals. And two rooms in the upper story of the wing were combined for a laboratory.

Basically, however, the Holderness Inn remains a late 19th century summer hotel with the same exterior dominated by a veranda, and the same internal layout of public spaces and guestrooms. There are few such early hotels now surviving in the Lakes Region. The Inn is the last 19th century hotel in the Squam Lakes area. Its contemporaries, such as the Mount Livermore Hotel, the Asquam House, the Willows, and the Batchelder House, have all burned or been demolished. In the entire Lakes Region, there are only six remaining hotels of the same vintage. Besides the Holderness Inn, there is one early hotel on Newfound Lake (the Pasquaney Inn in Bridgewater) and four such hotels on Lake Winnepesaukee (the Lake Side Hotel at the Weirs, the Christmas Tree Inn in Gilford, the Oakbirch Inn on Alton Bay, and the Long Island Inn in Moultonboro). The Holderness Inn, among the best preserved of this small group, is a fine example of the hotels that played so large a role in the development of tourism in the Lakes Region and the State of New Hampshire.

Architecture. The Holderness Inn is an attractive Victorian vernacular building. John S. Davison was not a trained architect, so his design does not have the precise symmetry or the stylistic allusions typical of professionally designed late 19th century buildings. The exterior ornament is generally simple, limited to entablatures over the windows and doors, and mouldings in the cornices. Still, the design is successful, relying for its charm on the encircling veranda and the gabled mansard roof. The wide veranda, that essential feature of the 19th century hotel, is distinguished by turned posts, a box cornice with mouldings, and an ornamental gable over the main entry. The gabled mansard roof is the Inn's most distinctive feature. Decorated by cut wooden shingles, a pedimented moulded upper cornice and flaring eaves above the lower box cornice, the roof is punctuated by shed-roofed dormers on the sides and shuttered windows with entablatures on the gabled ends. The mansard roof was a common feature of late 19th century hotels. Both the Asquam House and the Willows, for example, had mansard roofs. But the Holderness Inn's gabled mansard roof is a particularly pleasing one, a tribute to John S. Davison's untutored skill as a designer. The interiors again are not lavish. The ornament is limited largely to beaded board

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wainscoating and moulded trim, sometimes with cornerblocks. The large pillars and pilasters in the lobby and the pseudo-arch in the second story hallway are the only unusual ornamental features. But, as the local newspaper reported in 1896, the Inn is notable for its "well appointed, light, airy...rooms"<sup>3</sup> and its "roomy hallways and staircases"<sup>4</sup>. The rooms are pleasant, if not elaborate spaces, quite suitable for a quiet country hotel. John S. Davison was a highly competent, if not spectacular designer. And his hotel is now arguably the Lakes Region's most attractive surviving late 19th century hotel.

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<sup>3</sup>Ashland Item, June 13, 1896

<sup>4</sup>Ashland Item, July 25, 1896



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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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Tink Taylor, "Holderness Debates Fate of Old Inn", Laconia Evening Citizen, May 12, 1983.

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Correspondence - John S. Davison (grandson of builder of Holderness Inn).

Interview - Barbara Currier, May 11, 1984.

Interview - Doris Graton, June 29, 1983.

Interview - Peter Hendel, April 27, 1984.

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The nominated property is bounded on the south by Route 3, on the west by a line parallel to the Inn's western veranda at a distance of approximately 98 feet, on the north by a line parallel to the north facade of the main block at a distance of approximately 41 feet, and on the east by the eastern property boundary and a short northerly continuation on the same line as the property boundary to an intersection with the northern nomination boundary. The western nomination boundary corresponds to a line of trees which marks the westerly edge of the lawn west of the Inn. And the northern nomination boundary corresponds in part to the line of trees that marks the northerly edge of the same lawn. The boundaries were chosen to include the Holderness Inn and its immediate grounds, that is to say the lawns that surround the building. The remainder of the 199 acres owned by the Science Center of New Hampshire is now grown up to brush and woods, and dotted with exhibition buildings and facilities. Having changed substantially in character since the construction of the Inn, these remaining acres have been excluded from the nominated property. (Holderness Tax Map 5, Lot 63)

Boundaries of the nominated property have been highlighted in yellow on the attached sketch map.

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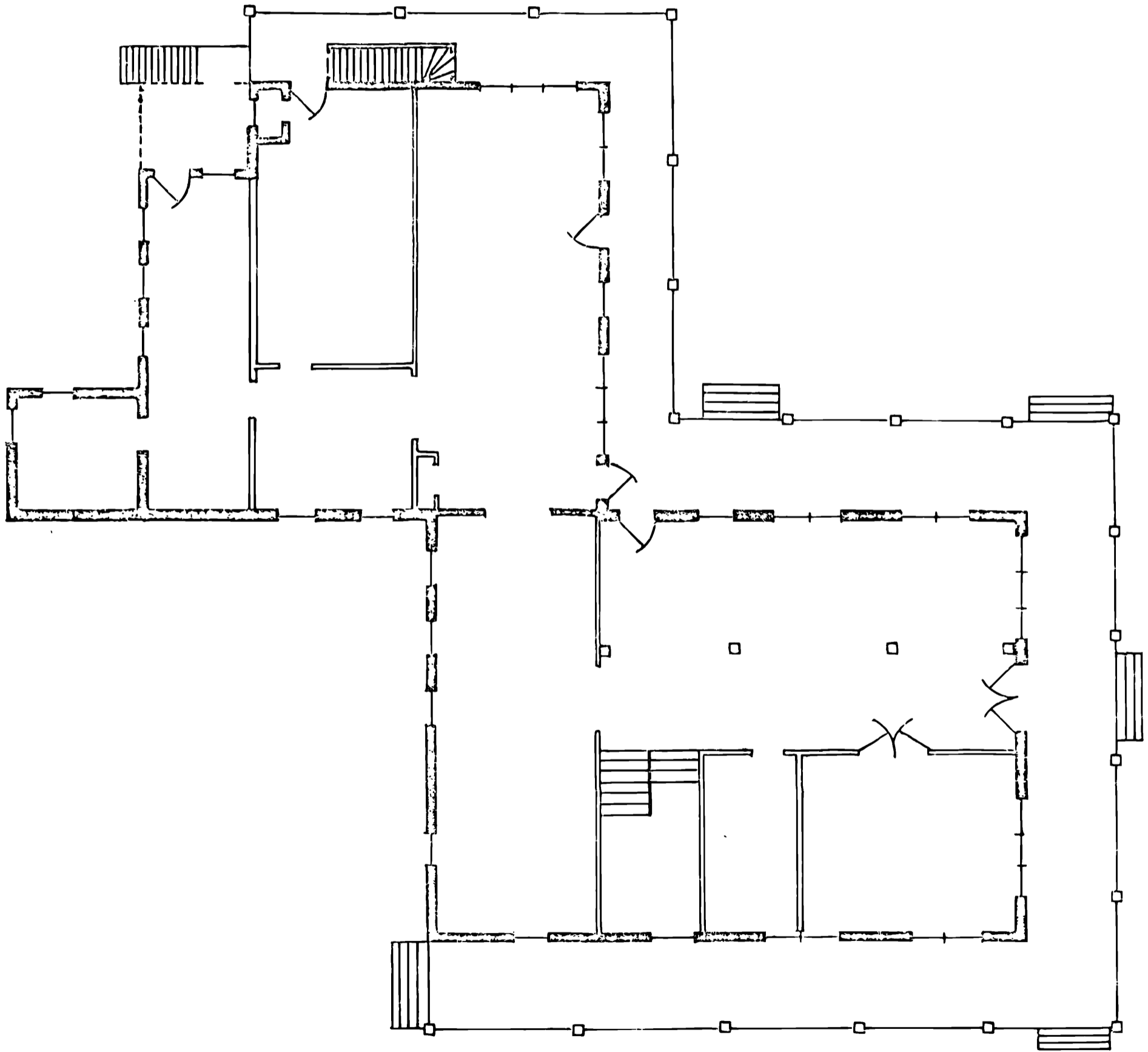
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**HOLDERNESS INN**  
**GROUND FLOOR PLAN**

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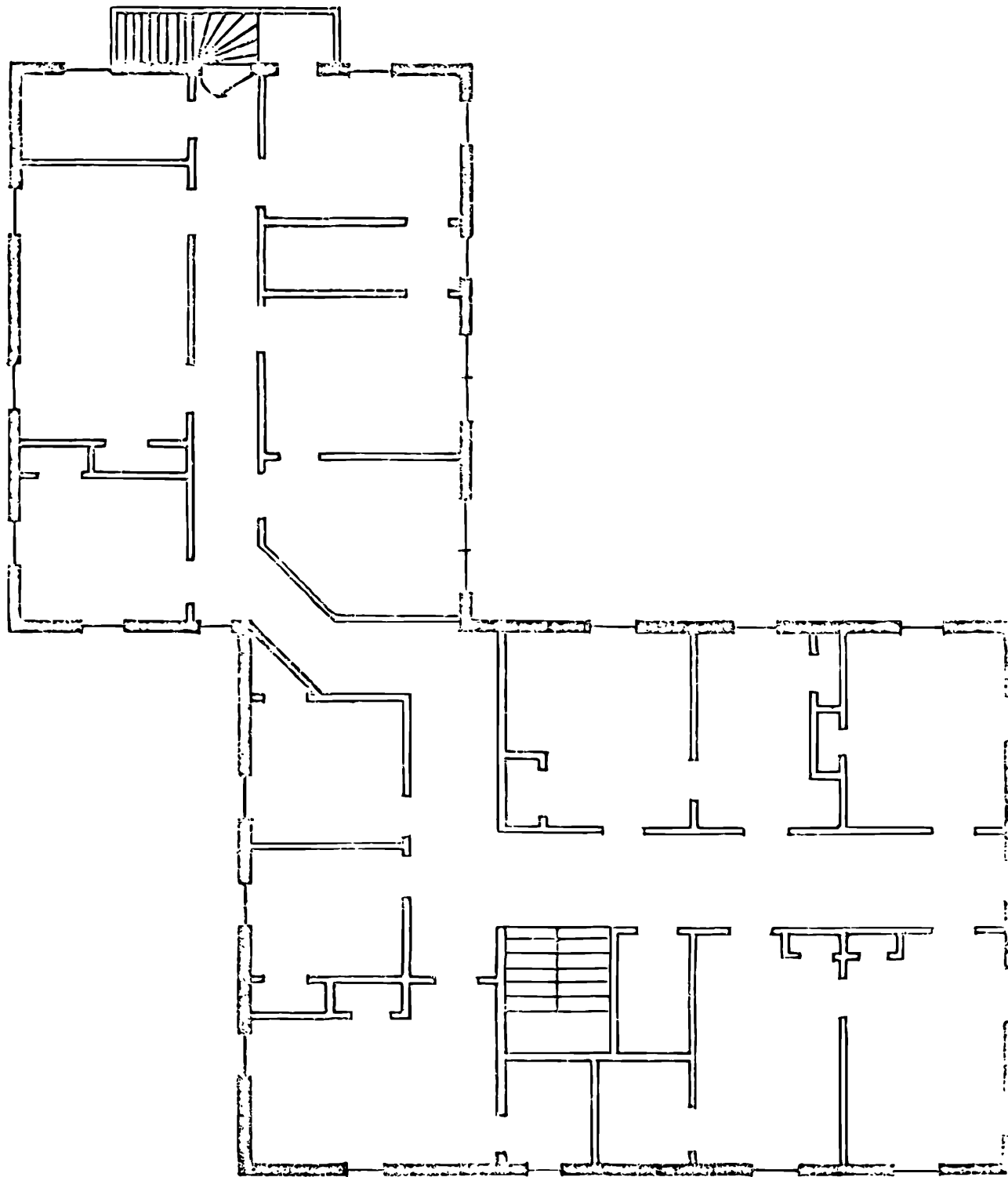
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**HOLDERNESS INN**  
**SECOND FLOOR PLAN**

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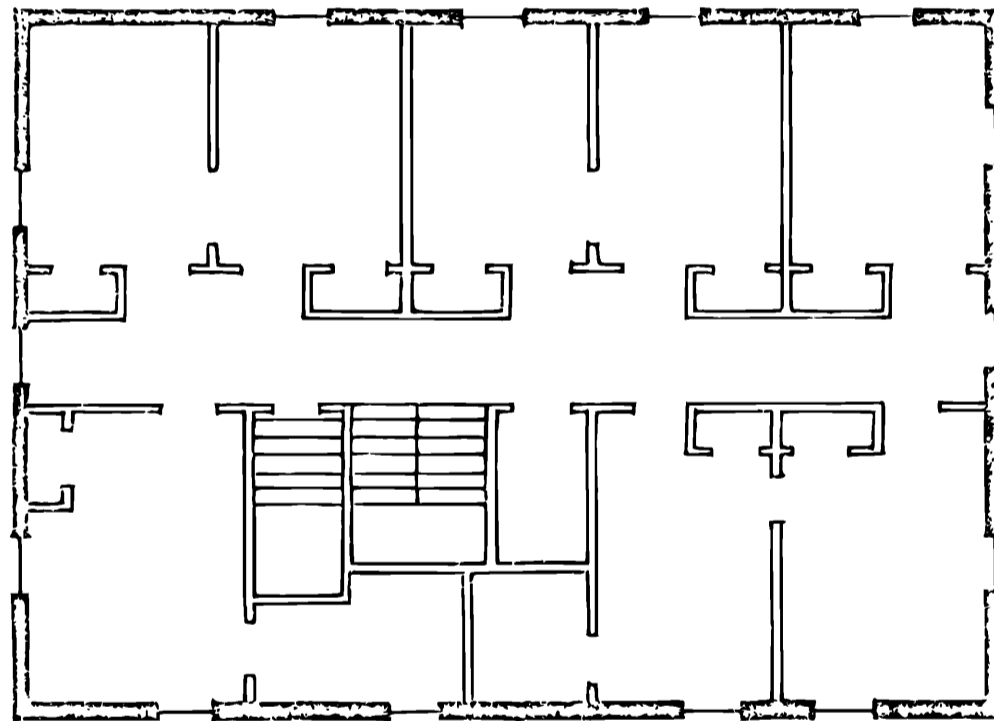
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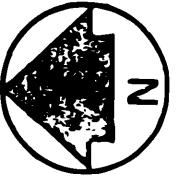
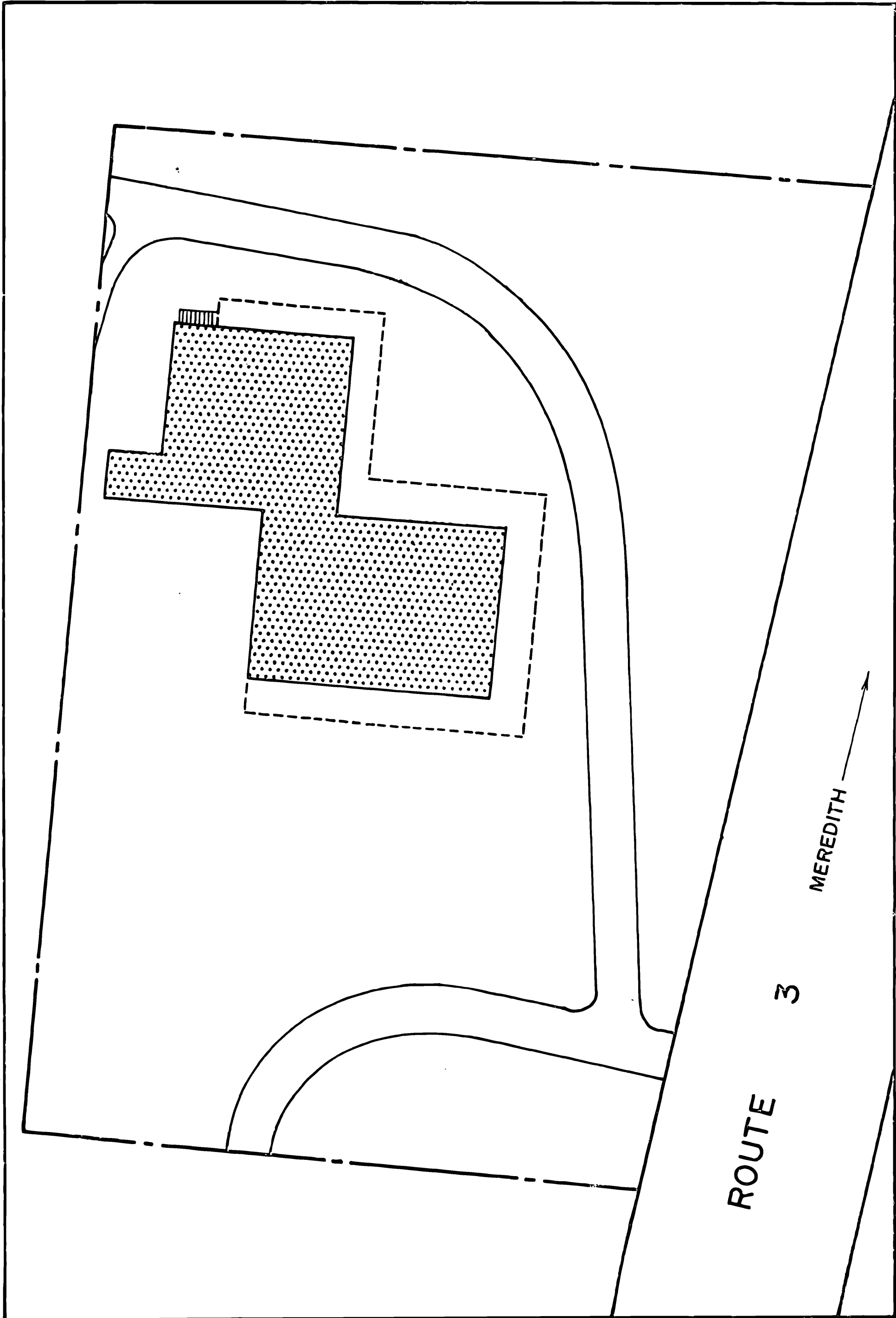
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HOLDERNESS INN

THIRD FLOOR PLAN





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