

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

26

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 7

## RURAL OTTER CREEK VALLEY HISTORIC DISTRICT (#1)

## Section 7 - Description

The Rural Otter Creek Valley Historic District occupies a central valley-bottom portion of the MRA along Route 7 west of Otter Creek. The district contains an outstanding concentrated group of nine adjacent historic farmsteads interspersed with open fields and pastures; the buildings generally flank the highway. Only two of these farms remain commercially active, and their owners have either acquired or rented land and/or buildings of adjoining farms. Several of the farms in the historic district are associated with the Munson and related families. Descriptions of individual structures are listed below. Numbers refer to the accompanying sketch map.

## 1-1 Arthur Davenport Farm

Lying next to and south of the Homer Waldo Farm and defining the north end of the MRA historic district, the Arthur Davenport Farm comprises the former tenant house, dairy barn, and other outbuildings together with the agricultural land that historically constituted Hillside Farm, whose main house (#1-1) stands adjacent and under separate ownership. The cultivated fields and pastures of the farm extend westward from the principal buildings, which are situated on a rise of ground overlooking the Otter Creek to the east.

The Davenport House was constructed c.1850 at the north edge of the grouped farm buildings; its Greek Revival style has been partly concealed behind synthetic siding applied in 1978. The large dairy barn was erected in 1963 on the site of its 19th century predecessor (destroyed by fire) between the Davenport and Hill Houses; the barn postdates the 1954 subdivision of the latter house from the farm property. Three other outbuildings stand to the rear (west) of the Hill House, among which the equipment shed was also constructed after the subdivision.

## 1-1 Arthur Davenport House; c.1850

The 2 1/2 story, wood-framed house stands oriented with its slate-shingled gable roof perpendicular to Waldo Lane. Only the three-bay north eaves elevation reveals the original clapboard sheathing and Greek Revival stylistic features; both the three-bay, sidehall, main (east) gable facade and the south elevation have been sheathed with aluminum siding. The window openings are fitted with 2/2 sash.

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

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



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 8

The north elevation displays the eaves entablature that formerly continued along the raking eaves of the east facade with partial horizontal cornice returns. The molded surround of the triangular gable window has also been covered, and the diamond-paned window has been replaced by metal screening. Prior to the application of the siding, the left-bay entrance was enframed by smooth pilasters carrying an entablature like that at eaves.

A smaller-scale, 1 1/2 story, clapboarded kitchen-shed wing extends from the rear (west) gable elevation of the main block. Its south elevation incorporates a right-bay entrance, screened-in porch, and a vehicle stall at the left end. The wing appears to have been constructed separately and earlier than the main block, possibly on a different site.

**A. Dairy Barn; 1963**

The elongated wood-framed and clapboarded dairy barn extends 36 feet by 120 feet beneath a gambrel roof sheathed with standing seam metal. The fenestration, limited largely to the first story, consists predominantly of coupled single-light windows. The first story stable contains metal stanchions for milking 51 cows. Equipped with a 500 gallon, stainless-steel collection tank, the milkhouse occupies a small 1 story, gable-roofed ell that projects from the north end of the barn's east elevation.

A cylindrical silo is attached to the rear (west) elevation of the barn. Built of interlocking cinder blocks, the silo rises 35 feet with a diameter of 14 feet to a metal domed cap. A metal weathervane bearing the name of the silo manufacturer, "Marietta," surmounts the cap.

Oriented like the present barn and similar in size, the previous dairy barn on the site differed principally by having a slate-shingled gable roof atop higher clapboarded wall surfaces. A cylindrical wood-stave silo stood next to its east eaves elevation.

The well-maintained present barn constitutes an important component of the valley's agricultural environment; it is considered non-contributing to the MRA on the basis of its age.

**B. Milkhouse; c.1900**

The detached milkhouse that served the previous dairy barn remains standing south of the present barn. The small-scale, 1 1/2 story, wood-framed and clapboarded building has a

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



6

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 9

slate-shingled gable roof. A 1 story south ell carries atop its gable roof an overscaled chimney with a corbeled cap.

C. Heifer Shed; c.1900, c.1970

Standing in the pasture to the west of the former milkhouse, this 1 1/2 story, wood-framed building was constructed c.1900 and then rebuilt c.1970. Its fiberboard exterior sheathing dates from the reconstruction but the gable roof retains the original slate shingles. A small ventilating cupola was added to the ridge also in c.1970, enabling the use of the building for maple sugaring. The two-bay north gable front includes a vehicle entrance.

D. Equipment Shed; 1968, c.1980

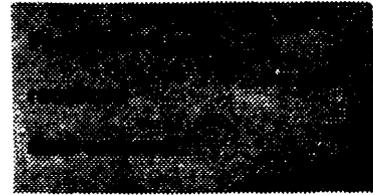
Situated in the pasture between the former milkhouse and the heifer shed, a 1 story, pole-framed, vertically boarded shed with a metal-sheathed saltbox roof has been extended twice from its original 1968 size. Nine open stalls now punctuate its northeast front elevation. Non-contributing due to age.

1-2 Hillside Farm

Middle 20th century transfers of ownership have separated the Joel Hill House and one outbuilding from the complex of buildings and agricultural land that formerly constituted Hillside Farm; those buildings and land have been incorporated into the Arthur Davenport Farm (#1-1). Nevertheless the dignified Hill House continues to dominate the ensemble from its position on a low knoll overlooking the Otter Creek, surrounded by informally landscaped grounds and shaded by mature deciduous trees. The sole outbuilding remaining with the property, an altered shed-garage, stands to the rear (west) of the house.

The Federal style brick house is reputed to have been constructed in c.1805. During the late 1820s, Israel Munson, brother of Isaac Munson (who owned his namesake farm to the south, #1-9) purchased this farm for their sister, Lois, and her husband, Joel Hill, a merchant in Wallingford village. The house may have been given a Greek Revival remodeling later in their ownership. Subsequently their son, Israel M. Hill, inherited the farm. By 1869, W. W. Kelley had acquired the property, including the adjacent tenant house now belonging to Arthur Davenport. Kelley, owner of a marble quarry in South Wallingford, might have given the main house the overlay of Italianate Revival features many of which were removed during a late 1940s restoration.

1-2 Joel Hill House; c.1805

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 10

Distinguished by marble trim and the Flemish bond of its brick work (now painted white), the 2 1/2 story main block stands parallel to the historic (pre-1937) alignment of the valley highway. A marble ashlar foundation enhances the main (east) eaves facade while the less publicly exposed elevations have marble rubble. Broad marble steps approach the main (east) entrance. Fitted with 1/1 sash, the window openings are framed with marble sills and splayed lintels. The gable roof is shingled with slate, and is pierced by an interior chimney at each end of the east slope. Matching chimneys have been removed from the west slope.

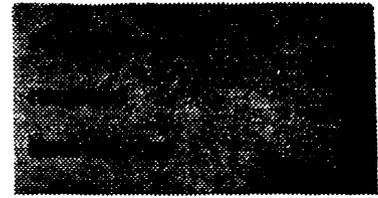
The five-bay east facade is arranged symmetrically around the central entrance; its present appearance dates from the late 1940s restoration. Within the semielliptical-arched opening, a fanlight with radiating comes surmounts the doorway which is flanked by two-thirds sidelights (with curvilinear comes) inset between pairs of slender reeded pilasters. The four first story window openings were also restored in the 1940s. A box cornice follows the horizontal eaves.

The latter feature encloses a pediment on the north and south gable elevations. Each brick tympanum is punctuated by two windows of reduced size. The lower stories display irregular fenestration, the south elevation being marked by an off-center, first-story Italianate bay window with a projecting cornice supported by paired brackets.

A 1 story, mostly brick ell with a slate gable roof projects from the rear (west) elevation of the main block; its south eaves elevation differs with its clapboard sheathing. The ell contains a side entrance on each of its three elevations along with irregular fenestration.

The Hill House received significant alterations during the middle 19th century, now represented only by the bay window on the south elevation. The east facade's first story was given a radically different Italianate Revival treatment. Each pair of window openings was replaced by a broad bay window similar in appearance to the surviving representative but with paired 2/1 sash in the central panel. Linking the bay windows, a one-bay entrance porch with turned balustrade projected forward beneath a shallow segmental-arched roof supported by bracketed chamfered posts. The main entrance appears to have been segmental-headed with double-leaf doors. The entire Italianate ensemble was removed from the facade during the late 1940s.

A. Shed-garage; c.1890, 1951

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 11

Standing to the rear (west) of the Hill House, a multi-purpose building comprises three sections. The 19th century, 2 story, wood-framed and clapboarded, gable-roofed central block possesses a three-bay east gable front with a central entrance; a large 1 story, shed-roofed wing (former chicken coop) extends from the south eaves elevation. In 1951, a 1 story, concrete-block, gable-roofed garage ell was added to the opposite (north) elevation; three stalls with segmented overhead doors enter its east eaves front.

## (#1-3) Dyer Townsend Farm

The buildings of the Dyer Townsend Farm are situated at the intersection of Route 7 and Cook Drive, the old road to Tinmouth. The early 19th century vernacular farmhouse stands next to Route 7 on the south side of Cook Drive. The surviving wing of a recently demolished middle 19th century barn stands to the rear of the house. The middle 20th century dairy barn and silos are sited a short distance to the west. Three smaller sheds are scattered along the opposite side of Cook Drive.

As early as 1812, Dyer Townsend (1789-1886) and a partner purchased a tan house and half-acre lot just north of the road intersection, starting a tanning business that continued many years. In 1814, Townsend acquired from Ebenezer Towner a larger tract with a combined house-tavern (the present farmhouse). Townsend expanded repeatedly his land holdings until the farm contained 132 acres; he became a prosperous breeder of Merino sheep. That prosperity enabled Townsend in 1877 to renovate the house into essentially its present appearance. Townsend also kept a dairy herd, and that use of the farm until recently. The farm remained in Townsend family (Westcott and Merriam) ownership until the middle 20th century.

## 1-3 Dyer Townsend House; c.1810

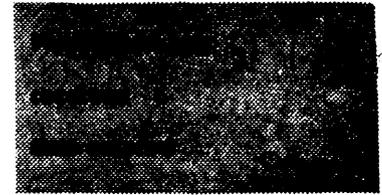
Oriented with its asphalt shingled gable roof perpendicular to Route 7, the 2 1/2 story, wood-framed and clapboarded house displays little original ornamentation other than a boxed cornice with partial returns. The somewhat irregular fenestration consists of 2/2 sash.

The four-bay main (east) gable facade includes an off-center, classically enframed entrance. Added in 1877, an Italianate Revival three-bay porch extends nearly the width of the facade, incorporating chamfered posts and scoll-bracketed eaves.

The four-bay south eaves elevation displays another Italianate

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

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



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 12

feature added during the 1877 renovation. A paneled bay window replaces the right pair of original windows; its projecting eaves are supported by brackets of different form than those on the front porch.

A smaller-scale, 2 story kitchen wing extends from the main block's rear (west) gable elevation. A central doorway on the wing's three-bay north eaves elevation is flanked by windows of reduced opening. A two-bay porch with dimension posts shelters a corresponding south entrance.

A 1 story, clapboarded, gable-roofed garage wing has been added to the kitchen wing's west gable elevation. A segmented overhead door enters the garage's north eaves elevation.

A. Shed; c.1880

Sited west of the house and following its orientation, this wood-framed and mostly clapboarded shed carries a slate-shingled gable roof. Its west gable elevation is sheathed with vertical boards that display the shadow pattern of framing members, apparently those of the larger clapboarded, gable-roofed barn that adjoined the shed until its demolition c.1980.

The north eaves elevation consists mostly of a large open right bay and a similar left opening with a sliding door.

B. Dairy Barn; c.1950

Oriented perpendicular to Cook Drive, the large wood-framed and novelty-sided dairy barn carries a gambrel roof with flared eaves and sheathed with standing-seam metal. Two large circular metal ventilators rise from the ridge.

The double-leaf wagon entrance occurs at the center of the north gambrel elevation, entering the upper (hay mow) level of the barn from the higher adjacent grade. A triangular projection from the gable peak shelters the partly infilled loft doorway. The stable occupies the ground level, lighted by a row of coupled windows.

A 1 story, gable-roofed ell containing the milkhouse projects from the barn's east eaves elevation. To the left of the milkhouse, a shed-roofed addition extends to the south end of the barn.

A large 1 story, wood-framed and novelty-sided wing of more recent construction extends from the barn's south elevation; its shallow-pitched gable roof is sheathed with standing-seam metal.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

13

The wing is used as a horse stable.

Two concrete-block cylindrical silos with metal domed caps stand adjacent to the dairy barn. The taller silo near the northwest corner was erected c.1970; the shorter silo next to the west elevation dates from the previous decade.

The dairy barn, built by a Mr. Weston who also built the Hager Farm Barn (#4E), is an important component of the local agricultural environment; it is considered non-contributing to the MRA due to its age.

C. Shed; c.1950

Sited north of Cook Drive, set back from Route 7 and in deteriorated condition, this small 1 story, wood-framed and vertical-boarded, gable-roofed shed possesses two arched open bays on its east eaves front. It is non-contributing due to its age.

D. Garage; c.1974

One story; wood-framed; plywood sheathing shallow gable roof. Non-contributing due to age.

E. Equipment shed; c.1975

One story; pole-framed; open-sided; two-slope roof. Non-contributing due to age.

F. Shed; c.1980

One story, wood-framed, board and batten siding, gable roof. Non-contributing due to age.

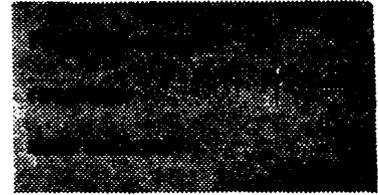
1-4 Goodyear Clark Farm

The Goodyear Clark Farm lies a short distance south of the Cook Drive intersection with Route 7. The farm buildings straddle the highway, surrounded by partly cultivated fields and the swale of a small brook on the south. The stately high-style Greek Revival house stands on the west side of the highway along with a former tenant house and a vehicle shed. The historically associated dairy barn stands on the opposite (east) side of the highway, near the floodplain of Otter Creek.

A legacy from the estate of her uncle, Israel Munson, enabled Louisa, daughter of Isaac Munson, and her husband, P. Goodyear

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 14

Clark, to build the distinctive Greek Revival farmhouse in 1845, replacing an older house on the site. The Clark house appears similar to the contemporary farmhouse (#1-8) constructed for Louisa's brother, also named Israel Munson, the principal difference between the houses being the flush plank siding of this house which is intended to simulate stone. After Goodyear Clark's death in 1890, the farm remained in the possession of relatives until the early 1940s.

The previous main barn was destroyed by fire and replaced in 1935 by the present gambrel-roofed barn. In 1970, the house and adjacent outbuildings were separated in ownership from the farmland and dairy barn.

1-4 Goodyear Clark House; 1845

The Goodyear Clark farmhouse retains nearly its original appearance. The rectangular plan of the house's 2 1/2 story main block approaches a square, both the east eaves facade and the south gable elevation are five bays in length. Above a marble ashlar foundation, the main block is sheathed with tongue-and-groove flush boards hung horizontally to simulate stone masonry. The gable roof is shingled with slate, and carries a south interior end chimney on each slope; both chimneys have tapered caps rebuilt from the original uniform shafts. The original matching chimneys at the north end of the roof were removed c.1955 when an exterior fireplace chimney was added to bisect the north gable elevation.

The symmetrical main (east) facade presents to the highway an elaborately decorated central entrance approached by marble steps. Enframed by paneled pilasters carrying architrave blocks, full-width frieze, and rebuilt cornice, the doorway is slightly recessed behind a paneled reveal; a molded surround inset with three-quarter length sidelights, corner blocks, and divided transom enframes the door itself. The marble platform at the entrance had until its removal in the 1960s a one-bay porch with double paneled pillars supporting an entablature along the eaves of its flat roof. Like those on the other elevations, the window bays are occupied by 6/6 sash surmounted by molded lintels.

Paneled pilasters ascend the corners of the main block to support the heavy eaves entablature that continues onto the pedimented north and south gable elevations. The latter shares the arrangement of the east facade, its central entrance retains the shelter of a three-bay portico (offset to the left bays) the paneled pillars of which rise from a marble slab deck to the eaves entablature of a flat roof. Two bays of reduced sash light

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 15

the tympanums of the north and south pediments.

A somewhat altered 1 1/2 story, clapboarded kitchen-shed ell with a slate gable roof projects from the rear (west) elevation of the main block. To the left of the entrance on the south elevation, a former double-leaf vehicle stall has been infilled. A bay window has been added (c.1975) to the north eaves elevation.

A. Tenant House; c.1880, altered c.1930

Standing a short distance southwest of the main house's ell, this modest 1 1/2 story, wood-framed and clapboarded house is oriented with its slate-shingled gable roof parallel to that of the ell. A first-story pavilion extends the width of the east gable facade. It incorporates a one-bay recessed corner porch with a marble deck that serves a left sidehall entrance. Three bays of the 2/2 sash common to the house light the pavilion's front wall plane. The north and south eaves elevations extend only two bays in length.

The building was converted c.1930 to a house for hired farm hands from its original function as a small carriage barn. A large sliding door previously entered the gable front in the main wall plane.

B. Vehicle Shed; c.1880

Oriented with its slate gable roof perpendicular to that of the tenant house, this 1 1/2 story, wood-framed and clapboarded shed stands next to and south of that house. Three vehicle stalls with folding doors are on the east eaves front. A small shed-roofed wing (now used for maple sugaring) has been recently added to the south gable elevation.

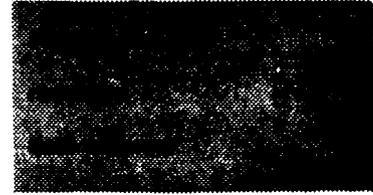
Two shorter sheds were joined together to create the present building. The south unit originally stood closer to the highway and was used as a harness shop.

C. Dairy Barn; 1935

Oriented parallel to the highway, the substantial wood-framed and novelty-sided dairy barn shares the gambrel form (and flared eaves) with its later counterpart (#1-1A) on the Arthur Davenport Farm but is distinguished by its slate shingled roof. A triangular projection from the north gable peak shelters a loft entry. A large circular metal ventilator stands astride the ridge, surmounted by a metal weathervane in the form of a cow. The irregular fenestration consists mostly of coupled six-light

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

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



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

16

windows along the first story stable.

A cylindrical silo was erected c.1970 near the northeast corner of the barn. The silo is constructed of ribbed precast concrete blocks reinforced by metal hoops and capped by a standing-seam metal dome.

(#1-5) Chapman Farm

To the south of the Goodyear Clark Farm, the Chapman farmstead comprises two buildings situated on a low knoll along the east side of the highway. The mid 19th century vernacular house crowns the knoll, oriented perpendicular to the highway. The contemporary barn stands south of the house, banked against the east side of the knoll and oriented parallel to the highway. The barn was doubled in length c.1900, the extension projecting southward away from the knoll to provide a fully exposed basement story for the stable. The floodplain of the Otter Creek tends eastward behind the barn.

The house on the present site belonged to S. Hyde, in 1854 possibly the original owner. By 1869, possession had been transferred to D. Nickerson. The Chapman family owned the farmstead during the 20th century.

1-5 Chapman House; c.1850

The relatively unembellished 2 1/2 story, wood-framed and clapboarded main block rises from a marble foundation to a slate-shingled gable roof. Both the three-bay, west gable front and the three-bay south eaves elevation have entrances sheltered by distinctive porches. The regular fenestration consists of 2/2 sash; on the north and south elevations, the window heads abut the fascia that follows both the horizontal and raking eaves.

The west gable front presents to the highway a left sidehall entrance that is sheltered by a flat roofed Queen Anne porch. The porch incorporates a turned balustrade and valance, and bracketed posts and extends three narrow bays across slightly less than half the facade. The south elevation's porch contrasts by exhibiting Italianate Revival character, notably pedestaled, chamfered, and bracketed posts. Furthermore, the south porch extends in two broad bays the full length of the main block and continues in two additional bays along the corresponding three-bay elevation of the reduced-scale, 2 story east wing, to visually unify the two sections of the house.

The north elevation of the house appears more disjointed. A 1

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

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

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received	
date entered	

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

17

story, flat-roofed wing projects from the east block, overshadowed by a tall exterior chimney. A shed-roofed enclosed porch on the east elevation of the wing overlooks the Otter Creek floodplain.

Barn; c.1850, c.1900

The large wood-framed, gable-roofed barn incorporates the original block and the south extension that matches the scale and form of the original block. The two halves are clearly distinguished by various characteristics: the original block is clapboarded while the extension is novelty-sided; the slate shingles on the two halves of the roof differ slightly in color and size, and; the original block is banked against the knoll while the extension rises from a fully exposed basement story (a stone retaining wall terminates the higher grade in front of the original block).

The large rectangular ventilating cupola astride the ridge displays novelty siding and a central position, indicating that it was added when the barn was enlarged. Capped by its own slate gable roof with projecting eaves like those on the barn, the cupola has pairs of rectangular louvered openings on its broader east and west eaves faces and a single such opening on the north and south gable faces.

The barn possesses various entrances and limited fenestration. Three large sliding doors enter the original block's west eaves front from grade at a level corresponding to the second story on the opposite elevation. Another large sliding door at the basement level of the south gable elevation provides access to the stable. A large hinged loft door with a peaked head enters the gable beneath a hoist, the only direct opening into the hay mow of the extension.

A 2 story, shed-roofed wing emerges from the original block's rear (east) elevation, sheathed partly with novelty siding and partly with brick-patterned asphalt paper. A more prominent clapboarded wing extends toward the house from the original block's north gable elevation, similar in appearance to the latter but lower in height.

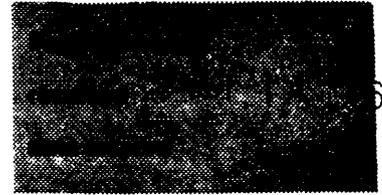
1-6 Bruce House; c.1980

Factory-built; 1 story; wood-framed; shallow-pitch roof; exposed basement on north elevation. Non-contributing due to age.

A. Garage; c.1985

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

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



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 18

Gambrel roofed shed garage; T-11 siding, cross buck hayloft doors, modern overhead garage doors. Non-contributing due to age.

1-7 Post Farm

The Post Farm lies to the south of the Chapman Farm, its buildings also situated on the east side of the highway. The Greek Revival style house stands deeply recessed from, and oriented parallel to, the highway behind informally landscaped grounds. Probably planted when the house was built, mature maple trees shade the grounds. The middle 19th century barn stands south of the house and parallel to it on an eastward offset. The barn is banked against a short downslope so that its basement is exposed on the rear (east) elevation while the grade at its west eaves front corresponds to the drive floor level. A small outbuilding rests on the lower grade northeast of the barn.

The farm belonged to D. Hyde in 1854, although it is not known whether he was responsible for construction of the house. The Post family had acquired the property by 1869. Around the turn of the century, the 160-acre farm was incorporated into the Israel Munson Farm (#1-8) adjacent to the south, and the house was occupied by tenants. In 1972, the buildings and a smaller tract of land were separated from the Munson farm. The barn was converted to an antiques shop in 1978.

1-7 Post House; c.1850

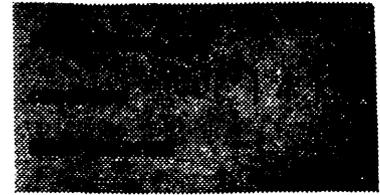
Somewhat similar to the more sophisticated Israel Munson House (#1-8), this Greek Revival style, wood-framed and clapboarded house rises 2 1/2 stories from a marble veneer foundation to a slate-shingled gable roof. An entablature follows both the horizontal and raking eaves and is supported by plain corner boards in place of the stylistically typical pilasters. The regular fenestration consists of 2/2 sash.

The five-bay main (west) eaves facade is arranged symmetrically around a central entrance that was altered c.1890. The paneled double-leaf doors of room height are enframed by paneled pilasters and an entablature. A one-bay porch with a semielliptical-arched front and side openings shelters the doorway; its paneled pillars carry a denticulated frieze band, from which scrolled corner brackets support the deeply projecting eaves of a flat roof.

Extending from the two-bay south gable elevation of the main block, a recessed 1 1/2 story kitchen wing also has an

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

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



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 19

entablature along the eaves of its slate roof. The two-bay west eaves front of the wing includes a left entrance. A two-bay porch with a slate hipped roof supported by rebuilt box posts extends along the front of the wing and turns the interior corner onto the main block's south elevation.

A 1 story shed ell with a slate gable roof projects from the rear (east) elevation of the kitchen wing. A former double-leaf garage entrance on its south eaves front has been eliminated (c.1970) in favor of a larger opening without doors that reveals an interior stone terrace. A bay window has been recently installed in the east gable elevation. A small unlighted gabled pavilion on the shed's north elevation contains the former privy.

Barn; c.1850, 1978

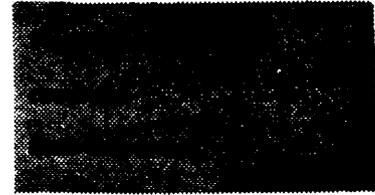
The present appearance of the wood-framed and clapboarded barn with a slate-shingled gable roof reflects its use as an antiques shop. On the west eaves front, the original off-center wagon entrance of double-leaf doors has been infilled with vertical boards surrounding a large rectangular fixed window. A former garage entrance to the left has also been closed. A broad multi-light fixed window has been installed in each (north and south) gable. An exterior concrete-block chimney has been added to the north gable elevation. On the east eaves elevation, a small 1 story, shed-roofed stable wing was attached c.1980 to the exposed basement (the former stable).

Chicken Coop; c.1900

Standing northeast of the barn, a small 1 story, wood-framed and clapboarded chicken coop carries a shed roof sheathed with asphalt paper. Four coupled windows (now partly infilled) light its south front.

1-8 Israel Munson Farm

Although the uses of its buildings have changed in recent decades, the Israel Munson Farm constitutes the architectural centerpiece among the farm properties in the Otter Creek valley. The farmstead comprises a high-style Greek Revival house, a sprawling multi-unit barn of exceptional character, and two lesser outbuildings all situated on the west side of the highway opposite the intersection of Hartsboro Road. The house stands prominently set back from the highway on upward sloping grounds shaded by mature maple and other deciduous trees. A group of extraordinarily tall pine trees separates the house from the banked barn higher on the slope to the rear. Partly cultivated

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 20

fields and pastures surround the buildings on the north, west, and south.

Distinguished by an Ionic-columned entrance porch, the house's main block was apparently reconstructed in the 1840s from an older building on the site. This occurred after Israel Munson (1808-1887) purchased the farm with his legacy from the estate of his uncle, Israel Munson (1767-1844), probably about the same time that another legacy from Israel enabled Goodyear Clark to construct his similar high-style Greek Revival house (#1-4) a short distance to the north. The secondary rear block was attached later in the century, being rebuilt from a barn moved from elsewhere on the Munson property. The imposing multi-unit barn was similarly assembled (at least partly in the 1880s) from a number of existing barns that were joined together and then embellished with unusual stylistic features by the architect, Clinton G. Smith of Middlebury, Vermont. The farm remained in Munson family ownership until the death of Israel's elder son, Kirk G., in 1932. Arthur Davison then acquired the property, and he and his son, Howard, conducted commercial dairy farming here until 1972. In 1983, the house was converted to an inn and restaurant.

1-8 Israel Munson House; rebuilt c.1845

Exhibiting a full complement of Greek Revival stylistic features, the 2 1/2 story, wood-framed and clapboarded house carries a slate-shingled gable roof with interior chimneys at each end of the front (east) slope. The rubble foundation is veneered with marble directly below the paneled pilasters that ascend along the corners of the house. The pilasters support a heavy entablature that follows both the horizontal and raking eaves. The entablature returns forming pediments on the north and south gables. The clapboarded tympanums of which are inset with single reduced 2/2 sash. Enhanced by shouldered surrounds with cornice caps, the house's regular window openings are fitted with 2/2 sash.

The symmetrical five-bay main (east) eaves facade presents to the highway a richly embellished central entrance. Sheltering the doorway, a one-bay porch incorporates a marble deck and step, inner Ionic columns with marble bases and angled volutes, paneled corner pillars also with marble bases, and a flat roof with eaves entablature. Recessed within a paneled reveal (and marble sill), the doorway ensemble includes a molded surround with corner blocks displaying a floral motif, transom, and two-thirds-length sidelights above panels bearing anthemia. The eight-panel door retains a circular bell escutcheon stamped with the name, "Israel

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

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



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 21

Munson."

The secondary four-bay south gable facade possesses a full-length portico but a less elaborate off-center entrance. The four-bay portico differs from the main entrance porch by its wood deck and lack of Ionic columns; single paneled pillars support an entablature along the eaves of its sloping roof. The only marble component is the entrance sill, from which rise the paneled pilasters that enframe the sidelighted doorway.

Offset southward from the main block's southwest corner, an undecorated ell of similar scale extends four bays (of 2/2 sash) along its south eaves elevation. An east entrance opens onto the main block's south portico while a transomed rear entrance is centered on the opposite (west) gable elevation. An enclosed porch is recessed into the southwest corner of the ell. A second-story entrance just added to the north eaves elevation is reached by an exposed exterior staircase.

A. Barn; c.1888

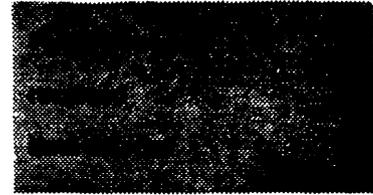
The great wood-framed and mostly clapboarded, multi-unit barn with slate-shingled gable roofs incorporates a central block and three major attached blocks of similar scale. These blocks were moved to the site from other locations. The central portion possesses an east gable front marked by a distinctive gable projection. To the left, a south ell relates visually by the central gabled wall dormer on its east eaves front. To the right of the central block, the north ell serves to balance in massing the south ell but contrasts by its recessed and nearly blank east eaves elevation. The fourth major block projects westward from the north ell, aligned with the latter's north gable front in the manner of the south ell and central block.

The 2 1/2 story central block has an exposed basement on the rear (west) gable elevation. The three-bay east gable front is dominated by a vertically delineated central bay occupied on each story by large wagon or loft doors. A long ramp buttressed by field stone leads to the opening abutting vertically, the double-leaf, six-panel doors are sheathed within the panels by patterned (mostly diagonal) boarding. The flanking window bays are fitted with 6/6 sash.

Projecting prominently from the gable peak, a large-scale gabled canopy supported by chamfered brackets shelters the doorways below. The bracket spandrels are infilled by clapboards hung in a sunburst pattern, and the gable end is clapboarded in a similar manner. Showing exposed rafter tails, the eaves both of the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

22

canopy and the main roof are decorated with bargeboards scroll-sawn at the lower ends.

Another distinctive feature of the central block stands astride the ridge. An overscaled rectangular ventilator rises from a slate-shingled base to a slate hip roof. Large round-arched louvers (paired on the longer north and south faces) provide ventilation; and are decorated in the sunburst pattern seen on the front gable canopy.

The central block contains a presently unused horse stable with stalls arranged primarily along the rear (west) wall of the first story.

Oriented perpendicular to the central block's south elevation, the slightly lower south ell block has an exposed basement on its south gable and west eaves elevations. The east eaves front incorporates three wagon entrances that occupy nearly the entire first story. A sliding eight-panel door closes the right entrance while the central and left bays have semielliptical-arched openings without means of closure. Each arched opening is detailed with sunburst motifs surmounting the central bay, a steeply pitched triangular wall dormer displays a triangular louver surrounded by radiating clapboards. The south ell's eaves are treated like those of the central block.

Exposed only on its east and north elevations, the north ell block shares the physical orientation of the south ell relative to the central block. The north ell's wagon entrance, however, occurs on its north gable rather than east eaves elevation. The double-leaf sliding doors are surmounted by a multi-pane transom, surmounted in turn by a large semicircular fan of radiating clapboards.

The north ell serves as a hay barn with a mow on each side of the central longitudinal drive floor. An interior wood-stave cylindrical silo stands in the southeast corner.

Attached to the north ell's west eaves elevation (the clapboards of which now form an interior wall surface), the fourth major block consists of an added west ell of the English barn type now sheathed with novelty siding. Its transomed wagon entrance is centered on the north eaves elevation; the double-leaf sliding doors have been removed from the opening.

On the interior, the central drive floor is flanked by a hay mow on each side. An exposed ground story on the south elevation fronts the now unused stable that occupies the concrete-floored

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 23

basement.

A 1 story equipment shed extends from the west gable elevation of this block; a double-leaf doorway enters the shed's north front. A smaller 1 story shed wing emerges from the basement level of the south elevation.

B. Milkhouse; c.1890

Standing south of the barn's south ell at basement level, the former milkhouse consists of a 1 1/2 story, wood-framed and clapboarded building with a slate-shingled gable roof. The three-bay east gable front includes a central entrance below a loft door. The bargeboards repeat the decorative pattern of those on the barn. A small cupola with a pyramidal slate cap surmounts the ridge; two round-headed louvers appear on each face.

C. Shed; c.1890

Immediately west of the milkhouse on a north offset, a smaller 1 story shed repeats the form and appearance of the milkhouse (excepting its cupola).

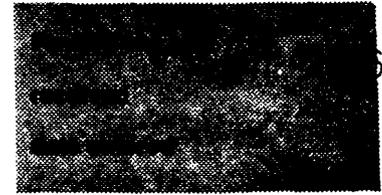
1-9 Isaac Munson Farm

The original farm purchased in 1814 by Israel Munson for his younger brother, Isaac (1771-1835), to the south of the Israel Munson Farm (#1-8). The house, dairy barn, and three lesser outbuildings stand on the west side of the highway. Partly cultivated fields surround the buildings, sloping gradually upward to the west. The Federal style brick house exhibits marked similarity to the contemporary (c.1830) General Robinson Hall House (#6) about one mile south in the MRA. The exceptionally large dairy barn was erected around the turn of the century to replace a previous barn destroyed by fire; the barn is situated farthest from the highway among the outbuildings.

The house was constructed for Isaac Munson and his wife, Sarah Bradley Munson, it's assumed a few years before the former's death in 1835; it replaced an earlier wood-framed house on the site. Isaac Munson's eldest son, Elizur, inherited the farmstead, and after his death in 1854, his younger brother, Israel (owner of the adjacent farm), purchased it. The property remained in Munson family ownership until 1934, when Thomas and Elizabeth Ketcham acquired it. The Ketchams continued to operate a dairy farm here until 1967. Subsequently the fields have been used by nearby farmers for the cultivation of corn and hay.

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

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



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 24

1-9 Isaac Munson House; c.1830

Shaded by a dwindling number of mature deciduous trees, the house is recessed from the highway within informally landscaped grounds. The 2 1/2 story main block stands oriented perpendicular to the highway with the three-bay, east gable front facing the highway. Above a coursed marble ashlar foundation, the brick walls are laid up informally in Flemish bond. The window openings are framed with marble sills and, on the first story, splayed lintels. The windows consist of 6/6 sash; the shorter second story versions abut the attenuated architrave below the prominent cornice. The slate-shingled gable roof carries a central chimney astride the ridge and an interior end chimney at the rear (west) gable peak.

The pedimented front facade presents to the highway a left sidehall entrance reached by a flight of marble steps and distinguished by a semielliptical-arched opening inset with a louvered fan. The arch itself has been stuccoed and scribed to represent brick work. Unlike the Hall House, that form is not repeated on the brick tympanum, it is lighted instead by an 8/8 sash with marble sill and splayed lintel.

The south eaves elevation possesses an off-center secondary entrance with a divided transom. This entrance suggests the original location of the driveway, which now parallels the opposite (north) elevation.

Attached to the rear (west) gable elevation below its closely cropped eaves, a 1 1/2 story, wood-framed and clapboarded wing with a slate gable roof extends two bays in length. Two large semielliptical-arched screened openings occupy its south eaves elevation while the opposite (north) elevation includes a kitchen entrance next to a 12/12 sash. The wing has been shortened from an original link to a south shed ell (also removed during this century).

A. Carriage Barn; c.1870

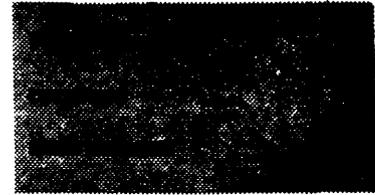
Directly west of the house (and repeating its orientation) stands a medium-sized, wood-framed and clapboarded carriage barn with a slate-shingled gable roof. An off-center vehicle entrance on the two-bay east gable front now lacks its sliding door. The varied fenestration includes 12/8 and 2/2 sash.

B. Shed; c.1870

Standing south of the carriage barn, a smaller wood-framed and

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 25

clapboarded building with a slate-shingled gable roof formerly served as a sheep shed. The shed's south eaves elevation incorporates a rubble stone wall for about half its height; a livestock entrance passes through the rubble wall.

C. Milkhouse; c.1900

Sited northwest of, and perpendicular to, the carriage barn, a 1 story, wood-framed and clapboarded milkhouse with a slate gable roof parallels the large dairy barn farther west. A central doorway enters its south gable front.

D. Dairy Barn; c.1900

The largest single-unit barn in the MRA, this elongated wood-framed and clapboarded, gable-roofed barn stands banked against the rising slope on its west eaves facade. Mortared rubble foundations are partly exposed on the north and south gable elevations, leading to a fully exposed and clapboarded basement story on the east elevation. A broad fascia defines the upper wall surfaces, below the projecting molded cornice that follows both the horizontal and raking eaves of the slate-shingled gable roof.

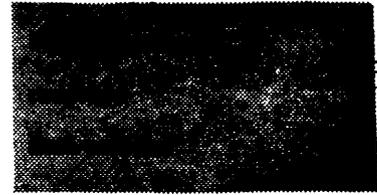
The five-bay south gable front includes the principal pedestrian entrances within a symmetrical arrangement of openings. On the first story, twin doorways occupy the end bays and flank the inner bays of the 6/6 sash common to the barn but damaged or missing in several windows. Not visible from the house or highway, the west eaves facade contrasts by possessing twin wagon entrances (from grade) surmounted by multi-pane transoms; the double-leaf doors have been removed from those openings.

Astride the center of the roof ridge, a large gable-roofed ventilator emulates the appearance of its counterpart visible across the fields to the north on the Israel Munson Farm's great multi-unit barn. The rectangular ventilator rises from a slate-sheathed base to a slate roof; pairs of round-arched louvers mark the east and west faces while a single louver occurs on the north and south. Plain vertical boards sheath the spandrels unlike the decorative treatment of the earlier model on the other barn.

The main level of this barn includes two drive floors (inside the wagon entrances) and an intermediate link serving the spacious hay mows. Horse stalls occupy the south end below an upper-level mow to facilitate feeding. Prior to its removal c.1970, an interior silo rose from the basement into the north mow above the

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

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



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 26

main level. The concrete-floored basement contains the now-unused stable with metal stanchions and some wood stalls for cattle.

1-10 Nichols Farm

The Nichols Farm lies to the south of the Isaac Munson Farm (#1-9). Surrounded by open fields and pastures that reach the Otter Creek on the east and ascend the hillside on the west, the farm buildings straddle the highway. The early 19th century Federal style house stands on the west side of the highway, facing a contemporary English type barn on the opposite side. A larger late 19th century dairy barn and related outbuildings are situated to the rear (west) of the house.

Although the builder of the house is not known, the farm was owned by the Wells family during the 1850s when other members of the same family owned the adjacent Bersaw House. In 1910, A. W. Nichols acquired the farm and subsequently made various improvements to the buildings. His son, Joel Nichols, continued commercial dairy farming until the required conversion to bulk-tank milk collection systems during the early 1960s. After the death of Joel Nichols in 1979, the farm was sold outside the family for predominantly non-agricultural uses.

1-10 Nichols House; c.1810

Oriented parallel to the highway, the Nichols House appears similar to the plainer Hulett House (#5) farther south in the MRA. The 2 1/2 story, wood-framed house rises from a marble slab foundation to a slate-shingled gable roof; the wide clapboard sheathing was probably applied in the late 19th century. Two interior chimneys remain on the west slope of the roof.

The five-bay main (east) facade is arranged symmetrically around a central entrance which exhibits a concentration of the house's decorative elements. Approached by marble steps and sill, the doorway is enframed by reeded pilasters that support stepped-out blocks on a surmounting entablature. 6/6 sash sidelights flank the surround.

The regular fenestration consists of 2/2 sash with narrow molded surrounds. The upper story windows are shorter in height and abut a rudimentary architrave/frieze band below the boxed returning cornice. The slender molded corner boards match the window surrounds.

The two-bay north and south gable elevations share the eaves

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

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



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 27

treatment of the east facade. The windows, however, lack the molded surrounds. A 6/3 sash lights each gable.

Projecting from the rear (west) elevation of the main block, a later 19th century, 2 1/2 story ell with standard clapboards rises to a slightly higher ridge. A right entrance sheltered only by a gabled hood marks its two-bay south eaves elevation. A corresponding entrance on the opposite (north) elevation is sheltered by a two-bay, shed-roofed porch with dimension posts.

Attached to the west gable elevation of the ell, a 1 1/2 story shed wing has an asphalt-shingled gable roof.

**A. Barn; c.1834**

The original English-type barn of the Nichols Farm may have been built in 1834. The wood-framed and now novelty-sided barn stands closely parallel to the east side of the highway, its gable roof shingled with slate. The two-leaf wagon entrance is centered on the west eaves front, reflecting the three-bay interior division of hay mows flanking the drive floor.

A large novelty-sided rear (east) wing has been added to the barn; its slate-shingled shed roof rises to the eaves of the main block. A partly open basement underlines the wing's main story.

Attached to the barn's south gable elevation on a partial west offset, an ancillary smaller-scale block retains vertical board sheathing along with slate shingles on its gable roof. Twin eight-pane horizontal windows have been installed in its south gable elevation.

**B. Dairy Barn; c.1890**

Situated a short distance southwest of the house and oriented perpendicular to its main block, the principal barn of the Nichols Farm complex served as a dairy barn until the 1960s. The large wood-framed and clapboarded building with slate-shingled gable roofs comprises two blocks of similar size and appearance. The somewhat larger east block rises slightly higher than the west block; both are banked on the north eaves elevation while the downward slope to the south exposes fully the basement stable story on the opposite elevation.

The main wagon entrance of each block occurs off-center on the north eaves elevation. The main block retains double-leaf doors while the west block has a sliding door. The irregular fenestration includes 2/2 sash on the main block along with

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

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



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 28

fixed windows. Astride the center of each ridge, a louvered ventilating cupola carries a slate-shingled gabled cap whose projecting eaves correspond to those of the main roof.

Entered by a sliding door on the main block's east gable elevation, the now disused stable occupies the concrete-floored basement of the barn. The metal stanchions and wood stalls generally remain in place.

Erected in the 1920s, a cylindrical wood-stave silo reinforced with metal hoops rises from a high concrete foundation beside the main block's south elevation. The silo culminates in a metal-sheathed conical cap.

Projecting from the east end of the main block's north elevation, a 1 story, clapboarded ell with an asphalt-shingled gable roof was added c.1950 to serve as a horse stable. A sliding door enters its east eaves front. A metal ventilator straddles the ridge.

**C. Milkhouse; c.1925**

Placed next to the south elevation of the dairy barn's main block, a diminutive 1 story, wood-framed and clapboarded milkhouse has a shallow-pitched gable roof. The single-leaf entrance and a multi-pane fixed window mark the east gable front. A shed-roofed west extension of the building contains a poultry coop.

The milkhouse retains the spring-fed concrete water tank that was formerly used to cool milk cans.

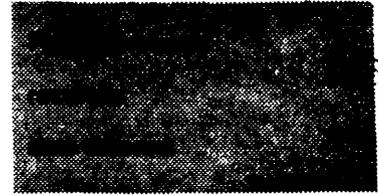
**D. Garage; c.1890, altered c.1925**

Standing north of the dairy barn's main block, this 1 story, wood-framed building was given its present appearance in the 1920s when converted from a shed to a garage. Novelty siding was applied over the original vertical board sheathing and a saltbox extension was added to the north elevation; two sliding doors were installed on the south eaves front. The ridge of the asphalt-shingled roof is decorated with metal terminal scroll forms.

**E. Chicken Coop; c.1910**

Placed between the house and the garage, a 1 story, wood-framed and clapboarded chicken coop carries an asphalt-shingled shed roof. Four 2/2 sash provide abundant light on its south front;

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

29

the doorway enters the east end of the building.

1-11 Albert Bersaw House

Located to the south of the Nichols Farm (#1-10), the Albert Bersaw House defines the south end of the MRA historic district. The c.1830 house, a modest horse barn, and a small shed stand along the west side of the highway. During the 19th century, the property served as a sheep farm and was associated with the Wells and Law families. In recent decades, the house has been related to the adjacent Nichols Farm through the marriage of its owner, Albert Bersaw, to a member of the Nichols family.

1-11 Bersaw House; c.1830

The house constitutes the only example in the MRA district of a 1 1/2 story kneewall framing. Oriented parallel to the highway, the clapboarded house has a stone foundation and a slate-shingled gable roof. An off-center chimney rises from the ridge.

The symmetrical five bay main (east) facade displays a transomed central entrance bearing a concentration of the house's limited decorative features. Slender tapered pilasters flank the doorway, and carry architrave blocks below a frieze band (also having stepped-out blocks) and cornice. The window openings are fitted with the 6/6 sash common to the house. Above the blind kneewall, a broad fascia and boxed cornice follow the horizontal eaves.

A smaller-scale wing extends from the main block's south gable elevation. Its three-bay east eaves front includes a central entrance, and a similar arrangement appears also on the south gable elevation. Added probably early in the present century, a deep Bungalow inspired veranda extends two bays across the wing's east and south elevations. The veranda incorporates a wood-shingled rail, box posts, and a shallow-pitched roof.

A gable-roofed shed ell of similar scale projects westward from the south wing.

A. Horse Barn; c.1880

Standing south of the house and parallel to it, a small wood-framed horse barn now sheathed with novelty siding retains slate shingles on its gable roof. A sliding door enters the north gable front. A 1 story, shed-roofed garage wing has been added to the barn's west eaves elevation; a segmented overhead door enters its north front.

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

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



Continuation sheet

Item number

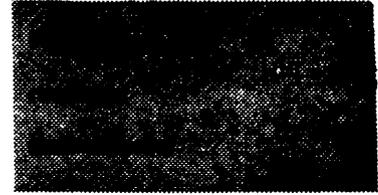
Page 30

B. Shed; c.1900

Sited to the rear (west) of the house, a 1 story, wood-framed and clapboarded, gable-roofed shed has a left entrance on its east gable front.

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

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



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 31

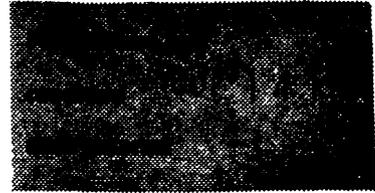
Rural Otter Creek Valley Historic District (#1)

Section 8. Statement of Significance

The Rural Otter Creek Valley Historic District includes nine of the MRA's farmsteads whose physical proximity and historical associations heighten their significance. Five of these farmsteads share the distinction of having been owned and developed by members of the Munson and related families during a 120-year period beginning in 1814. Israel Munson, a wealthy merchant from Boston, bought the first farm for his brother, Isaac, and legacies from Israel subsequently enabled three of Isaac's children to build distinguished Greek Revival style houses on their farms. One of these houses is complemented by the most elaborate barn in the MRA, designed in the 1880s by a leading Vermont architect, Clinton G. Smith. The only one commercial farm is now (1986) being operated within the MRA are located in the historic district; it serves to maintain the continuity of agricultural activity while the abandoned counterparts illustrate the drastic decline in Vermont agriculture during recent decades.

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

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



6

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

32

Rural Otter Creek Valley Historic District (#1)

Section 10. Geographic Data

Acreage: approximately 110 acres

Quadrangle Name: Wallingford 15 minute series, scale - 1:62500

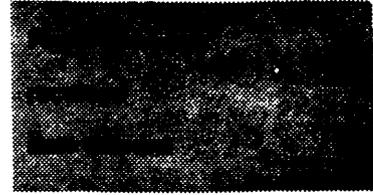
UTM References: A. 18/663225/4814000  
B. 18/663350/4813000  
C. 18/662625/4811625  
D. 18/662250/4811650

Verbal Boundary Description: The boundary of the Rural Otter Creek Valley Historic District begins at Point A, the intersection of the eastern extension of a line 20' north of and parallel to the north wall of building #1-1 and the west edge of the right of way of T.H. 13. It thence proceeds in a southerly direction along said edge to Point B, the intersection of said edge and the western edge of the the right of way of U.S. Route 7. The boundary thence proceeds in a southerly direction along said edge, crossing T.H. 14 to Point C, the intersection of said edge and the western extension of a line 20' north of and parallel to the north wall of building #1-5C. The boundary thence proceeds in an easterly direction along said extension, said line and an easterly extension thereof to Point D, the intersection of said extension and the west bank of the Otter Creek. It thence proceeds in a southerly direction following the curving Creek bank and passing under Hartsboro Road T.H. 34 to Point E, the intersection of said bank and the eastern extension of a line 20' south of and parallel to the south wall of building #1-12A. The boundary thence proceeds in a westerly direction along said extension, crossing U.S. Route 7 and continuing along said line and a western extension thereof to Point F, the intersection of said extension and a line 500' west of and parallel to the western edge of the right of way of U.S. Route 7. It thence proceeds in a northerly direction along said line, crossing T.H. 14 to Point G, the intersection of said line and the western extension of a line 20' north of and parallel to the north wall of building #1-1. It thence proceeds in an easterly direction along said extension, said line and an easterly extension thereof to Point A, the point of origin.

Boundary Justification: The boundary of the Rural Otter Creek Valley Historic District includes a concentration of farms located within the context of the MRA. Besides being geographically linked by adjoining property boundaries, the farms are also visually connected. The north boundary excludes a

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

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



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 33

modern ranch house, while a c.1970 telephone office and a ranch house and mobile home are excluded to the northeast. Topographic features define the remaining boundaries. The Otter Creek marks the limits to the south and east. A sharp bend around a steep hill on U.S. Route 7 visually breaks the district from areas to the south and the rising foothills of the Taconic Range define the western boundaries. Generous field and pasture area surrounding the structure are included to maintain the buildings' historic agricultural context.

United States Department of the Interior  
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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \* 8 Page 1

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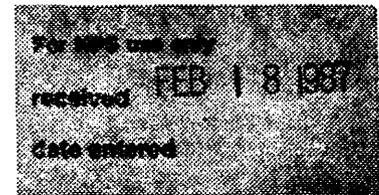
Additional Information

Rural Otter Creek Valley MRA (COVER)

	Date/Signature
for Keeper	<u>Patrick Andrews 3/31/87</u>
Attest	<u>Beth L. Swartz 3-31-87</u>

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

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



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 66

Please note the cover sheet for Section 8—Statement of Significance for the Rural Otter Creek Valley Multiple Resource Area—should be changed. The specific period of significance is c.1790–1935.

"As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination 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."

Eric Gilbertson  
Director/Deputy State Historic  
Preservation Officer