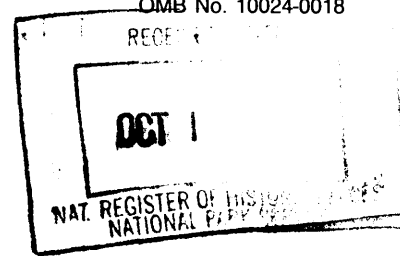


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

1284



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name EMERSON, EZEKIEL, FARM

other names/site number APPLE HILL FARM

2. Location

street & number Vermont Route 73 N/A not for publication

city or town Rochester N/A vicinity

state Vermont code 50 county Windsor code 027 zip code 05767

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Margaret C. Jamieson, National Register Specialist 10-12-01  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Vermont State Historic Preservation Office  
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official/Title Date

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

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Edson W. Beall Date of Action 11-29-01

Emerson, Ezekiel, Farm  
Name of Property

Windsor County, Vermont  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>4</u>		buildings
		sites
<u>1</u>		structures
		objects
<u>5</u>		Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

**Agricultural Resources of Vermont**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling  
Agriculture/animal facility  
Agriculture/agricultural outbuilding

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/hotel  
Agriculture/animal facility

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Mid-19th Century  
Late Victorian/Queen Anne

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete  
walls aluminum  
wood  
roof metal  
other stone  
glass

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [x] A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
[] B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
[x] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
[] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- [] A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
[] B removed from its original location.
[] C a birthplace or grave.
[] D a cemetery.
[] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
[] F a commemorative property.
[] G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture

Architecture

Period of Significance

c. 1840-c. 1920

Significant Dates

c. 1840

c. 1875

c. 1920

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- [] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
[] previously listed in the National Register
[] previously determined eligible by the National Register
[] designated a National Historic Landmark
[] recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
[] recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- [x] State Historic Preservation Office
[] Other State agency
[] Federal agency
[] Local government
[] University
[] Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 38

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 18 67 4 73 0 4 8 58 0 50 A  
Zone Easting Northing  
2 18 67 5 14 0 4 8 58 1 90 B

3 18 67 5 35 0 4 8 58 08 0 C  
Zone Easting Northing  
4 18 67 4 89 0 4 8 57 76 0 D

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Hugh H. Henry, Historic Preservation Consultant

organization N/A date May 2000

street & number 2148 Green Mountain Turnpike telephone 802-875-3379

city or town Chester state Vermont zip code 05143-8873

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Ronald L. and Nancy A. Halter

street & number P. O. Box 251 telephone 802-767-6088

city or town Rochester state Vermont zip code 05767

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Emerson, Ezekiel, Farm  
Rochester, Windsor County, Vermont

DESCRIPTION

The Ezekiel Emerson Farm covers 38 acres of land mostly on a south-facing hillside along the West Branch of the White River valley with the four farm buildings clustered at the base. The one-and-one-half-story, now aluminum-sided, gable-roofed, vernacular farmhouse displays a high-style Queen Anne wraparound porch. Adapted to a garage, the one-and-one-half-story, clapboarded, gable-roofed horse shed is linked to the house by a one-story, gable-roofed hyphen. The two-and-three-quarters-story, vertical-boarded, gable-roofed bank barn possesses a high-drive and interior silo. A one-story, clapboarded, shed-roofed milkhouse stands between the house and dairy barn. The buildings have been maintained generally in good condition. The primary field east of the buildings has been kept mowed but the former pastures on the hillside were allowed mostly to revert to brush and trees during the latter 20th century; the present owners are clearing the same and restoring their use as sheep pastures. Overall the Ezekiel Emerson Farm retains historic integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

\*\*\*\*\*

Located about 1.5 miles southwest of Rochester village, the Ezekiel Emerson Farm lies along the lower north side of the narrow valley created by the West Branch of the White River. The small cluster of four farm buildings is situated at the west end of a roughly oval area of level land at the base of a south-facing hillside. The two-lane, asphalt-paved Vermont Route 73 passes south of the buildings in a generally east-west direction paralleling the eastward-flowing river.

The four extant buildings comprise the farmhouse, a horse shed/garage connected to the northwest rear corner of the house, a bank barn northeast of the house, and a milkhouse between the house and barn. A concrete and stone foundation marks the site of a former potato shed northeast of the barn.

Only the c. 1840 house exhibits the distinctive features of an architectural style, and those are now limited to the highly decorated Queen Anne porch that wraps around the front (south) and southeast facades. The main block originally possessed elemental Greek Revival features but those were altered during a

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c. 1899 enlargement and renovation, and then entirely removed or concealed behind the synthetic siding that was applied probably about 1970.

The house stands amidst simply landscaped grounds that are partly shaded by mature deciduous trees. The main gravel driveway has been shifted eastward from its historic location closely paralleling the east side of the house to its present location between the milkhouse and barn. A shorter secondary driveway passes the west side of the house to reach the horse shed/garage.

The farm now encompasses about 38 acres of land, reduced from the 55 acres that belonged to its namesake owner, Ezekiel Emerson, between 1874 and 1907. A narrow strip of about 3.5 acres slopes downward between the south side of the highway and the river; this piece was used historically for producing hay for feeding livestock but has partly overgrown with brush and trees in recent decades.

The remainder of the farm land takes a roughly rectangular form north of the highway. A relatively level field used for haying and some crops expands eastward from the buildings. The lower slopes of moderate gradient behind the buildings were used for pasture, especially by the dairy cows that were kept on the farm during the century before 1955; subsequent lack of grazing has allowed most of this area to revert to brush and trees. Higher on the hillside, the slope becomes gradual and fields here were used for haying and crops.

1. House; c. 1840, c. 1899

The slightly irregular cruciform plan of this vernacular house reflects its c. 1899 enlargement from an original one-and-one-half-story, gable-roofed block oriented perpendicular to the road; a two-story, one-bay-deep ell was added to both the east and west eaves facades. The gable roofs of these ells match the ridge line of the main block but the peaks of the ells are slightly offset from each other. A smaller-scale, one-story, one-bay-deep, shed-roofed wing has been appended to the north (rear) facade. Added probably in 1899, a six-bay, Queen Anne porch wraps around the south (front) gable and southeast eaves facades.

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Rochester, Windsor County, Vermont

The house rests on a foundation that has been mostly faced or rebuilt with concrete. Between the foundation and the eaves, the entire building has been sheathed with aluminum siding over the original clapboards and decorative trim. Similarly, the several roof surfaces have been uniformly covered with standing-seam sheet metal. An interior brick chimney emerges from the west slope of the main block's roof near the ridge and forward of the west ell's roof.

The two-bay south gable facade lacks an entrance. The bays contain the two-over-two sash (plus one-over-one metal storm sash) common to the house. Projecting diagonally from the southeast corner, a one-story, one-by-one-bay rectangular pavilion also lacks an entry; two-over-two sash (enlarged on the central face) illuminate this pavilion.

The ornate Queen Anne porch echoes the pavilion by its canted southeast corner bay crowned with a molded pediment rising from its nearly flat roof. (This feature suggests an entry but none exists below it.) The porch generally incorporates turned posts with cut-out and spindled brackets, a balustrade also with turned and cut-out components, a sawtooth valance, and a keyhole skirt with a sawtooth bottom edge. The porch spans the south facade in three bays and, beyond the canted bay, continues two bays along the two-bay south eaves section of the east facade.

Sheltered by the porch's north end, the present main entrance occupies the single bay on the south side of the two-story east ell. The broad oak door incorporates a large upper light above three molded recessed panels; a metal storm door has been installed on the exterior. This ell possesses two window bays on its east gable facade and another entrance (with a matching oak door) on its single-bay north eaves facade, the latter sheltered by a one-bay, shed-roofed porch with a turned post. The counterpart west ell differs by being three bays in breadth without an entrance.

North of the east ell, the main block's east eaves facade continues two additional bays. Then the one-story, clapboarded, shed-roofed north (rear) wing extends another bay (an entrance) on its east end and spans the entire rear of the main block and the northwest hyphen. This wing's north facade is lighted by coupled sets of recent casement windows.

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The hyphen links the northwest corner of the house and the southeast corner of the closely adjacent shed/garage. This one-story, two-bay appendage carries a shallow-pitched gable roof. A recent nine-light-over-two-panel door enters the left bay of the south eaves facade. The south roof slope continues outward over a two-story porch with a turned post and balustrade similar to the main porch; this porch has been enclosed by means of a large six-light fixed sash above the balustrade and a metal storm door in the left bay.

Documented by a photograph taken about 1890, the original appearance of the house differed radically. The main block then consisted of a modest three-by-three-bay, clapboarded building, probably of sidehall plan, decorated with simple Greek Revival stylistic features. The unsheltered main entrance occupied the right bay of the front (south) gable facade; its surround included smooth pilasters and a crowning entablature. The main door was open (behind a screen door) and not visible at the time of the photograph.

All window openings on the south and east facades were fitted with two-over-two sash enframed by smooth surrounds below drip moldings. Narrow corner boards ascended to a frieze band and molded cornice along the eaves; short cornice returns marked the front gable. The roof was covered apparently with wood shingles. Appended to the rear (north) gable facade, a one-story, shed-roofed wing extended one bay in depth.

The c. 1890 photograph reveals the house in rather shabby condition. The clapboards were painted a relatively dark color in contrast to a light color on the trim, but the paint was heavily weathered especially on the east eaves facade. Some of the clapboards were warped or partly loose. The house clearly needed at least cosmetic rehabilitation, if not the renovation that would follow in 1899.

The interior of the house reflects its repeated alterations, both in plan and finish materials. On the first floor, the combined parlor and dining room occupy the southeast quadrant. Moved from its presumed original position aligned north-south just inside the then-front door, the single-flight, closed stair to the second floor (now aligned east-west) separates the dining room from a rear room opening into the present kitchen. The original parlor (now an office) remains in the southwest front corner, and a smaller room adjoins in the center-west position.



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On the second floor, three bedrooms (plus a full bathroom) surround a center hall that extends southward from the present stair. The east wall of the hall curves southeastward to indicate the original position of the stair. A smaller room exists at the north rear of the hall.

The interior surfaces are finished in relatively plain materials that have been applied at various times, such as the c. 1899 renovation and a 1998 refurbishing. Historic plaster-and-lath remains in place on some walls and ceilings while others, especially ceilings, have been sheathed with gypsum board. The only molded woodwork survives in the second-floor front bedroom where one door with four raised panels retains a single-beaded surround; the smooth woodwork elsewhere mingles historic and recent material.

Similarly the floors display a variety of tongue-and-groove or butted boards of different widths and woods, both hard and soft. Among these, the second-floor center hall retains medium-width pine boards possibly original to the house while the flanking east and west bedrooms have narrow curly red (actually yellow) birch boards of later origin.

2. Horse Shed/Garage; c. 1840

Probably detached from the house at the time of its construction (but parallel in orientation), this one-and-one-half-story, two-by-three-bay building stands recessed from the road with its southeast front corner adjacent to the northwest rear corner of the house. The one-story, two-bay hyphen (described above) now connects the two blocks.

Sheathing its post-and-beam frame, the shed/garage retains clapboards on its south (front) gable facade and the exposed north half of the east eaves facade. Both the west eaves and north (rear) gable facades have been covered with vertically grooved plywood. The gable roof now shares the standing-seam sheet metal common to the house.

The two-bay south gable facade has been altered by the installation of twin segmented overhead doors without sash. An historic twelve-over-twelve sash lights the gable. On the two-bay west facade, a large twelve-light fixed sash occupies the left-center position, and a vertical-boarded, hinged pass door

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enters the left corner protected by a gabled hood. A similar pass door marks the opposite (northeast) corner.

This building served originally as a shed for horses and buggies. Photographs taken during the early 1900s show that a slightly taller, gable-roofed wing was attached to the rear (north) gable facade. Also, a small one-story, one-bay, shed-roofed appendage was attached to the west facade, apparently used as a privy.

3. Milkhouse; c. 1920

Oriented toward the house rather than the barn, the small one-story, one-by-one-bay, shed-roofed milkhouse possesses a balloon frame sheathed with clapboards. Its asphalt-shingled roof slopes downward toward the barn.

The west facade is entered by a vertical-boarded, side-hinged pass door next to the left corner. On the opposite (east) facade, a diminutive vertical-boarded, top-hinged door provides an opening at ground level next to the left corner. The only window in the building, a two-light fixed sash marks the north facade.

The milkhouse has been adapted to a tool shed, and the former milk cooling equipment has been removed.

4. Bank Barn; c. 1875

Although banked against the sloping ground on its north (rear) gable facade, the former dairy barn exhibits a marked verticality in its vernacular design. The barn rises two and three-quarters stories to a high gable roof, whose steeply pitched slopes give emphasis to the upward thrust of the building. A gable-roofed, high-drive wing ascends from the sloping ground to the loft level of the north facade. An interior rectangular silo occupies the southeast corner of the barn, rising from the ground floor into the upper loft.

The foundation has received structural repairs in recent decades. The most fully exposed section under the south gable facade together with the east facade section retain partly mortared rubble and fieldstone materials. The partly visible section under the west facade has been rebuilt in poured concrete,

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presumably at the same time when a concrete slab was poured to cover part of the ground floor. The banked north foundation (visible only inside the ground floor) consists of dry-laid fieldstone and rises a full story in height; a similar wing wall extends outside the barn from both the west and east ends.

The post-and-beam frame of the superstructure incorporates mostly circular-sawn timbers plus some round logs used as floor joists; these are connected by mortise and tenon joints with wood pegs. The exterior sheathing consists of flush vertical boards. The gable roof is supported by dimension rafters overlaid with rough boards and corrugated sheet metal. The roof lacks any ventilating cupola or decorative feature.

The high-drive wing repeats the post-and-beam structure and exterior sheathing materials of the main block. Round log joists carry its heavy plank drive floor over the open passageway between a rebuilt concrete abutment with stone wing walls and the barn's north wall. The high-drive's north gable facade consists mostly of an open entrance with canted upper corners. At the barn wall, the high-drive shelters the broad double-leaf, vertical-boarded loft doors hung on iron strap hinges. A half-story storage shelter with a wood-shingled shed roof has been attached to each (east and west) side of the high-drive.

Facing the house, the five-bay west eaves facade possesses a ground floor entrance with a vertical-boarded, exterior sliding door in the left-center position; a matching door on the opposite (east) facade enables vehicles to drive through the barn. The second story corresponds to the ground level on the banked north facade; a vertical-boarded, hinged pass door at the left corner provides entry (historically for cows) and four equally-spaced, six-light fixed sash illuminate the interior milking parlor.

The three-bay south gable facade ascends the greatest height from the ground. Only this facade lacks an entrance. Most of its fenestration is aligned vertically at four levels under the gable peak, and consists of six- or twelve-light fixed sash in coupled pairs plus a twelve-over-eight sash at the peak. Affixed horizontally at the second-story level, large wood block letters compose the name, "Apple Hill."

The interior of the barn possesses three main levels linked by flights of wood stairs. The former manure basement has been converted to a partly concrete ground floor where the present

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owners of the farm keep sheep. Apparently added to the barn at an unknown time, the horizontal- and vertical-boarded interior silo occupies the southeast corner. The wood-plank main floor retains the now-disused milking parlor with its whitewashed walls and ceiling in the southwest quadrant; the wood stanchions remain in a linear arrangement along the interior side of this space. The south half of the central main floor has been enclosed and finished for office use. The cavernous loft level has a wood-plank drive floor extending the full length of the central axis flanked by low horizontal-boarded partitions and the open hay lofts; the east loft extends down to the main floor.

## 5. Potato Shed Foundation; c. 1910

Banked against the slope northeast of the barn, only the concrete and stone foundation survives to represent the former potato shed, and the stone portion indicates that a different building existed previously on this site. The longer southeast side consists of a continuous concrete wall but near the southwest end it serves to face a rubble stone inner wall. The latter turns the corner to form the exterior southwest end wall. In contrast, the opposite (northeast) end wall consists entirely of concrete. Both end walls taper upward to terminate against the rising slope of the ground surface.

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Rochester, Windsor County, Vermont

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Ezekiel Emerson Farm holds significance for representing the development of small-scale diversified agriculture, the dominant contributor to the broad pattern of rural Vermont history during the 19th century. The Emerson Farm holds additional significance for embodying the distinctive characteristics of a middle 19th-century Vermont hill farm with its small cluster of vernacular buildings surrounded by crop and pasture land lying mostly on sloping terrain. While the farmhouse lacks individual distinction, the bank barn and associated milkhouse constitute outstanding examples of their building types; the gable-front barn exemplifies the Early Bank Barn type commonly built in Vermont during 1850-90 and the milkhouse a detached version of that outbuilding typical of the period 1920-40. Furthermore, both the barn and milkhouse represent the small-scale dairy farming that dominated Vermont agricultural practices during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Emerson Farm relates especially to the statewide historic context of Diversified and Specialty Agriculture in Vermont, and meets the registration requirements for the property type of Farmstead (see the Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Agricultural Resources of Vermont").

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The origin of the Ezekiel Emerson Farm remains obscure. By the earliest recorded deed to the property yet discovered, in November 1842, Ephraim D. Briggs of Rochester sold a 42-acre tract to Solomon Nott. Nott paid \$1,000 for the property, indicating that at least a house then existed. Briggs was a wealthy land dealer who resided in Rochester village, and probably created this farmstead for speculative sale. Nott and his wife, Fanny M., lived here until November 1854, when they sold the premises to the Town of Rochester for \$1,300.

Regardless of ownership, the farmhouse was constructed probably about 1840. The vernacular Greek Revival style and sidehall plan displayed by the modest one-and-one-half-story house in its original appearance are typical of that period in Vermont architectural history. (The house was enlarged and extensively altered about 1899.)

The Town of Rochester apparently rented the farm soon after the departure of the Notts. The Windsor County map published by

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Hosea Doten in 1855 names the owners or occupants of the buildings indicated thereon; the name "L[yman] Emerson" appears next to the appropriate symbol for this farm in Rochester. The Emerson family, therefore, probably were tenants on this farm during the interval until August 1862, when two female members acquired the property for \$700. The title was transferred to Olive Emerson, wife of Lyman, and her daughter, Louisa Emerson then of Lowell, Massachusetts.

Lyman Emerson (born in 1792) and Olive Warren (born in 1805), both natives of Rochester, were married in 1827 and became the parents of nine children; Louisa was the first and a brother named Ezekiel followed her. Previously (1814) Lyman had married Olive's sister, Anna, and they had had three children before her death in 1826.

The eldest son of Lyman and Olive, Ezekiel Emerson was born at Rochester on 14 September 1830. Apparently while yet a teenager, he joined his older step-brother, Lyman, Jr., by going to Manitowoc, Wisconsin. The two Emersons thereby participated in the great migration westward from Vermont that reduced the state's population during the mid-19th century. (The population of the town of Rochester reached its maximum of 1,509 in 1860 and declined thereafter.)

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Ezekiel enlisted with the Fifth Wisconsin volunteer infantry and served until July 1864. Then he returned to Vermont and rejoined his parents on the home farm. His father may have been in declining health; Lyman died only four years later (1868), leaving Ezekiel in the position of responsibility for the farm operation.

The U. S. Census of Agriculture for 1870 records the agricultural activities then being conducted by Ezekiel and his mother. Their farm encompassed 50 acres of "improved" land; the real estate was worth \$2,000 and the "farming implements and machinery" were worth \$100. The livestock, whose listed value of \$800 seems exaggerated, consisted primarily of one horse and four "milch cows." There were not any sheep listed; in this respect, the Emerson Farm deviated from the standard agricultural practice in Vermont during that period.

Among the field crops, Ezekiel produced 40 bushels of Indian corn, 40 bushels of oats, 35 bushels of Irish potatoes, and 15 tons of hay. He used much of the milk from his cows to make 250

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pounds of butter, the standard dairy product of the period suitable for shipment by train to urban centers in southern New England. He also made 250 pounds of maple sugar, probably keeping enough for household needs and selling the surplus; this was another cash product suitable for rail shipment. The total value of "all farm production" amounted to \$350 for the year, indicating that the Emersons lived in a frugal manner typical of contemporary Vermont hill farm households.

The next transfer of title to the Emerson Farm came in July 1874. At that time, Olive formally sold the farm to Ezekiel for \$2,000. The money never actually changed hands; instead, Olive credited Ezekiel the same amount for accepting the numerous "agreements and promises" that she wrote into the deed for her "support, comfort and maintenance" (including \$10 per year in spending money) during the rest of her life on the farm. The conditions included the right for Ezekiel's unmarried sisters to continue residing on the farm.

Gaining titular possession of the farm seems to have induced Ezekiel to make various improvements and expand the scale of his agricultural pursuits. The U. S. Census of Agriculture for 1880, recording production for the calendar year 1879, documents some of the changes although it also appears to contain errors regarding the Emerson Farm. The listed acreage of 123 or more is undoubtedly wrong while the value of the farm remained at \$2,000, the same figure reported in the 1870 Census.

By 1880, Ezekiel more than doubled the size of his dairy herd, having nine milch and three other cows plus four calves. The greater volume of milk enabled him to make 1,200 pounds of butter. In this way, Ezekiel contributed to the contemporary trend in Vermont agriculture toward larger-scale dairy farming. His other livestock included two horses and twelve poultry but not any sheep or swine. The total value of his livestock was \$350; however, the comparative 1870 value of \$800 and the relative number(s) of animals indicate another error.

The origin of the extant bank barn has not been discovered. The probability exists that Ezekiel and/or others constructed the barn during the 1870s to accommodate the marked increase in the number of his dairy cows. At the present (2000), the barn retains a milking parlor with wood stanchions along the west side of the main floor above the manure basement. The linear arrangement and wood materials of the milking parlor appear

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virtually unaltered from what would have been original in this barn type, the prevalent Vermont barn design during the latter 19th century.

Ezekiel Emerson also expanded somewhat his output of field crops by 1879. These included 40 bushels of Indian corn, 50 bushels of oats, six bushels of rye, and 60 bushels of Irish potatoes. Additionally he reported having a three-acre orchard with 100 apple trees that yielded 95 bushels. His output of maple sugar also rose to 300 pounds. Nevertheless, despite the marked increases in certain commodities (notably butter), the value of all farm production for 1879 was estimated at \$500, only \$150 higher than a decade earlier. This considerable variety of animal, field, and orchard products qualifies Ezekiel's farm as highly representative of the small-scale yet diversified hill farms that existed throughout Vermont at that time.

The Grand List of Real Estate for the Town of Rochester in 1880 may explain the questionable acreage credited to Ezekiel Emerson in the 1880 Agricultural Census. The 1880 Grand List records that Ezekiel owned 55 acres with a value, including the farm buildings, of \$875, located in the appropriate School District #3 for the home farm. The same document records that Ezekiel also owned 100 acres worth \$1,500 (presumably another farm) in School District #4, where his younger brother, Enoch Dana, was tenant. The 1880 Census enumerator may have combined the two farms, if only in terms of their areas.

Olive Emerson outlived her husband by two decades. Upon Olive's death in 1887, Ezekiel was freed of the conditions that she attached to the transfer of title to the farm. He remained unmarried, and his younger sister, Eunice Elizabeth, born in 1843 and continuing to live here, apparently became his housekeeper.

A photograph taken probably about 1890 shows both Ezekiel (sitting in a horse-drawn buggy) and Eunice (standing) in the front yard of the farmhouse. Reproduced to accompany the National Register nomination, this photograph (No. 6) documents almost certainly the original appearance of the house. The modest one-and-one-half-story, three-by-three-bay, clapboarded main block of sidehall plan possessed a right entrance on its front gable facade. The house displayed the typical vernacular Greek Revival stylistic features, notably the pilasters and entablature on the entrance. The weathered appearance of the house in this photograph indicates that it needed some cosmetic repair.



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The introduction of electricity came later to rural Rochester than most larger towns in Vermont. Although not directly involved in its actual development, Ezekiel Emerson made possible the first hydroelectric generating station on the West Branch of the White River that flows along the south side of the farm. In June 1897, he sold to W. D. Huntington of Rochester "all the water power + privilege of building a dam ... and also of running a penstock along the bank at any place on my land...." The deed states that Huntington paid only \$15 for these rights.

Then in October of the same year Huntington purchased two small pieces of land from Ezekiel a distance downstream from the dam site. Huntington paid only \$50 for these two pieces that presumably became the site of the powerhouse for the project. Huntington purchased these rights and land on behalf of the Rochester Electric Light & Power Co., incorporated in September 1897. Construction started on the hydroelectric project in October, and electric lights illuminated Rochester village for the first time in February 1898.

Soon after the onset of electrical generation, major changes occurred both in the appearance of Ezekiel Emerson's house and the amount of his personal worth. The sum of money (\$65) paid him outright for the hydroelectric project rights and land was inconsequential. However there may have been also an unrecorded agreement between Ezekiel and the power company that provided ongoing payments to him proportional to the amount of electricity being generated.

Whatever the source of the money, the Rochester Grand Lists spanning the five-year period between 1896 and 1900 record substantial increases in the values of Ezekiel's real estate and personal property. In 1896, his 55-acre farm was appraised at \$1,250 and his personal property at \$345. The personal property appreciated first, rising to \$550 in 1897. That increase was minor compared with the subsequent increments to \$3,000 in 1898 and \$5,235 in 1899. Then in 1900 the value of his real estate rose abruptly to \$1,800 while his personal property continued its ascent to \$8,000, the latter being about 2,300 per cent higher than in 1896. Both figures remained at about the same levels for some years thereafter.

This sudden stroke of financial fortune undoubtedly made possible the transformation of Ezekiel's house, both exterior and interior. An ell of matching height was appended to each side of

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the original main block, and the rear wing was expanded. The stylistic highlight of the renovation project took the form of a Queen Anne style porch wrapped around the front and east facades, and sheltering a rectangular window projection added diagonally to the southeast corner. The fancifully decorated porch emulates others on elaborate Queen Anne houses that were being built during the same period in Rochester village and elsewhere throughout Vermont.

During repairs made to the house in 1998 by the present owners, the date of "Nov. 7 1899" was found marked on the subfloor in the dining room. This date presumably represents the time of the major renovation, and corresponds to the marked increase in Grand List value of Ezekiel Emerson's real estate.

Ezekiel and Eunice, however, did not have many years to relax on the spacious porch and enjoy their renovated house. Ezekiel, at least, was able to make a nostalgic trip to the West about 1904, and attend as a Vermont representative a Grand Army of the Republic national encampment in San Francisco. Then the death in May 1907 of his sister and presumed housekeeper, Eunice, apparently caused Ezekiel to sell the farm. On 2 September of the same year, H. M. Kinsman and W. E. Lang of Rochester paid him \$1,600 for the property. Thus ended the half-century of Emerson family ownership of this farm, and Ezekiel moved into Rochester village.

An extraordinary panoramic photograph taken in 1914 shows the north side of the West Branch valley viewed from a hill on the south side. Both the small cluster of buildings and most of the agricultural land constituting the Ezekiel Emerson Farm appear clearly in this photograph. The buildings then comprised the enlarged house, the horse shed closely adjacent on the northwest, the bank barn, and a small one-story, gable-roofed shed a distance to the northeast (the site if not the same building used later for potato storage). The land was almost entirely cleared; pastures with scattered trees covered the more steeply sloping terrain behind the buildings while open fields for haying occupied the gentler slopes higher on the hillside. Several fence lines marked by deciduous trees criss-crossed the area. The maple "sugarbush" apparently shaded the slopes of a ravine along the west edge of the hillside land.

Ezekiel Emerson watched his farm change ownership twice again in the next few years. Then his last trip away from Vermont took

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him to Florida, the refuge of many elderly Vermonters seeking to escape the cold winter months in their home state. There, on 3 June 1917, Ezekiel died of "senility" at St. Cloud in his 86th year of age. His body was returned to Vermont by train for burial in Rochester.

The next transfer of ownership of the former Emerson Farm occurred on 16 August 1919, when George E. Burditt acquired the property. Burditt remained here until 1943, becoming the second longest-term owner of the farm after Ezekiel Emerson and the last full-time farmer. He achieved a local reputation for growing the specialty crop of potatoes; he used fields on the hillside above the farm buildings for this purpose. The concrete foundation of his potato storage shed remains near the barn to represent this agricultural activity. Burditt also probably built the milkhouse in accord with State regulations intended to improve sanitation in the handling of fluid milk for the commercial market.

On 8 November 1943, George Burditt deeded the farm to Albert H. and Beatrice C. Wilbur. The Wilburs engaged in limited farming with a half-dozen dairy cows while Albert worked primarily for the Vermont Highway Department. They also made maple syrup; a partial stone foundation marks the site of their sap collection tank on the hillside above the house. Retaining possession until 1955, the Wilburs were the last occupants of the Emerson Farm to pursue active farming prior to the present owners.

A significant change in the use of the farmhouse occurred during a subsequent ownership. On 20 May 1969, Winifred F. Reynolds and Patricia T. Conley of West Hartford, Connecticut purchased the farm. Reynolds and Conley made substantial alterations to the house (including its exterior synthetic siding) while adapting it to a lodge for accommodating skiers under the name "Apple Hill." That name undoubtedly referred to the numerous apple trees that continue to grow on the hillside. The Reynolds-Conley occupancy and commercial activity, however, lasted only one decade until the next change of ownership in 1979.

The current owners, Ronald L. and Nancy A. Halter, acquired the Emerson Farm on 26 May 1998. The Halters performed a thorough rehabilitation of the house before reviving its usage for lodging in the bed-and-breakfast manner under the Apple Hill name. Furthermore, they have revived part-time agricultural activity on the farm by raising sheep, and have undertaken longer-term efforts to rehabilitate the overgrown fields, crumbling stone

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walls, abandoned maple sugarbush, and other long-neglected aspects of the diverse historic agricultural usage.

The Ezekiel Emerson Farm preserves at the present much of its historic architectural and agricultural character, reflecting especially the achievements of Ezekiel Emerson around 1900 to improve his domicile. The extant agricultural outbuildings continue to convey the sense of, in the case of the bank barn, Ezekiel's latter 19th-century efforts in small-scale diversified farming, and the milkhouse, the early 20th century practice of dairying by the next longest-term occupant of this farm. Similarly the surrounding open land shows the evidence of practices such as haying and pasturage integral to those agricultural activities. The resumption of those practices by the current owners will enhance the ability of the Ezekiel Emerson Farm to represent the historic character of rural Vermont molded by an agrarian society.

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BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the Ezekiel Emerson Farm corresponds exactly to the 38.1-acre Lot 12-098 depicted on the official Town of Rochester Lot Map.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the farmhouse, outbuildings, fields, pastures, and forest that have historically been part of the Ezekiel Emerson Farm and that retain historic integrity.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

The following information applies to all photographs except where noted:

Emerson, Ezekiel, Farm  
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Credit: Hugh H. Henry  
Date: October 1999  
Negative filed at Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

Photograph 1  
Setting of farmstead; view looking west.

Photograph 2  
House (#1) - south and east facades; view looking northwest.

Photograph 3  
House (#1) and Horse shed/garage (#2) - east and north facades;  
view looking southwest.

Photograph 4  
Milkhouse (#3) - north and west facades; view looking southeast.

Photograph 5  
Bank barn (#4) - west and south facades; view looking northeast.

Photograph 6  
Credit: Photographer unknown  
Date: c. 1890  
House (#1) - south and east facades; view looking northwest.