

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Robert Frost Farm (Homer Noble Farm)

AND/OR COMMON  
Robert Frost Farm (Homer Noble Farm)

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER 1/2 mile north of Vermont Route 125,  
about 3 miles east of Ripton

CITY, TOWN  
Ripton

VICINITY OF

\_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
At Large

STATE  
Vermont

CODE  
050

COUNTY  
Addison

CODE  
001

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME President and Fellows of Middlebury College

(Contact: Mr. James D. Ross,  
Business Manager)

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN  
Middlebury

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE  
Vermont

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Town Clerk's Office

(Book 17, Page 1)

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN  
Ripton

STATE  
Vermont

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE "Sites Associated with Robert Frost, New Hampshire and Vermont"

DATE 1968

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service

CITY, TOWN Washington

STATE D. C.

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT                     DETERIORATED  
 GOOD                             RUINS  
 FAIR                              UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Homer Noble Farm is located about three miles east of the small community of Ripton and about 1/2 mile north of Vermont Route 125 in the Green Mountains. An unimproved town road leads from Route 125 up a gentle slope to the farm buildings, which stand in rolling meadows on the western portion of the 150-acre property; the remaining--and larger--portion of the farm now appears to be heavily wooded. Extant buildings on the Noble property include the farmhouse, a wooden storage shed, a cabin, and a hay shed (specific dates not known): all appear to be in excellent condition, except the hay shed, and relatively unaltered in character. The barn which originally stood near the hay shed had deteriorated badly and was demolished in 1971.

The original Noble farmhouse stands to the west of the driveway which extends north from the town road. A simple frame and clapboard building on a low foundation, it consists of a 1-1/2-story main block with a 1-story and 1-1/2 story ells on the rear (west), all with gabled roofs. A screened porch covers the main entrance; additional entrances on the south elevation of the main block and the east elevation of the second ell are covered by hoods supported on plain wooden brackets. The first floor contains two living rooms in the main block and a dining room, kitchen, and pantry in the ells; a number of bedrooms are located on the second floor.

The cabin which Robert Frost occupied stands above the farmhouse (north) at the edge of the woods. A roughly square 1-story building, it is covered with log siding and has a gabled roof. On the west elevation is a screened porch, on the north a gable-roofed woodshed covered with vertical plank siding. The living room extends across the south side of the cabin. Behind it on the left (west) are the kitchen, pantry, and bath; on the right are two small bedrooms. In his early years at the cabin, Frost refused to have a telephone installed since there was one at the farmhouse; a bell attached to a clothesline strung between the house and the cabin let him know when dinner was ready or when visitors had arrived. Although most of the furnishings of the cabin have Frost provenience, they have not been kept exactly as they were when Frost lived there. Middlebury College has acquired Frost's library, consisting mostly of Modern Library editions given to the poet by Bennett Cerf, and plans to return it to the empty bookshelves in the living room.

In the meadow between the cabin and the house is the small apple orchard which Frost planted and the site of the vegetable garden which he tended each summer. To the southwest of the house is a wooden storage shed, 1-story with gabled roof. To the southeast of the house, on the opposite side of the driveway, is an open hay shed, now in deteriorated condition, and the site of the original Nobel barn, where Frost frequently kept a horse and a few cows.

There have been no major intrusions on the historic setting of the Homer Noble Farm. The property is bounded directly on the east, north, and west by the Green Mountain National Forest. On the south are largely undeveloped private lands with additional sections of the national forest beyond.

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1940-1963 (Frost ownership) BUILDER/ARCHITECT not known

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The author of 11 volumes of poetry, Robert Frost has been one of the few 20th century poets to command both critical respect and wide readership. During his lifetime he reaped more honors than any other American poet before him. On four occasions he received the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry: in 1924 for New Hampshire, in 1931 for Collected Poems, in 1937 for A Further Range, and in 1943 for A Witness Tree.

In the fall of 1940, Frost purchased the Homer Noble Farm, located about three miles east of the small community of Ripton in the Green Mountains of Vermont. Associated with the 150-acre property were a 1-1/2-story frame and clapboard farmhouse, a wooden barn and hay shed, and a 1-story log-walled cabin. Living and writing there during the summer and fall months until his death in 1963, Frost produced five volumes of poetry including his fourth Pulitzer Prize-winner.

The Homer Noble Farm is now owned by Middlebury College. The barn has been demolished but the farmhouse and cabin are in excellent condition and relatively unaltered. The property is not open to the general public but scholars, students, and writers may visit by appointment.

Historical Background

Robert Frost was born on March 26, 1874, in San Francisco, California. He was the son of William Prescott Frost, Jr., a newspaper reporter from Lawrence, Massachusetts, and Isabelle Moodie Frost, a former teacher who had been born in Edinburgh, Scotland. Robert was 11 years old when his father died of tuberculosis. Honoring a last request, the family took the body back to Lawrence for burial. No funds were available for the return trip and Mrs. Frost settled with her children--Robert and his younger sister Jeanie--in Salem, New Hampshire, where she earned a living for several years by teaching school.

Frost entered Dartmouth College in the fall of 1892 but disliked formal study so intensely that he left after only two months. During the next two years, he earned a living in miscellaneous ways while sending poems to uninterested editors. In 1894, to celebrate his first sale of a poem--"My Butterfly: An Elegy," published by the New York Independent--he privately printed six of his poems in a booklet entitled Twilight; an edition limited to two copies, one for his affianced, Elinor White, and one for himself.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Frost, Robert, Complete Poems of Robert Frost, (New York, 1964).  
 Gould, Jean, Robert Frost: The Aim Was Song, (New York, 1964).  
 Munson, Gorham B., Robert Frost, (Chicago, 1962).  
 Spiller, Robert E., et. al. Literary History of the United States, rev. ed.,  
 (new York, 1960).  
 Thompson, Lawrance, Fire and Ice: the Art and Thought of Robert Frost, (New York, 1942).

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 150 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	18	661640	4870280	B	18	661660	4869690
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	18	659760	4869940	D	18	659760	4870660

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries of the national historic landmark designation for the Robert Frost Farm (Homer Noble Farm), shown in red on the accompanying sketch map, are those of the 150-acre property as acquired by the President and Fellows of Middlebury College from Theodore and Kathleen J. Morrison by deed recorded in the Ripton Land Records on December 29, 1966 (Book 17, page 1): bounded easterly, northerly, and westerly by lands of the United States Government (Green Mountain National Forest administered by the United States Forest Service) and southerly by lands of William H. Upson, lands of

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

Original Form prepared by: John D. McDermott, 1968

NAME, TITLE  
 Polly M. Rettig, Historian

ORGANIZATION  
 Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service

DATE  
 12/3/75

STREET & NUMBER  
 1100 L Street, N.W.

TELEPHONE  
 523-5464

CITY OR TOWN  
 Washington

National Historic Landmark  
 Designated: 23 1968  
 date  
 Boundary Certified: Mar 28, 1978  
 LOCAL Virginia  
 date

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: [Signature] DATE 3-31-78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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After his marriage in 1895, Robert Frost taught for two years at his mother's private school in Lawrence and then spent the next two years as a special student at Harvard. In 1900, for reasons of health, he moved to a small farm in Derry, New Hampshire, and conducted a small poultry business there until 1905. Failing as a farmer, he taught various subjects in the Pinkerton Academy at Derry from 1905 to 1911 and then moved to Plymouth, New Hampshire, where he taught psychology for a year in the New Hampshire State Normal School.

By 1912 Frost had decided to devote his main efforts to poetry, and fortified with the money obtained from the sale of the Derry farm and an annuity of \$800 left him by his grandfather, Frost set sail for England with his family. Settling first in Buckinghamshire and then in Herefordshire, he cultivated the friendship of a number of English poets. Composing a few new poems and selecting others written at Derry and elsewhere, Frost prepared a volume for publication. Mrs. Alfred Nutt of London brought out the first book, A Boy's Will in 1913. A second, North of Boston, appeared the following year. The cordial praise given those poems by British men of letters won him lasting friendships in England and attracted the surprised attention of critics and editors in his native land. When he returned to the United States in 1915, his first two books had been reissued in New York and North of Boston soon became a best seller. A third volume, Mountain Interval was published in 1916.

After his return from England, Frost purchased a farm two miles west of Franconia in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. In 1917 he accepted a position as Professor of English at Amherst College. During the rest of his life, Frost spent a part of almost every year teaching and working in a college atmosphere. As his reputation grew, the demands made upon him as a teacher decreased, and he held a number of Fellowships at various colleges, all of which gave him a great deal of freedom to pursue his art. His major appointments were at Amherst (1917-1920, 1923-1925, 1926-1938, 1949-1963), the University of Michigan (1921-1923, 1925-1926), Harvard (1939-1942), and Dartmouth (1943-1949).

Throughout his life, Frost continued to return to the New England countryside when the weather was good and his schedule permitted. In 1920 he bought the Peleg Cole Farm in South Shaftsbury, Vermont. In December of 1923 he purchased a second farm in the area, "The Gully," which he kept until after the death of his wife 10 years later. In 1940 Frost purchased the 150-acre Homer Noble Farm near Ripton, Vermont, located eight miles from Middlebury College and two miles from the Bread Loaf Inn, where each summer the college sponsored the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference. Frost knew the area well. He had been influential in establishing the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference, and he had delivered an annual lecture at the Middlebury School of English since 1921.

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From 1940 until his death in 1963, Frost spent the summer and fall months of each year at Ripton (springs were spent at Cambridge, Massachusetts, and winters at the New England style bungalow that he built on rural land near Coral Gables, Florida). Frost lived simply at the Noble Farm, occupying the log-walled cabin on the hillside above the farmhouse, which he "rented" to his private secretary and her husband, Kathleen and Theodore Morrison. He cooked many of his own meals when not eating at the farmhouse, made his own bed, cut all the wood for his fireplace, and grew vegetables for the Morrises and himself. Frost normally rose late in the day and wrote, read, or talked with friends far into the night. He continued his habit of taking long walks, especially at night, in the company of his dog Gullie.

Robert Frost reaped more honors during his lifetime than any other American poet before him. On four occasions he received the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry: in 1924 for New Hampshire, in 1931 for Collected Poems, in 1937 for A Further Range, and in 1943 for A Witness Tree. In 1939 he became the third poet in history to receive the coveted gold medal of the National Institute of Arts and Letters. In 1958 he was appointed Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress. Frost became such a national institution that he was asked to read a poem at the inauguration of President John F. Kennedy on January 20, 1961. Perhaps the most eloquent tribute paid to him after his death was made by a fellow poet, John Ciardi, who said simply: "He was our best."

Before his death, Frost made arrangements for the transfer of the Homer Noble Farm to the Morrises. Adjoining parcels of land that he had acquired were left to his friend and caretaker, Stafford Dragon, and sold to the Donald Gordons, parents of the wife of his only grandson, Prescott. Middlebury College bought the Homer Noble Farm from the Morrises in 1966. As part of the purchase agreement, the couple retained the right to occupy the house during the summer months for a 10-year period. In consequence the farmhouse and cabin are not open to the general public; however, scholars, students, and writers may visit them by arrangement with the College.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Thompson, Lawrance, ed. Selected Letters of Robert Frost (New York, 1964).  
Untermeyer, Louis. Robert Frost: A Backward Look (Washington, D.C., 1964).

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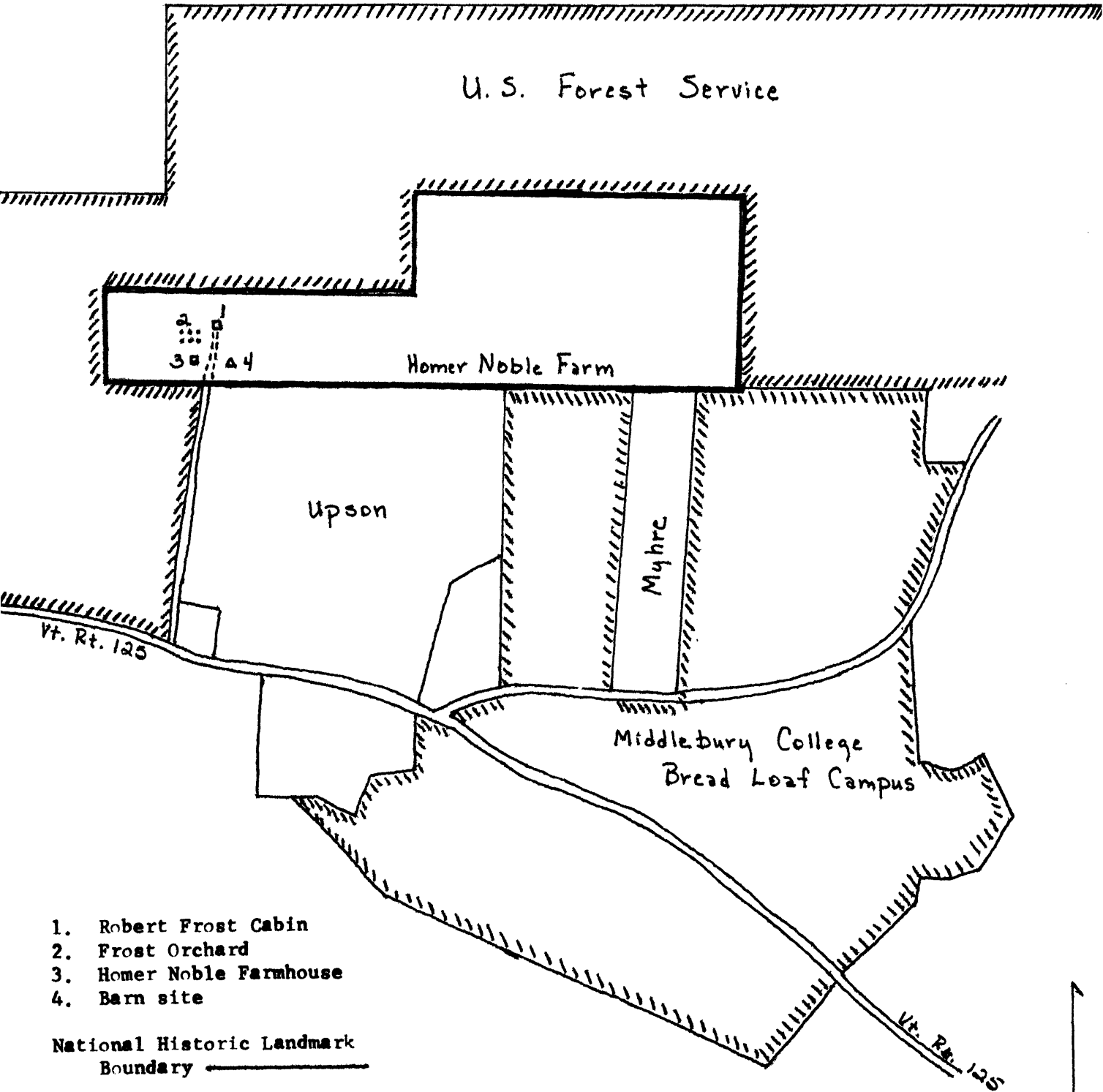
ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 2

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Middlebury College (Bread Loaf Campus; in 2 sections), and lands of one Myhre.



ROBERT FROST FARM  
(HOMER NOBLE FARM)  
vic. Ripton, Vermont



1. Robert Frost Cabin
2. Frost Orchard
3. Homer Noble Farmhouse
4. Barn site

National Historic Landmark  
Boundary —————

sketch map - not to scale

NORTH ↑