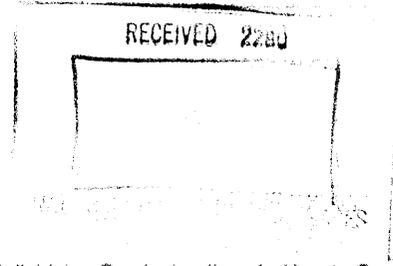


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



12

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 Chimney Farm

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 617 East Neck Road N/A not for publication

city or town Nobleboro N/A vicinity

state Maine code ME county Lincoln code 015 zip code 04555

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.)

[Signature] 12/22/06
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Maine Historic Preservation Commission
State or 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 certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this 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] 2-7-07
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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
_____ buildings
_____ sites
_____ structures
_____ objects
_____ Total
4

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC / Single Dwelling
FUNERARY/ Cemetery
AGRICULTURE / Agricultural Outbuilding
AGRICULTURE / Agricultural Field
DOMESTIC / Secondary Structure

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC / Single Dwelling
FUNERARY/ Cemetery
AGRICULTURE / Agricultural Outbuilding
AGRICULTURE / Agricultural Field
DOMESTIC / Secondary Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)
MID - 19TH CENTURY
LATE VICTORIAN / Queen Anne

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)
foundation GRANITE
BRICK
walls WOOD / Weatherboard
WOOD / Shingle
roof METAL / Steel
ASPHALT
other BRICK (Chimneys)

Narrative Description

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

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CHIMNEY FARM

LINCOLN COUNTY, MAINE

Section number 7 Page 2

DESCRIPTION

Chimney Farm, the former home of authors Henry Beston and Elizabeth Coatsworth, is an approximately twenty acre parcel of land containing fields, gardens, stone walls, a house, barn, writing studio and cemetery located on East Neck Road in the Lincoln County town of Nobleboro, Maine. The East Neck is one of two peninsulas of land that protrude northerly from the southern end of Damariscotta Lake, an eleven mile long body of water that stretches from Jefferson in the north to Nobleboro and Newcastle in the south. To the west Deep Cove divides the East and West necks and Muscongus Bay defines the eastern edge of the peninsula. Historically, Chimney Farm contained almost 85 acres and cut across the middle of the neck from cove to bay. However, for purposes of this nomination the boundaries of the Farm is limited to the twenty acres of cultural features at the heart of the property. (See boundary description for a more specific definition of the nominated property.)

The majority of the nominated property lies between East Neck Road and the bay. As originally laid out, the north-south road ran between the house on the east and the barn on the west: however, during the period of significance its route was altered to swing to the west of the barn in a gentle arc. The old road has been discontinued north of the house and the southern portion now provides a little used driveway. The main driveway runs east to west, leaving East Neck Road just north of the barn. Another track, primarily of dirt, runs southeast from the road along the southern boundary of the property to the shore. The house sits almost in the middle of the property. To the south and east the land slopes gently towards the edge of the bay and is vegetated with tall pasture and clusters of mixed hard and soft wood trees. Situated almost due south of the house, on the slope to the lake, is a small frame, one room cabin, known as the "little writing cabin". On both sides of East Neck Road are meadows and hay fields. On the west side of the road the south, west and north edges of the field is bounded by a line of deciduous forest that continues west to Deep Cove. At this interface of forest and field is a small cemetery enclosed behind a wooden picket fence. With the exception of the eastern shore area, most of the boundaries of this property are demarcated by piled fieldstone walls.

Separating the yard immediately around the house from the pasture to the east is a fence line which supports ancient grape vines. Several apple trees, lilac bushes and a stately weeping willow occupy the dooryard and lawn. Remnants of an herb garden are located between the house and the grape vines. There is also a large vegetable garden south the house. Attached to the southern side of the New England style barn is a wood fenced coral and beyond that a small frame chicken coop of questionable structural soundness.

House, contributing. Early 19th century.

The house at Chimney Farm is a 1 ½ story south facing cape with a 1 ½ story gable-side addition attached to the southeast corner, and a long, north stretching ell originating from the northwest corner. A small lean-to addition is attached to the northeast end of the ell, and a wooden deck is positioned in the sheltered dooryard between the ell and the north elevation of the main house. The entire property is clad in painted clapboards, sits on granite foundation stones and is capped with a standing seam metal roof. Narrow corner boards define the edges of the building, and thin cornice returns truncate the broadly overhanging roof. There are five brick chimneys: two pierce the ridge of the ell, another pair straddle the ridge of the main house just to the east and west of the center hallway, and the fifth rises through the ridge of the southeast appendage.

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The primary facade faces south and was originally constructed with pairs of windows symmetrically flanking the central door. At an unknown time, but prior to 1931, a 1 ½ story three sided tower was affixed over the center bay. The front door was moved forward into the tower and a pair of windows were added to each side facet. On the upper level three windows were installed. The original three sided tower roof has been flattened and is topped with a simple balustrade. Additional ornamentation on the facade is provided by a wooden arbor utilized as an entryway and positioned before the front door. The windows are presently six-over-six double hung wooden sash, however, historic photographs indicate that two-over-two sash had been installed previously. The west gable end is three bays wide on the first floor and is comprised of a pair of six-over-six windows between which is situated a side door surrounded by a projecting hood. This decorative element was carved by local woodworker Edbury Hatch, and has intricately carved wooden brackets displaying a fanciful combination of animals (fox, snakes and feline-type heads), stars, tassels, and floral motifs. Another pair of windows are situated under the gable. The eastern gable end is similar, minus the door and hood.

Attached to the southeast corner of the house is a high posted one story addition, oriented with the four bay eave ell facing south and north, and the two-bay gable ends facing east and west. The south wall of this appendage projects approximately 8 feet beyond the main house, and a wooden door in a plain wooden surround is positioned on the west wall of the first floor. As with the main house, the remaining bays contain six-over-six double hung wooden windows.

The ell contains two segments unified under a single gable roof line. The northern end of the ell contains two exterior sliding wooden equipment doors on the western elevation, and on the interior it is outfitted as a woodshed with a small loft. The more northerly of the two ell chimneys marks the transition to the four bay domestic component of the ell, which contains one bay of paired six-over-six windows, a pedestrian door, and two additional windows. Above this section of the ell are two gable dormers, which were added in the later decades of the 20th century. On the east side of the woodshed is a small shed-roof addition that contains a single room and the farm's privy. A similar structure is appended to the east gable end of the main house, thus widening the northeast room on the first floor by approximately five feet. Additional dormers are located on the north side of the main house (one each with a gable and shed roof), the eastern appendage (gable roof) and on the eastern slope of the ell (shed roof).

The basic plan of the house at Chimney Farm is that of a center hall cape. A central hall with a straight run stair divides the front into primary rooms in the southeast and southwest, behind which are three rooms of roughly equal dimensions.¹ Finishes in this main section of the building include painted pine floors, and either plaster or plaster board on walls and ceilings. The southeast main room retains late Federal-era trim around the six panel doors, but these features are lacking in the southwest parlor, as well as the northern corner rooms. The middle back room contains early green paint, four panel doors and a beaded board wall enclosing the cellar stairs. This south wall of this room also contains a built-in china cupboard. The location of the chimneys in the main house are noteworthy and may suggest an early, major remodeling of the property from an original center chimney plan. Both chimneys are located in the interior northern corners of the front rooms. Neither fireplaces, nor evidence for earlier hearths are present. The rooms in the eastern addition are also plainly trimmed, however, the mantle mounted on the north-south wall that separates the larger western room from the small study and steep stair to the garret in the east is vaguely ^{Geek Revival} in proportion and form.

¹The northeast rooms is somewhat wider as a result of the lean-to addition on the east side.

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CHIMNEY FARM

LINCOLN COUNTY, MAINE

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Save for book shelves lining the eave walls, the garret is unfinished, although it was utilized by the family for both storing herbs and writing. The second floor of the main house features large bedrooms to the east and west of the hall and a newer bathroom situated under the shed dormer in the rear. The tower room features built in benches below the windows.

As originally configured, the ell proper started north of the chimney positioned on the north wall of the northwest room in the main house. The ell contained the winter kitchen in the south and a separate summer kitchen with its own chimney on the wall dividing this room from the woodshed to the north. The interior walls between the northwest corner room in the main house and the summer kitchen and winter kitchen have been removed. In addition, in this now continuous ell room, new pine flooring has been installed, and ceiling joists have been exposed. The southernmost of the chimneys has been replaced with a masonry (Russian) heater. These changes to the original plan of the ell occurred during the later years of Elizabeth Coatsworth's life and do not represent an overall loss of integrity of design, materials or workmanship since the period of significance.

Barn, contributing. Nineteenth century.

The timber framed barn is located southwest of the house and across the driveway. In plan it is a New England style gable-front barn with a central aisle. The facade faces east and contains large, two-leaf, exterior sliding wooden doors flanked by a fixed windows: one to either side and one above near the gable peak. All but the latter window, which is boarded over from the interior, contain six-light wooden sash. The western elevation mimics the opposite gable end, however, here the centered door is smaller in scale. Two doors and a window are located on the southern elevation at ground level, and two four over four light sash are positioned in the southwest upper corner of the wall. The north side of the barn has no fenestration. The barn is shingled with an asphalt roof and narrow wooden corner boards and rake trim. It sits on piled fieldstones, and does not have a basement. The first level contains three wide box stalls on either side of the aisle. Overhead, three quarters of the length of the aisle has been floored. A stair at the west end of the aisle leads to a pair of small, enclosed rooms partitioned off from the otherwise open second level. Used as a study and retreat by Henry Beston (and known as the Barnatheum), these tiny rooms are finished with fiberboard walls and ceilings and are lined with book shelves. A small parlor stove, no longer vented, provided heat in these spaces.

Little Writing Cabin, contributing.

This is a small one story building with a low-pitched gable roof and novelty siding. A bank of six-over-six wooden sash windows fills the eastern facade, which faces towards Damariscotta Lake, and a metal chimney stack emerges through the northern side of the roof. The simple interior is outfitted with a small parlor stove, a cot and tables. This structure was originally located near the barn, but was moved down towards the pond to provide more privacy for writing. Its date of construction is unknown.

Cemetery

The Hall Cemetery is located on the western edge of the property, at the edge of the hay field. It is surrounded by a wood picket fence and is shaded by large maple trees. This small burying yard contains less than two dozen markers, most of which belong to members of the Hall family that lived on the Neck during the nineteenth century. It also contains the burial sites of Henry Beston and Elizabeth Coatsworth. In contrast to

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the granite and slate tombstones of the Hall family, Beston's marker is comprised of a brass plaque mounted directly onto a large boulder, and Coatsworth's burial site is signified by a small metal ground plate.

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.)

- 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.
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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

LITERATURE

Period of Significance

1931 - 1956

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 a 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.

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Beston, Henry (1888-1968)

Beston, Elizabeth Coatsworth (1893 - 1986)

Cultural Affiliation

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:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other
Name of repository:

See continuation sheet

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The 20 acre property on the edge of Damariscotta Lake in Nobleboro, Lincoln County, Maine known as Chimney Farm has been immortalized beautifully in the writings of Henry Beston and Elizabeth Coatsworth Beston.² Taken together their literary careers spanned over a hundred years. Their genres - children's stories, nature writing, historical fiction, poetry and local documentary - cover much ground and have garnered accolades from readers and critics of disparate voices. And yet, as well known as they were 'in their time' (and continue to be in the local region), and as lasting as their influence has been overall, critical and comprehensive evaluation of their long term contributions to literature have yet to be undertaken. There are the obvious yardsticks of significance: Coatsworth published over 112 volumes and won the Newbury Award for Children's Literature in 1931 with The Cat Who Went to Heaven; Beston's The Outermost House (1928) influenced Rachel Carson; was published in pocket sized editions for military personnel during World War II; and has never been out of print and has been cited as a benchmark of nature writing.³ As different as their writing styles and subject matter could be, the touchstone and wellspring of much of their best subject matter was Chimney Farm, which they occupied from 1931 through the ends of their respective lives: Beston in 1968 and Coatsworth in 1986. The goal of this document is not to undertake the sorely needed academic analysis of their respective works, but rather to outline the importance of the continued preservation of the property as an ongoing manifestation of their lives and work. Chimney Farm is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places at the statewide level of significance under Criterion B as both the long term residence, and frequent subject matter of, the authors Henry Beston and Elizabeth Coatsworth.

Chimney Farm - History and Acquisition.

The northern end of East Neck was acquired by James Hall prior to 1803. Hall had initially lived across the Pond⁴ in Waldoboro, but between then and 1815 he moved his mansion house over the ice and established his homestead on the northern reaches of the Neck. By about 1815 Hall had divided his land among his children who eventually established at least two farms that stretched across the Neck from Deep Cove to Muscongus Bay. At mid-century Daniel Hall (James's grandson) was inhabiting the middle farm, in a house that was probably constructed as a center chimney cape about 1830. A few years later Daniel's son Wilson and family lived in the structure, and it may have

²Married in 1929, Elizabeth Coatsworth Beston continued to use her maiden name in her professional career. In this nomination I will refer to her as 'Coatsworth' when discussing her career and Elizabeth Beston when discussing her family or domestic life.

³Beston papers, Bowdon College, M.12 Box 8, F 3; Wilding, p. 68; Payne, 2005.

⁴Damariscotta Lake is often referred to as Damiscotta Pond, or simply, 'the Pond'.

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been that family that added the one and one-half story structure to the eastern end of the house in the 1860s. In 1922 the property was sold by the Hall family to Allen and Ilda Bennet, and eight years later it was again offered for sale. The mansion house north of Chimney Farm is still owned by members of the Hall family, but the other homesteads on the Neck have also passed out of the family.

The story of the Bestons' acquisition of the property has apocryphal qualities. An illustrator who illustrated several of Beston's early volumes, Maurice 'Jake' Day had moored a houseboat (nicknamed 'The Ark') in Deep Cover for the summer. During a week-long visit to Maine by Beston, Bennet mentioned to Day and Beston that he wanted to sell his farm. With little more than a cursory exterior viewing Beston purchased the property. He then told his new wife of two years, Elizabeth Beston, over fish and chips lunch at a restaurant. And she was amenable.

At the time, the Bestons were living in her family's home in Hingham Massachusetts, and they also owned the little cottage on the shore of what would become Cape Cod National Seashore in Eastham, the 'outermost house'. Although the Bestons split their time between Hingham and Maine well into the 1940s they immediately prepared to renovate the Maine farm house.

Beston's connection to Chimney Farm is evident from the beginning. Although Beston should probably not be perceived as an antiquarian he was very sympathetic to the house's innate value and struggled with how to adapt it to their needs. In letters to Elizabeth Beston from Chimney Farm in the fall of 1931, he agonized over how to adapt a former parlor to their bedroom, and wrote of his desire for "a clean attractive convenient kitchen, a pleasant living room or "parlor" and one swank bedroom." While renovating the parlor it seemed that the room conspired against him. "The living room, entirely of its own volition - is going Victorian. The pine furniture just wont make it: it feels uncomfortable in the room, while the room actively dislikes it." (Beston Papers, M. 12.1, F 105, September 1931). By 1932 the family, which then included daughters Meg and Kate, had settled into Chimney Farm.

Henry Beston, 1888-1968.

The following biographical information on Henry Beston is summarized by historian Daniel G. Payne. This passage was excerpted from Payne's proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities for grant funding in support of a comprehensive biography of Beston (in progress).

Henry Beston was born in Quincy, Massachusetts in 1888 to an Irish-American physician and a French mother. Although he would later become one of the foremost American nature writers of the twentieth century, there was little in his early life that evinced a strong interest in natural history or the outdoors. Following his graduation from Harvard University in 1909, he spent a year teaching in France...When the first world war began, Beston volunteered to serve as an ambulance driver on the western

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front. When the United States entered the war in 1917, he took a position as a war correspondent serving with the U. S. Navy. Although he greatly admired the soldiers and sailors with whom he served, Beston's experiences in the war led to his growing misgivings about the effect of modern industrial civilization on the human spirit.

After the war, Beston began to write children's stories in an attempt to counter the effect of his wartime experience. Although these stories, particularly his fair tales were immensely popular with young readers (including the children of his close friend Theodore Roosevelt, Jr.), Beston turned to natural history as the subject for his breakthrough work, *The Outermost House*. In September of 1926, Beston left Quincy to spend a two week vacation on Cape Cod in a small house he'd built on an isolated stretch of marshland and dunes overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. The isolation of the Cape proved salutary, both in a personal and a literary sense. On the Cape, Beston refined his ideas regarding the harmful effect that industrial civilization had on humankind's physical sense, proclivity towards violence, and disconnection from the rhythms of the earth and the season. He argued that the anthropocentric notion that humans were of a different order than the rest of creation was fundamentally flawed: "We need another and a wiser and perhaps a more mystical concept of animals...They are not brethren, they are not underlings; they are other nations, caught with ourselves in the net of life and time, fellow prisoners of the splendour and travail of the earth". Both contemporary reviewers and modern critics praised *The Outermost House*, which is generally considered to be one of the classic works of American nature writing. Thomas Lyon, the editor of *This Incomperable Land: A Book of American Nature Writing*, compares *The Outermost House* to Thoreau's *Walden* and Edward Abbey's *Desert Solitaire*, calling it a "talismanic book of solitude".

In the 1930s, Beston and his family bought a farm near Damariscotta, Maine that they called "Chimney Farm." Beston had come to believe that farm life was an effective antidote to the toxic effects of a modern industrial civilization that was "without a truly human past and may be without a human future" (*Herbs and the Earth*, p. 5.) Beston continued to explore the link between nature and humankind in later works, most notably *Herbs and the Earth* (1935) and *Northern Farm* (1948). In his later years, Beston's productivity ebbed as his health slowly deteriorated, but his work continued to receive numerous accolades. In 1960 he was awarded the Emerson-Thoreau Award and in 1964 the "Fo'castle," Beston's cottage on Cape Cod was designated a National Literary Landmark. (Payne, 2005.)

Sadly, in 1978, the Fo'castle was swept out to sea in a storm.

In addition to the above cited honors, Beston was granted a Doctor of Humane Letters by the University of Maine in 1958 "in recognition of (his) distinguished work as a humanist, editor and author who has interpreted Maine and New England life and history with skill and

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understanding." (Beston Family Papers, M. 12, Box 8, folder 6.)

Elizabeth Coatsworth. 1893-1986.

The most significant honor Coatsworth received was the 1931 Newbury Award. Sponsored by the American Library Association, the Newbury Medal is awarded "for the most distinguished American children's book published the previous year." Its purpose is "To encourage original creative work in the field of books for children. To emphasize to the public that contributions to the literature for children deserve similar recognition to poetry, plays, or novels. To give those librarians, who make it their life work to serve children's reading interests, an opportunity to encourage good writing in this field." In addition, Coatsworth received the Irvin Kerlan Award, from the University of Minnesota, in 1975, "in recognition of singular attainments in the creation of children's literature, and in appreciation for generous donation of unique resources to the Kerlan Collection for the study of children's literature," (MWWC, CEB Box 1, F. 8a) and she was the only American entry for the Hans Christian Anderson Award in 1968. (Young, 1968). Yet, as with the career of her husband, no thorough biography or critical evaluation of her work has yet been produced.

The following biography, which was prepared by the staff of the Maine Women Writers Collection at the University of New England (Portland, Maine) summarizes the career of Elizabeth Coatsworth:

Elizabeth Coatsworth was born in Buffalo, NY in 1893 and graduated from Vassar College in 1915. She completed an MA in 1916 at Columbia, and received an honorary doctorate from the University of Maine in 1955. Coatsworth traveled widely in her youth to Europe, Africa, Mexico, and the Far East, and kept extensive notebooks of writing and artwork from her travels. She began writing poetry in 1914, and published her first book, "Fox Footprints," in 1923. In 1929 she married Henry Beston, the noted author and naturalist, and the two settled first in Hingham, Mass, and then at Chimney Farm in Nobleboro, Maine. Coatsworth continued to successfully publish books, mostly for children, for the rest of her life. She was the recipient of numerous awards, including the Newbury Medal in 1931 for "The Cat Who Went to Heaven." Her stories largely involve animals and nature, and show the influence of her travels. One of her collections of fiction, "The Snow Parlor and Other Bedtime Stories," includes stories written by her husband. In addition to writing children's books, Coatsworth published several novels and nonfiction works for adults, including the autobiographical "Personal Geography" in 1976. (MWWC, Coatsworth Collection, Series 1, Box 1).

"...Children of today are fortunate to have among them a teller of good stories who could lead from chapter to chapter of good poems." With these words, Louise Seaman Bechtel, the head of the juvenile book department at Macmillan press from 1919-1934 and the assistant editor and director for *The Horn Book Magazine*, begins the praise of her subject, the poet and writer Elizabeth Coatsworth.

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The article, written in 1936, cites Coatsworth's ability to interweave poetry with daily life in her children's stories, and identifies her world travels as inspiration. Other contemporaries noted her "imaginative feeling for the New England Country," (Eaton, 1939), or her "ability to evoke sensory pictures that place readers clearly within the settings of her stories" (Lukens, 1983). Although she published continually through the end of her life, her work is generally less well known today than it was several decades ago.

Chimney Farm

The sense of place is keenly developed in the writings of both Coatsworth and Beston, and for both, Chimney Farm provided inspiration and subject matter. Typical days involved writing in the morning, (Coatsworth at the table, and Beston either there or in one of his retreats), followed by afternoon walks, or visits to neighbors or town. Although sense of connection to the land is a key element in their books, the family did not farm, per se. Beston planted an herb garden in the back, which led him to write Herbs and the Earth, which has been described as "a poetic meditation on herbs, history, the mysteries of the soil and the magic of growth" (Smith, 2005). The family also planted a vegetable garden, tended fruit trees, and kept the hayfields for the use of their neighbors. For Beston, the property came to provide a literary device for his anti-industrial philosophy. This is illustrated in the following passage from Northern Farm: A glorious year on a small Maine farm, published in 1948.

As I settle down in this familiar house, with the lamplight glowing from its windows and the great planets crossing the sky above its chimney tops, I find I am shaking off the strange oppression which came over me when I lived by an urban sense and understanding of time. In a world so convenient and artificial that there is scarcely day or night, and one is bulwarked against the seasons and the year, time, so to speak, having no natural landmarks, tends to stand still. The consequence is that life and time and history become unnaturally a part of some endless and unnatural present, and violence becomes for some the only remedy. Here in the country, it all moves ahead again. Spring is not only a landmark, but it looks ahead to autumn, and winter forever looks forward to the spring. (Beston, Northern Farm, p. 7).

As noted above, Coatsworth was adept at being able to thoroughly immerse her reader in a setting, whether it was a foreign land visited on her travels, or an historic period of the New England countryside. She articulated the extent to which an understanding of place figured into her writing in the following excerpts from an article she wrote for *The Horn Book* in 1948 entitled "Upon Writing For Children".

Most often I begin with place. The sense of what the classical world called the *genius loci* is very strong with me, and again and again it has been a house or particular landscape or a village which has been the starting place for one of my books...In *Away*

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Goes Sally, the impetus came partly from an old book about Salem, but also from a small house with a stove in it fastened on runners and used by the woodcutters in winter. We found this in the woods of our farm when we were first exploring our land and it made an instant impression on me. *Houseboat Summer* was written because of ten days which my husband and I spent on the houseboat belonging to the artist, Maurice Day, and his wife. It was anchored in the cove of a Maine pond between two folds of wooded hills where the thrushes called through the long May twilights. (Coatsworth, 1948, p. 389-90)

This attachment to the landscape, to Chimney Farm, also figured prominently in Coatsworth's later collections of Maine stories, and her semi-autobiography, A Personal Geography (1976). In volumes such as Beston's, Northern Farm and Especially Maine (1970), and Coatsworth's Country Neighborhood (1944), Maine Ways, (1947), Maine Memories (1968) the two authors documented the social lives and customs of their neighbors and the farming community of mid-20th century Nobleboro, Maine.

There are three farms on East Neck, and ours, the middle one, like the others is surrounded by hayfields looking east to the water with pasture land above, largely overgrown now; beyond that, woodland stretches down to Deep Cove on the west. The neighborhood is entirely given over to farming: the farms are not rich, for the soil is not rich. The population has shrunk, and the woods are webbing in the corners of the fields: older cellar holes and lost orchards and gravestones among the pines bear testimony to this.

But the people on this back road which is almost impassable in mud-time retain the old independent self-respecting Yankee tradition. While here and there the blood has run out and families like plants have gone to seed, the men and women of our township are for the most part people of character and breeding, not cut out of any one pattern as by machinery, but whittled and showing the grain. Among them you will find some of the oldest names in the history of New England, mixed with the names of the Germans who settled in the neighboring town of Waldoboro in the mid-eighteenth century. Our road with its small weather-beaten farms has in the last few years taken on a new hopefulness, that fundamental and basic hopefulness of birth. One day we counted thirty-six children in its scattered houses where twenty years ago there were only two along its three miles; for the East Neck Road is of course only a side road starting at the Nobleboro post office and running to our gate, where it changes into a lane for us and the Hall farm, then into a wood-road, and so veins out into dim trails leading to the water. (Maine Memories, p. 7-8).

The sense of the past, as both a part of the present, and at odds with the present, is a theme that runs through the work of Coatsworth and Beston. For Coatsworth at least, Chimney Farm itself is emblematic of that past.

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It is a pleasant room to wake in. The wallpaper is very fresh-looking, a calico sort of design, bad in detail, but very becoming to the walls. Beyond my bedside table the Parlor Gothic stove stands under the mantel. Opposite is an old bureau, and a dressing table fills the space between the two windows. One door opens into Henry's room, and another, in the same corner, reaches the clothes closet and Kate's room beyond. There are three downstairs bedrooms at the farm, a most unusual number, but we are fortunate because sometime about 1860 a married son added the "east house" to the main dwelling, and in it several generations were raised. This bedroom was once kitchen and general living room: the study beyond was the parents' bedroom, although it would seem to me scarcely wide enough for a bed, and in the attic overhead (where now Henry keeps his long shelves of books, a desk under a new dormer for rainy days, and a spare bed beyond a little stove) the children of this part of the farm once slept. (Maine Memories, p. 1-2).

To understand the writings of Henry Beston and Elizabeth Coatsworth, one must be appreciate the extent to which Chimney Farm figures into their nature writing, their historical fiction, their poetry, and their neighborhood chronicles. As the property most directly associated with, and intimately influential on the work of these two exceptional writers, whose literary contributions were well established prior to 1956, Chimney Farm is thus recommended for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately 20 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

| | | | | | | | |
|---|------|---------|----------|---|------|---------|----------|
| 1 | 19 | 461909 | 4884792 | 3 | 19 | 462116 | 4884339 |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 2 | 19 | 462178 | 4884637 | 4 | 19 | 461763 | 4884651 |

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 CHRISTIA MITCHELL, ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

organization MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION date 21 October 2006

street & number 55 CAPITOL STREET, STATION 65 telephone (207) 287-2132

city or town AUGUSTA state ME zip code 04333-0065

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 _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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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 Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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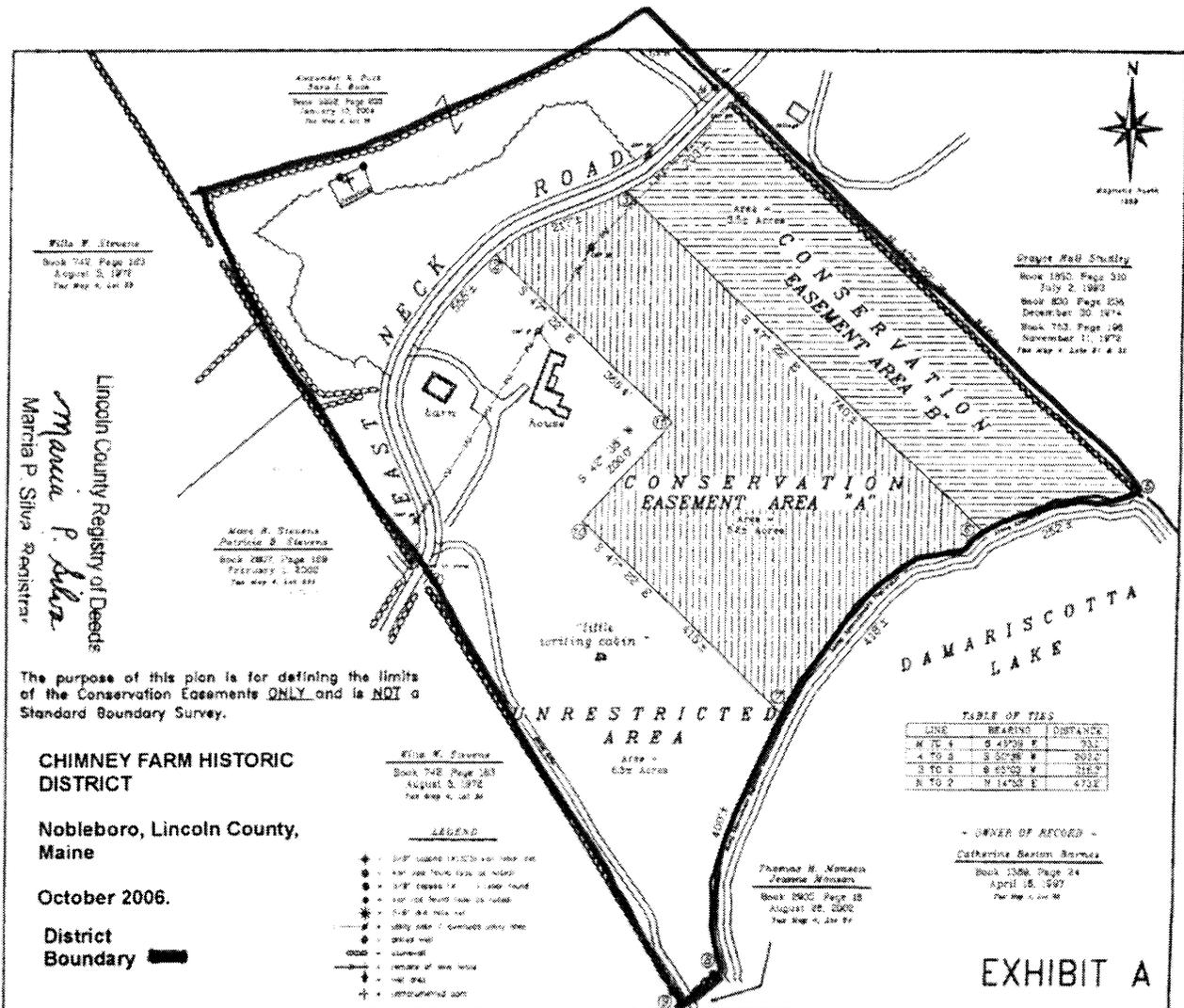
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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries of the nominated district contain all of the land described by Town of Nobleboro tax map number 4, lot 33. It also includes the portion of Town of Nobleboro tax map 4 lot 30 that lies that is bounded on the east by East Neck Road, and on the south, north and west by a stone wall. The full boundaries of the historic district are also indicated by the thick line on the map "Chimney Farm Historic District, 2006"

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The above described boundaries have been drawn to include all of the cultural features associated with the property during its period of significance.



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PHOTOGRAPHS

Photograph 1 of 3

Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

25 June 2006

Overview of Chimney Farm, including hayfield, house and barn; facing southeast.

Photograph 2 of 3

Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

25 June 2006

South facade and west elevation of farmhouse; facing northeast.

Photograph 2 of 3

Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

25 June 2006

Front yard, pasture and Damariscotta Lake; facing east.