

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Whitcomb, M. S., Farm
other names/site number Venture Farm

2. Location

street & number U.S. Route 2 N/A not for publication
city, town Richmond N/A vicinity
state Vermont code VT county Chittenden code 007 zip code 05477

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u>3</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>4</u>	<u> </u> objects
			<u>5</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
Agricultural Resources of Vermont

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

James Robert Mc...
Signature of certifying official

8/25/93
Date

Vermont State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. 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): _____

Delores Byers
Signature of the Keeper

9/30/93
Date of Action

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture/Animal Facility

Agriculture/Agricultural Outbuilding

Agriculture/Agricultural Field

Domestic/Single Dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture/Animal Facility

Agriculture/Agricultural Field

Agriculture/Agricultural Outbuilding

Domestic/Multiple Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Bank Barn

No Style

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone

walls weatherboard

roof slate

other wood

steel

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

See continuation sheets for description.

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Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1 Whitcomb, M. S., Farm
Richmond, Chittenden Co., Vermont

The M. S. Whitcomb Farm, whose focal point is an exceptional, large, 1901 barn with a monitor roof is located in Richmond, Vermont, on U.S. Route 2 about 1.5 miles east of Richmond village. The farm buildings and pastures are located on the north side of Route 2, with the historic fields on the south side. The farmstead, which once encompassed more than 960 acres, now has about 170 acres. Buildings include the historic 1901 bank barn, c.1900 carriage barn, and c.1850 horse barn, and the non-contributing farmhouse (1875/1982), two c.1970 silos, c.1975 metal barn, and c.1970 bunker silo. As a whole, the Whitcomb farmstead retains its integrity of materials, workmanship, design, location and setting, association, and feeling. New construction has been done to keep the farm agriculturally productive and is in keeping with its farm character.

1. Barn, 1901

This huge bank barn, a major landmark visible from Interstate 89, is a gable-roofed with monitor, four-story plus basement building, rectangular in shape (about 60' x 125', 5 bays by 9 bays) and is the focal point of the farm. It is placed midway between and behind the horse barn and the farmhouse. The building is sided with clapboard and roofed with slate. All windows are six over six panes unless otherwise noted. The front (south) facade, when initially constructed, featured two large doors at the basement level, three double-hung windows at the first level, which is the original stall area, and two identical windows in the central sections of the third and fourth stories. A single double-hung window is centered directly below the monitor section. The date 1901 is painted in white above this window.

In front (south) and screening the basement and first level of the monitor barn is a one and a half story rectangular milk house and milking parlor added, respectively, in 1958 and 1975. This structure is sheathed in vertical wooden boards, trimmed with white and roofed with corrugated sheet metal. monitor. One door, located in the third bay, leads into the milking area.

The western facade has two modern ell additions, added after 1972, that join two formerly freestanding barns to the monitor barn. The additions are used for farm equipment and for horses. The original facade had four rectangular windows at the first story. As none of the glass or window frames are intact, it is not possible to determine the exact configuration

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although it is probable they were similar to the windows on the east wall. There is a small, gable-roofed room, built in 1901 also, attached to the northwest corner at the first level above the uncoursed rubble stone basement level. This ell has a separate entrance and a large rectangular window on its main facade. A large rectangle of newer clapboards exists on the second and third level, indicating a door was covered over when the additions were built.

The northern (rear) wall is built into a bank, with the first two levels below grade. There are large openings for wagons centrally located on the third and fourth levels (the hay mow). At the end of the high drive are the remains of a ramp. Evidence of a track for double, sliding doors is visible above both wagon openings. A window is centrally located below the monitor. No glass or frame remains, but it is likely that the window was identical to the south wall window.

The west (side) facade is weathered and is missing some clapboards on the southeastern section above the first bay, first level. Three trap doors lead from the basement (manure) level into the barnyard at the southeastern section. Six over six, double hung windows are located on the first level in all but the eighth bay, which contains a wooden batten door.

The monitor level of the barn is highly visible from many vantage points and provides ventilation and lighting. It runs the entire length of the barn and has nine evenly spaced window openings. Most of the windows and glass are missing, but some remaining sash show that they were horizontal with six panes.

Interior:

The basement level has a stone foundation with concrete floor, and contains free stalls. This level was originally used as the manure sink. Cattle stalls were located on the level above and the stalls were cleaned by shovelling the manure into this basement pit. In 1957 the manure sink was concreted over and converted to free stalls. The first level still has the remains of wooden stanchions and troughs. The upper two levels form the hay mow. There are eight diagonal wooden chutes leading from the window level of the monitor down to the second level. The barn is a sophisticated late post and beam structure built with a combination of heavy timbers and dimension lumber. Interior posts alternately support the base of the monitor or its roof.

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2. Carriage Barn, c.1900

This one and a half story plus basement wooden structure with clapboard siding is rectangular in shape (3 bays by 6 bays/ about 32' long x 60' wide). It is located approximately 100' to the west of the bank barn (#1) and is built into the same earthen bank. The west side of the roof is covered in the same type of slate as the bank barn. The basement level is uncoursed stone rubble, which has been patched with concrete in the center of the south end.

A double batten board door is centrally located at the main level of the west (gable) end. This door may have served as the main entrance for carriages or wagons coming from the monitor barn, and was reached by a ramp (no longer extant) from the bank. A double hung, six over six sashed window is found below the gable apex.

The north, eave side facade has windows in all but the fourth bay at the first level. No glass remains, but these windows were undoubtedly similar to that found at the apex on the west facade. A batten board door is located in the fourth bay. At the second level there are two wall dormers in the second and fourth bays.

The eastern gable end contained the primary entrance for people. The basement level is not visible on this side and access is gained through a doorway in the second bay, first level. This door shows signs of having been decreased from a double door to its present, single width size. Windows are located in the first level, first bay and directly below the roof apex (mirroring the fenestration on the western facade). A small, brick chimney is located two-thirds of the way up the north side of the roof. This chimney vented the blacksmith's forge on the second floor.

The southern eave side consists of a full basement level and has five window openings. There are two carriage entrances in the basement level. This barn was converted to free stalls for cattle in the mid-1950s. It is currently used to store farm equipment.

3. Horse Barn, c.1850

The horse barn, located south of the carriage barn, is believed to have been built by William S. Freeman, the farm's original owner. This early barn, of post and beam construction with

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Richmond, Chittenden Co., Vermont

half-log rafters, is 1-1/2 stories tall, 5 bays by 5 bays and rectangular in shape with about the same dimensions as the carriage barn. It is sided with clapboards and has a standing seam metal gable roof. Windows are small square stable windows.

The main entrance may have been in the west eave side, which faces the farmhouse. The first story of the west facade has a large double doorway to the left and two small, square windows to the right. A large opening (probably a hay door) is centered above the double doorway on the second level.

The north side is sided with vertical planks and some joinery is visible. The first story has two double door openings (one of which has been partially boarded up) separated by a rounded post. Immediately above the doorways are two rectangular openings, similar to transoms, and above these is one large rectangular opening.

The eastern facade is unpainted and has two double doorways in the first and third bays. One doorway is similar to the door in the west wall. In addition, there is a small, single door opening in the fifth bay. All doors are found on the first level and there is no fenestration on this side.

The south wall has five small square stable windows. A slightly larger window with a peaked lintelboard is in the gable peak.

The interior is divided into multiple stalls and storage areas, possibly for tack. The building is currently used for storage.

4. Farmhouse, 1875/1982

Originally built in 1875, this two-story Italianate structure burned in 1982. It was rebuilt using the internal framing and external details (brackets, window and porch moldings). The new building sits atop the original foundation and follows the same footprint. It is rectangular in shape with an ell on the east side. Both portions are gable-roofed. The roof is supported by halves of paired brackets. The building is two stories tall on top of a raised stone basement. A small porch defines the entrance way located on the east side of the main block. The building is white clapboard (at rear) and aluminum siding on all other facades. Its roof is covered with asphalt shingles. A plaque located at the apex of the main ell erroneously dates the building as 1901/rebuilt in 1982. The

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house is non-contributing, as most of the building is of recent construction.

5. Round-Roofed Barn, c.1975

This metal barn is one story tall, rectangular in footprint (approximately 105' long by 35' wide at the base). It has clapboards on the east and west ends. The roof is round. There are two large doorways. Originally constructed as free stall space for cattle, this barn now houses farm equipment. The barn is non-contributing due to age.

6 & 7. Silos, c.1970

The Whitcomb farm also has two large Harvestore silos. The large (about 60' tall) blue silos were once used to store feed grain for cattle but are currently unused. The silos are non-contributing due to age.

8. Bunker Silo, c.1970

The property also contains one concrete bunker silo, approximately 60' square, which was originally used for manure storage. It is currently empty. It is non-contributing due to age.

9. Farmstead Landscape

The farm buildings sit on 170 acres of agricultural land that is crossed by U.S. Route 2 and just north of Interstate 89. The acreage is roughly triangular in shape. The landscape to the north of the farm complex is largely hilly, and historically was used as grazing space for dairy cows. The section to the north and south of the barnyard is flatter, and forms the floor of the fertile Winooski River valley. It has been and continues to be used for growing crops.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Agriculture

Period of Significance

c.1851 - 1942

Significant Dates

c.1851
1901

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See continuation sheets for statement of significance.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

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

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property + 170 acres

UTM References

A

18	664410	49178210
Zone	Easting	Northing

C

18	664620	4916930
Zone	Easting	Northing

B

18	664320	49170910
Zone	Easting	Northing

D

18	664260	49166410
Zone	Easting	Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title L. T. Rosenthal
organization Historic Preservation Program, UVM date 5/92; revisions 6/93
street & number Wheeler House telephone (802) 656-3180
city or town Burlington state Vermont zip code 05405

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Section number 8 Page 6 Whitcomb, M. S., Farm
Richmond, Chittenden Co., Vermont

The M. S. Whitcomb Farm on U.S. Route 2 in Richmond is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C, meeting the registration requirements for the property type farmstead under the "Agricultural Resources of Vermont" multiple property submission. The centerpiece of the farm is the 1901 dairy barn, one of the most outstanding turn of the 20th century dairy barns in Vermont. By its scale and unusual incorporation of a monitor/ventilator system, this four level bank barn is a landmark in the Winooski River Valley. The barn represents the pinnacle of bank barn design in Vermont, being of the last generation of bank barns before farmers moved to the ground level stable barn design. This barn, which incorporates traditional heavy timber framing with lighter sawn members, is one of only a few known bank barns with monitors in the state; another, somewhat smaller and in poor structural repair, is located on the neighboring property. The farm shows the trend in Vermont from diversified agricultural production to dairy specialization.

Between 1851 and 1853 William S. Freeman compiled a parcel of land here for use as a horse farm. He built the horse barn (#3) still standing today. Freeman sold the farm to M. S. Manwell in 1854. The 1860 agricultural census shows that Manwell specialized in dairy farming, was a large producer of butter and cheese, and owned 250 improved acres of farmland and 80 acres of unimproved land, for a total value of \$11,000. The farm had four horses, sixty-five milch cows, two oxen, twelve other cattle, four sheep, and nine pigs (total value--\$2,500). Crops included 50 bushels of wheat, 300 of Indian corn, 700 of oats, 300 of Irish potatoes, eight of grass seeds, 25 pounds wool, 1,800 (or 800?) pounds butter, 10,000 pounds cheese, and 600 pounds maple sugar. By the time of the 1870 agricultural census, Manwell owned 280 acres of improved farmland, 50 acres of woodland, and 150 unimproved acres, with a total value of \$20,000. He had less milch cows (46), and from their milk made 1,300 pounds of butter and 15,000 pounds of cheese. The total value of his produce was \$6,200.

In 1871 M. S. Manwell split the farm and sold the parcels to Manwell S. and Uziel S. Whitcomb. The 1882-83 Child's gazetteer for Chittenden County shows Uziel S. Whitcomb as a farmer on this road with 120 dairy cows and 600 acres. His son, Moses S., is also shown as a farmer on this road. By 1887 M. S. Whitcomb had purchased all adjoining land parcels and combined them into a 636 acre dairy farm. In 1891 he purchased

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Richmond, Chittenden Co., Vermont

300 adjacent acres bringing the land total to its peak of 936 acres.

At the turn of the century Whitcomb began making some major improvements to the farm, showing its prosperity as a dairy farm. The carriage barn was probably constructed c.1900. Then in 1901 Whitcomb built the large monitor barn for his large dairy herd. In 1904 he built a similar but smaller monitor barn, with a delicate cupola, to the west of the original barn (this barn, now on an adjoining parcel, is in poor structural condition). At its peak the farm had more than 406 Holstein cows. Its peak production, in the 1960s, was 6,000 pounds of milk per day. The current owner, Xenophon Wheeler, purchased the property in 1948.

The 1901 barn functioned as a typical gravity bank barn. Hay wagons were driven up the ramp to the third level, where the hay was loosely stored. The stalls were located on the second level and hay was thrown down from the upper levels to feed the cows. Manure was shovelled through trap doors in the floor to the basement manure sink below. In the early 1950s, in response to state and federal health regulations, Xenophon Wheeler had the manure sink remodeled into free stalls with a concrete floor and moved the majority of his herd into this area. In the 1970s he added a milking parlor in front of the main barn and two additions to its west side.

Many late bank barns on active dairy farms have been adapted to modern requirements, and so continue to serve the needs of the Vermont dairy farmer. These barns are common throughout the state, but this one is particularly outstanding because of its large size and the monitor that runs the length of the building along the roof peak. This is an exceptionally large barn in Vermont for the time period. It has become a local landmark, being highly visible from both Interstate 89 and U.S. Route 2.

The horse barn (#3) contributes to the significance of the farm, telling of its mid 19th century history, and is particularly interesting for the small blacksmith shop inside (the chimney remains). Horse barns were not usually constructed in Vermont until the 1850s. Before that time farmers often housed much of their livestock and farm storage in one building. The horse barn and c.1900 carriage barn (#2) are typical of their time periods, being 1 1/2 stories high, gable-roofed, and clapboard-sided. The horse barn has a hay door over the wide, sliding door and small stable windows.

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Section number 8 Page 8 Whitcomb, M. S., Farm
Richmond, Chittenden Co., Vermont

Although not relating to the period of significance of this property, it should be noted that this farm was the birthplace of U.S. senator George F. Edmunds (b. 2/1/1828, d. 1919). In 1840 the family moved to Richmond village. Edmunds read law at the U.S. Supreme Court in the winter of 1845/46. In 1866 he was appointed to a seat in the U.S. Senate to fill the vacancy upon the death of Sen. Solomon Foot. Edmunds was a senator until 1891, when he resigned for health reasons. He presided over the Senate when Vermont-born Chester Alan Arthur was president, and was nominated as a Republican presidential candidate in 1880 and 1884.

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Whitcomb, M. S., Farm
Richmond, Chittenden Co., Vermont

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Child, Hamilton. Gazetteer and Business Directory of Chittenden County, Vermont, for 1882-83. Syracuse, N.Y.: 1882.
- Chittenden County Historical Society. Look Around Richmond, Bolton, and Huntington, Vermont. Burlington, Vt.: 1974.
- United States Agricultural Census, 1860 and 1870. (microfilm)
- Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. "Historic Sites and Structures Survey for Richmond." Montpelier, Vt.: 1976.
- Interview with Xenophon Wheeler, Spring 1992, Richmond, Vt.

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Whitcomb, M. S., Farm
Richmond, Chittenden Co., Vermont

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary for this property is defined on the southwestern edge by U.S. Route 2. Beginning at point A, which is about 200' west of the farmhouse on the north side of Route 2 (the point now delineated by a small hedge), and proceed northeast, on a line perpendicular to Route 2, 292.47' to point B; thence turn southeast and proceed on a line parallel to Route 2 177.63' to point C; thence proceed northeast about 650' to point D; thence proceed northwest 185.44' to point E; thence proceed northeast in a line perpendicular to Route 2 317.72' to point F; thence proceed ENE approximately 1220' to point G, which is a marked utilities easement; thence proceed northeast in a line perpendicular to Route 2 and advance 1228' to point H; then rotate 50 degrees and proceed southeast 753' to point I; then turn 5 degrees east and proceed 1485' to point J; then proceed east, parallel to Route 2, 1543' to point K; thence proceed southwesterly 1300' to point L; then proceed west, in a line parallel to Route 2, 567.11' to point M; then proceed south, perpendicular to Route 2, 224.41' to point N; then proceed southwest 115.01' to point O; then turn 5 degrees further south and proceed 248.93' to the northern side of Route 2 and point P; then proceed along the north right of way of Route 2 to the beginning point--A. This boundary encompasses about 170 acres and is the current size of the farm.

Verbal Boundary Justification:

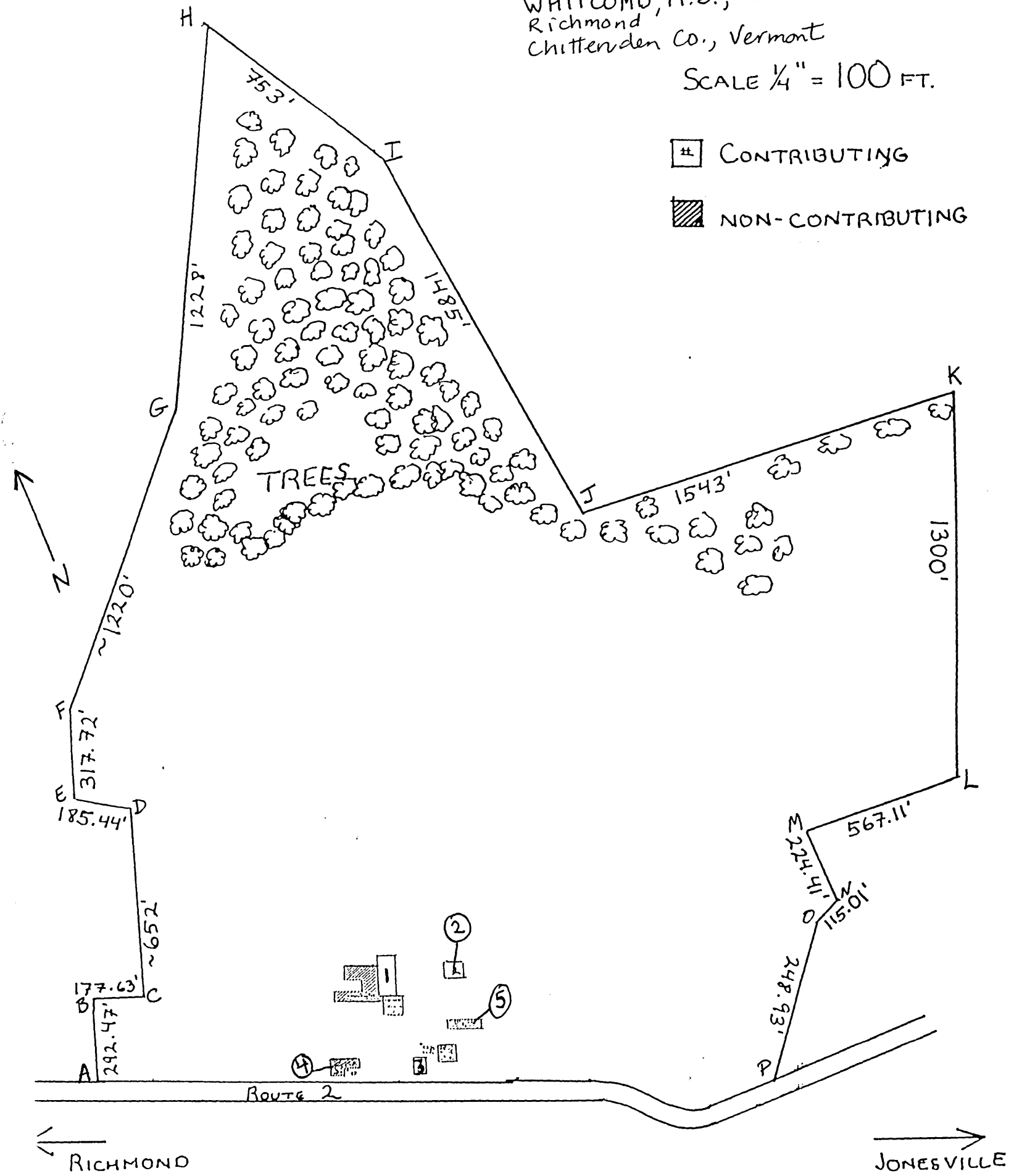
The boundary is the current size of the farm. All the land within the boundaries is historically associated with the farm. It is sufficient to convey the significance of the property.

WHITCOMB, M.S., FARM
Richmond
Chittenden Co., Vermont

SCALE $\frac{1}{4}'' = 100$ FT.

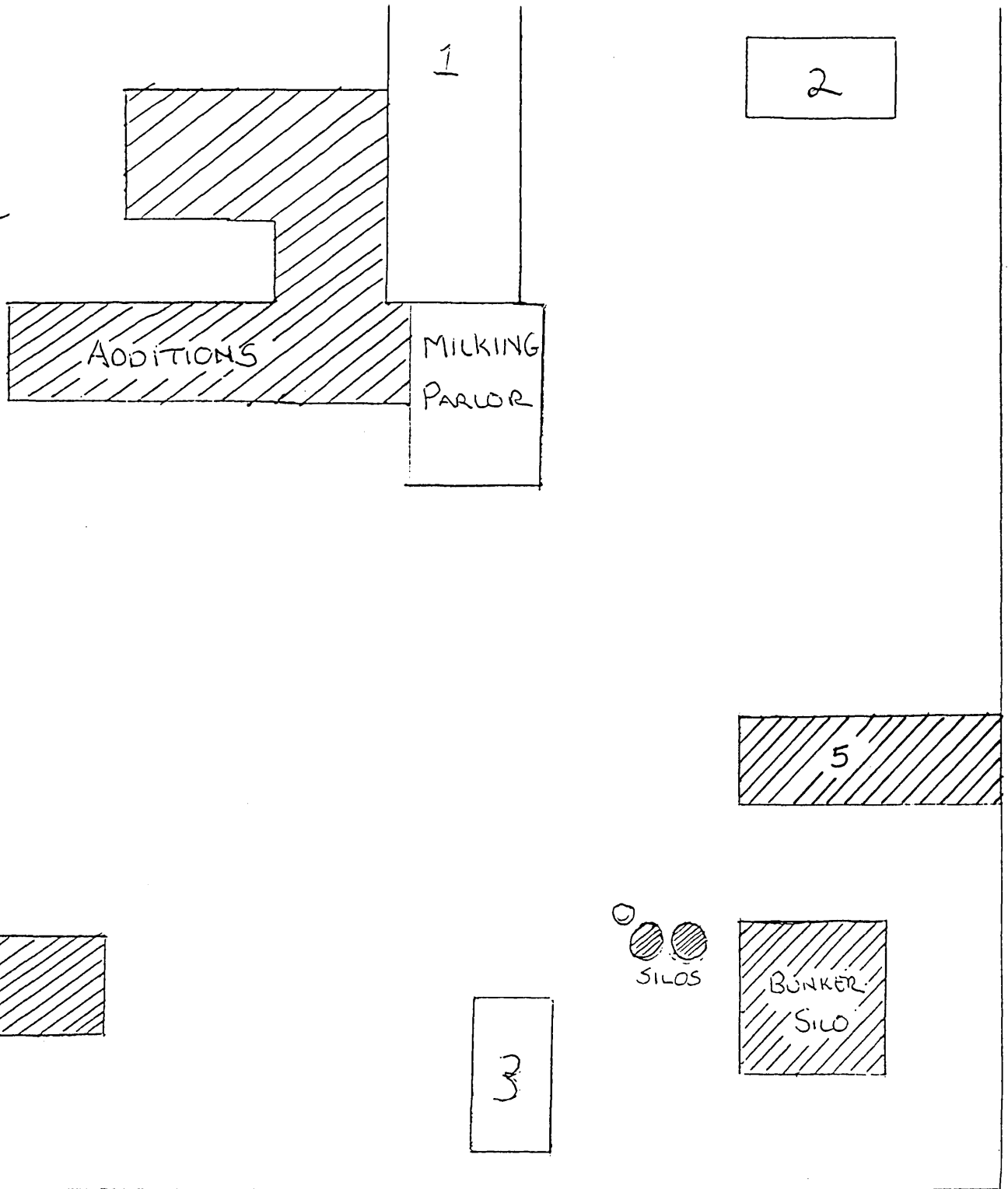
☒ CONTRIBUTING

▨ NON-CONTRIBUTING



SCALE 1 INCH = 60 FT.

Whitcomb, M.S., Farm
Richmond,
Chittenden County,
Vermont



ADDITIONS
MILKING
PARLOR

5

4

3

SILOS

BUNKER
SILO

ROUTE 2

Linn St