

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

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 Spring Hill Farm

other names/site number NA

2. Location

street & number 263 Meriden Road NA  not for publication

city or town Lebanon NA  vicinity

state New Hampshire code NH county Grafton code 009 zip code 03766

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.)

James McConaha, SHPO 9/29/02  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
New Hampshire  
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 certifying 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] Signature of the Keeper Date of Action  
Beverly Sarge 6/13/02

Spring Hill Farm

Lebanon (Grafton Cty) NH

Name of Property

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	
2		buildings
		sites
1	1	structures
		objects
3	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE

animal facility

agricultural outbuilding

storage

agricultural field

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE

agricultural field

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Federal

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation granite

walls brick

wood

roof asphalt

other NA

Narrative Description

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

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Continuation Sheet

Spring Hill Farm  
Lebanon (Grafton Cty) NH

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Spring Hill Farm is located in the Great Brook Valley about 1.75 miles southwest of downtown Lebanon. It is on Meriden Road, just east of its intersection with Laplante Road. This 91.5 acre farm is comprised of main house, barn, manure shed, tool shed, fields, and woodland. Its buildings are clustered in the southwestern corner of the property, adjacent to the intersection. To the northeast and east the land rises, giving way first to fields and then woodland.

1.) Main House, c.1799, c.1845, c. 1812. Contributing Building. The main house consists of main block, rear wing, and summer kitchen/shed. Initially constructed c.1799, it was expanded in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the 1930s Colonial Revival features were incorporated during the ownership of Maurice Downes. It was Downes' influence that resulted in the full development of the property that is recognized today.

The main block is a two-and-a-half-story load-bearing brick structure that rests on a mortared fieldstone foundation with dressed granite facing. It is five bays across and two bays deep. A one-bay, semi-circular, Colonial Revival portico shelters a Federal style six-panel door with transom light in the central front (southwest) bay. The windows on first and second floors are wooden two-over-two double-hung sashes flanked by blinds. The gable roof is sheathed in asphalt and punctuated by interior end chimneys on the ridge. The gable walls are clad in clapboard; each gable wall includes two four-over-two windows. There is a central interior hallway with one room to either side. Sometime before 1850 the original hipped roof was replaced by the gable configuration. The brick main block was constructed to front an earlier section of the house in order to face the Croyden Turnpike (now Meriden Road/Route 120) chartered in 1804.

The two-and-a-half-story, rear (northeast) wing extends perpendicularly behind the main block. It is three bays on the first floor and two on the second. This portion of the building has aluminum siding in imitation of the white clapboard siding it conceals. All but one of the windows are two-over-two double-hung wooden sashes flanked by blinds. The gable roof is clad in asphalt shingles and broken by a single stove chimney on the ridge. A full width porch on the side (southeast) elevation shelters two windows and an early 20<sup>th</sup> century glass and panel door. On the other side (northwest) elevation the glass and panel door is sheltered by a one-bay portico with triangular pediment. This portion of the house is believed to be the earliest component, dating from c1799. In the early 1930s it was expanded from a one-and-a-half-story cape with later porch to its current configuration.

The one-story summer kitchen/shed is off-set to the northwest from the rear wing, extending beyond it about 35'. The original summer kitchen area, closer to the rear wing, has been modified in the past several years to provide for a primary living space. Modern doors, windows, and aluminum siding and wooden shingles have replaced the clapboards and sliding vertical plank doors on the southeast elevation of the original structure. The former woodshed, at the far end of this section, is now used as a workshop. Its recessed position in the house's configuration minimizes the visual impact of the alterations to the summer kitchen/shed.

2.) Barn, 1929. Contributing Building.

This two-and-a-half level barn is rectangular in plan, measuring 90' by 30', with a 10' by 10' milk house on the southeast end. The structure rests on a concrete foundation. Its gable roof is sheathed in asphalt shingles; a large metal ventilator is centered on the ridge flanked on either side by three lightning rods evenly spaced along the ridge. The principal (southwest) elevation is sheathed in characteristic red-painted clapboards with white trim. A series of double and triple six-pane windows with simple board surrounds

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Spring Hill Farm  
Lebanon (Grafton Cty) NH

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light the lower level. On the southeast end of the first level, a narrow door gives access. An 8' wide door provides access to the lower level on the northwest end of the barn. A small window opening is located above the wide door and symmetrically on the other end of the southwest elevation. The northwest side elevation is also clapboarded with white trim. Three small windows light the stables; a 6-light window near the west corner lights the shop. The only other feature on the northwest elevation is a gable light. On the southeast elevation is the milk house, clad in red-painted clapboards and white trim.. On the southeast and northeast elevations is a central door with small four and six pane windows to either side. Extending from the southeast end of the milk house is a lean-to with shed roof. The milk house has concrete foundation, floor, and cooling tubs inside

The rear (northeast) elevation of the barn is not visible from the road. It is on this elevation that one can read the transformation this barn underwent in the late 1920s. On the southeast end one can easily see the 40' x 30' English barn dating from 1820-25. It has the characteristic vertical plank siding, absence of windows, and three interior divisions. To the northwest is a 50' section, constructed between 1927 -29 from the materials of two smaller English barns on the farm and lumber harvested on the property. The newer section is clad in red-painted clapboards and white trim. On its lower level double and triple six-over-six windows light the interior. Two six-over-six windows light the upper level.

Maurice Downes created this improved and expanded barn in the late 1920s in order to incorporate farming operations under one roof. By this point he had become very successful and found that operating the farm on his own was very demanding given the three barns on the site. In order to make the operation more efficient, Downes expanded the largest of the three English barns using materials salvaged from the two smaller ones along with new materials. Thus he created a modern ground-level stable barn with concrete floor and attached milk house. An additional feature of the barn is the manure trolley that ran on a track from the barn to the manure shed.

**3.) Manure Shed, 1929. Contributing Structure.**

The manure shed is located east of the barn. It is a one-level gable-roofed structure on a high concrete foundation built into the hillside. Wooden shingles clad the three exposed elevations; asphalt shingles cover the roof. The east elevation has paired glass and panel doors; the west side has a six-over-six window; there are two windows on the south elevation. This structure was introduced as part of the modernization work in the late 1920s. The manure trolley carried manure from the barn, dumping it in the manure shed and thus reducing odor and disease in the barn itself.

**4.) Tool Shed, 1955. Non-contributing Structure (due to age).**

The tool shed is a three-bay pole barn open to the southwest. Its walls consist of vertical pine boards; the gable roof is clad with asphalt shingles. This structure was introduced at the time that a tractor was purchased to replace the use of horses on the farm. In addition to housing the tractor, the bailer, side-delivery hay rake, wagons, and other farming equipment were stored here.

**Land Use**

The "front" half of the property facing Meriden Road is open field, as is most of the segment along Laplant Road. Behind the barn the land is open and slopes up. In the area where Laplante Road meets Walhowdon Road is a wooded area; near where it meets the open area to the southwest is a well-screened residence constructed c.1990. The eastern part of the property is primarily fields that are growing up and some areas of woodland.

**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.

**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.

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture

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**Period of Significance**

c.1799 - 1952

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**Significant Dates**

c.1799

c.1812

1927-1929

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

NA

**Cultural Affiliation**

NA

**Architect/Builder**

House - Unknown

Barn - Maurice Downes

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

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Spring Hill Farm  
Name of Property

Lebanon (Grafton Cty) NH  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 91.5

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 8	7 2 3 4 9 0	4 8 3 3 6 3 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	1 8	7 2 3 8 2 0	4 8 3 4 2 0 0

3	1 8	7 2 4 0 6 0	4 8 3 4 0 0 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	1 8	7 2 4 1 4 0	4 8 3 3 3 0 0

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 Christine E. Fonda

organization NH Div. of Historical Resources date April 2002

street & number Box 2043 telephone 603-271-6437

city or town Concord state NH zip code 03302-2043

**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 SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**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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Continuation Sheet**Spring Hill Farm  
Lebanon (Grafton Cty) NHSection number 8 Page 3

Spring Hill Farm in Lebanon, New Hampshire, is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A for Agriculture. The property is significant as an excellent representation of a farm that modernized in the early 20th century in response to scientific and technological innovations. The ground-level stable barn constructed here incorporated concrete foundations and flooring, mechanical ventilation, manure removal, and milk house with cooling tubs - all characteristic features of this type of barn and part of an important trend in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to improve cleanliness and sanitation. Placing the herd on a concrete ground-level floor eliminated the use of manure basements, and with them dust and odors. Farmers accomplished this by building new barns or expanding/modifying existing structures. The property retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, design, workmanship, feeling, and association for the period c.1799, when the first construction took place, to 1952, the arbitrary 50-year cut-off date.

**Agriculture**

The buildings at Spring Hill Farm were fairly typical of New Hampshire farms when Maurice Downes (1891-1964) purchased the property in 1913. There was an early 19<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse and a collection of barns and other outbuildings from the early 1800s. Downes had grown up on a small farm in Wilmot, New Hampshire. He described the stables there as old fashioned and dark for the cattle, and the inside working conditions as being "unhandy". At 18 he went to Thompson School of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts at University of New Hampshire to study dairy farming. While there, he worked as a herdsman at Morrison Farm in Peterborough, New Hampshire. The Morrison Farm buildings were newly built of concrete. Young Maurice found the work in a concrete barn enjoyable and determined to someday own a barn with at least the foundation and floor of concrete. After college he went to work at Broad Rock Farm in Peasedale, Rhode Island, where he met his wife who was bookkeeper there. Broad Rock Farm was a large operation that included other products such as coal and ice.

In 1913, Maurice Downes began farming in Lebanon. He was the first farmer in town to keep Holsteins, a breed that had been introduced in New England in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Jerseys and Guernseys were the dominant dairy breeds at the time, prized for the high butterfat content of their milk. In early 20<sup>th</sup> century Lebanon, New Hampshire, farmers were very resistant to the Holstein breed. In fact, Downes was ridiculed by his neighbors for having Holsteins. It wasn't until the mid-1940s that other farmers embraced this high-producing breed.

By the late 1920s, Downes had been successful at farming; he wanted a barn where he could do nearly all of the work alone with the horses and cattle under one roof. Beginning in the spring of 1927 he dismantled two smaller barns on the property, leaving a 40'x30' English barn. The barn was jacked up, and the area dug down to make a 3' 10" sill. The frame of the two demolished barns almost completed the frame of the 50' extension, and most of the boarding was also used. The rest of what was needed was cut from the property, except for clapboards and shingles that were purchased. A mechanical ventilator and lightening rods were installed on the roof.

Downes had 90' x 30' of floor space in the reconstructed barn. The cow barn was 66' x 30' with a concrete floor including gutters that were pitched to drain and was easy to keep clean. It was outfitted with steel stanchions, drinking cups, electric lights, electric milking machines, and manure trolley. (Downes was anxious to have electricity at his farm, so he offered to pay for electricity at the adjacent schoolhouse in order to get service extended to Spring Hill Farm.) In addition to stanchions for 28 cows, the area accommodated two calf pens and a maternity pen, an eight foot alley between the cows and the pens, and adequate floor space for the hay and silage to be dropped down from the storage area above. In the

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Spring Hill Farm  
Lebanon (Grafton Cty) NH

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remaining space were three horse stalls, workshop, and a place to pull a truck into, as well as a walkway to take the horses to their stalls and space for a watering trough for the horses.

Downes was delighted with the reconstructed barn and new manure shed serviced by a trolley. He found that his milk sales increased with the clean sanitary barn. He deemed it was well worth the time and expense. Furthermore, his goal of improving the ease of working his farm alone was realized.

Spring Hill Farm was the site of a number of advanced 20<sup>th</sup> century agricultural practices. Maurice Downes was an educated and experienced farmer who had been exposed to technological and scientific improvements in dairy farming at the University of New Hampshire, at the Morrison Farm where he was herdsman in his late teens/early twenties, and at Broad Rock Farm in Peasedale, Rhode Island. He was hardworking and innovative. At Spring Hill Farm, Downes introduced new practices and equipment for making work less arduous and more productive. He embraced architectural trends in barn construction and arrangement, as well as theories of cleanliness and sanitation that would not be fully accepted in Lebanon for almost 40 years. Downes ground-level stable barn is testimony to this. His use of modern concrete flooring was well ahead of his neighbors. It was not until the 1950s and '60s, when sanitation regulations and health standards required the use of concrete barn floors, did most farmers in the area finally give up wooden planking in favor of concrete. His Holstein herd was the first in town; the breed later become the pre-eminent dairy breed in New England.

All but a few farms in Lebanon have been subdivided and/or developed in recent decades. There are two large commercial farms extant and a handful of smaller farm properties that remain intact. Spring Hill Farm survives as the only known example in Lebanon of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century expansion of an existing barn in to a ground-level stable barn.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Downes, Daniel. Interviews, February 12 and 25, 2002.

Downes, Lloyd. Interview, February 12, 2002.

Downes, Maurice. Unpublished letter describing the reconstruction of the barn and the benefits of cement, 1929. Original located at Spring Hill Farm, Lebanon NH.

Garvin, James. Interview, February 25, 2002.

Mausolf, Lisa. Unpublished "Historic Resources Survey of Lebanon NH", 1984. On file at NH SHPO.

Patch, Howard. Telephone interview, March 27, 2002.

Townsend, Howard. Telephone interview, March 28, 2002.

Visser, Thomas Durant. Field Guide to New England Barns and Farm Buildings. Hanover NH: University Press of New England, 1997

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is comprised of the following parcels in the Lebanon NH Tax Records: 138-7, 138-7-1, 138-7-2, 138-7-3. Boundaries are indicated on the attached sketch map.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the nominated property encompass the surviving land that continues to be associated with Spring Hill Farm.

PROPERTY OWNERS

Daniel A. and Elizabeth G. Downes  
263 Meriden Road  
Lebanon NH 03766

Lloyd B. Downes  
258 Meriden Road  
Lebanon NH 03766

Matthew and Susan Downes-Williams  
97 Laplante Road  
Lebanon NH 03766

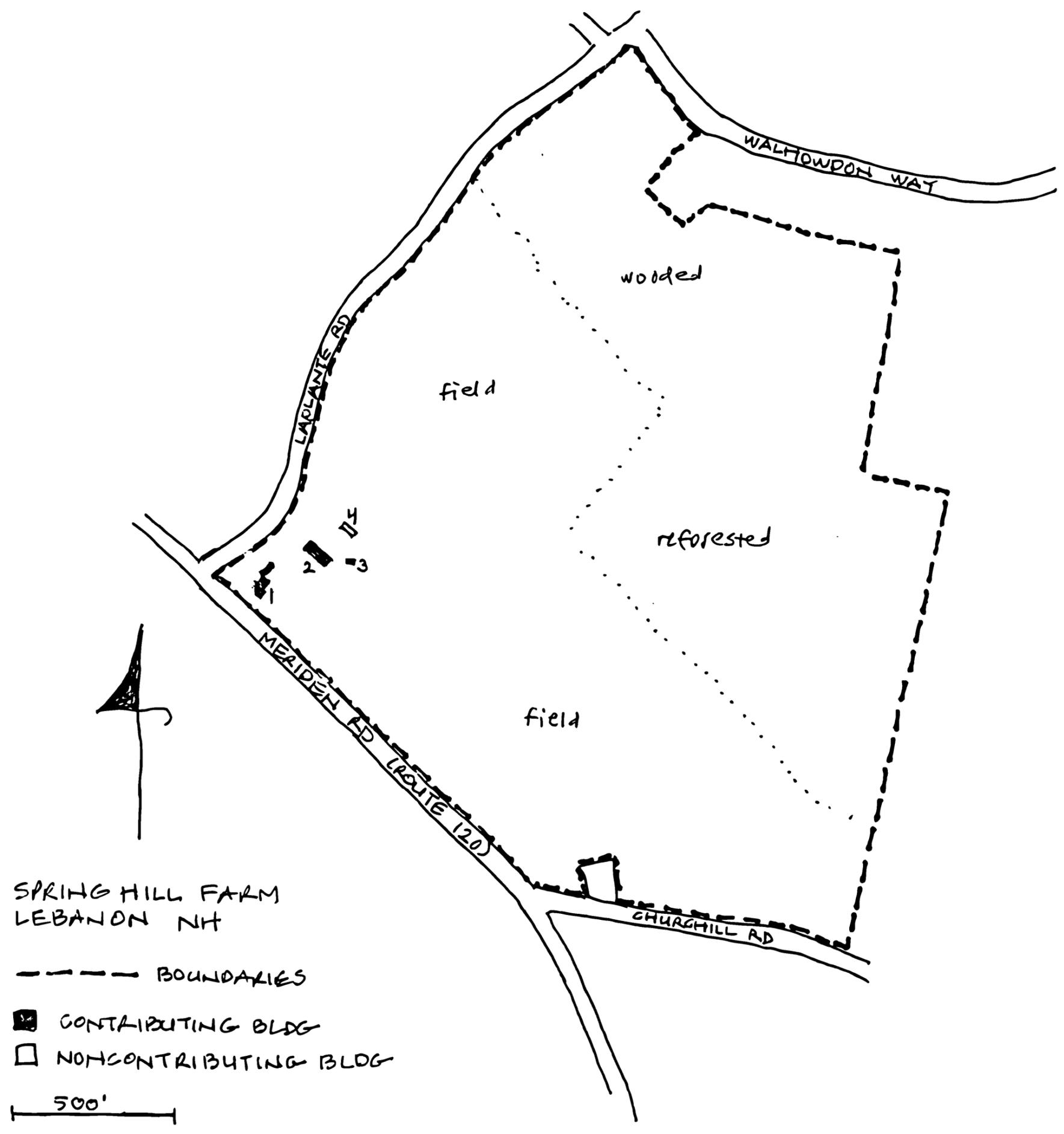
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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

SPRING HILL FARM  
LEBANON (GRAFTON CTY) NH

SKETCH MAP

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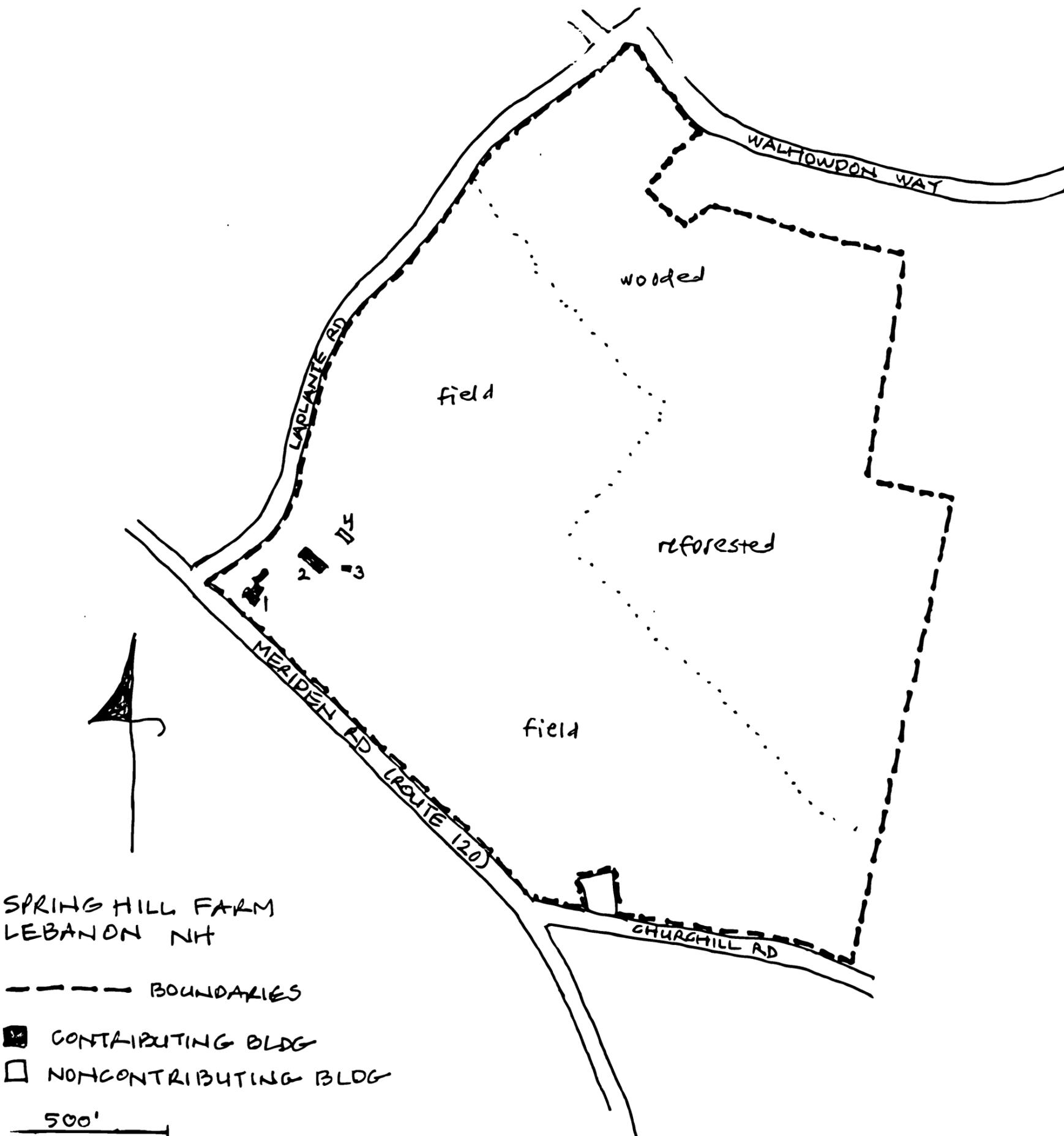
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SPRING HILL FARM  
LEBANON (GRAFTON CO) NH

PHOTO KEY

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SPRING HILL FARM  
LEBANON NH

--- BOUNDARIES

■ CONTRIBUTING BLDG

□ NONCONTRIBUTING BLDG

500'

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Spring Hill Farm  
Lebanon (Grafton Cty) NH

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PHOTOGRAPHS

This information applies to photographs 1 - 7:

- Photographer: Daniel Downes
- Photographs taken January 2002
- Negatives stored at NH Div. of Historical Resources, Concord NH

Photo #1:  
Barn and House, looking east

Photo #2:  
House and Barn, looking north

Photo #3:  
Barn (southwest elevation), looking east

Photo #4:  
Barn (northeast elevation), looking west

Photo #5:  
Manure shed (east elevation), looking southeast

Photo #6:  
Front field, looking southeast

Photo #7:  
Rear field, looking south

Photo #8:  
Rear field, looking northeast