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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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 McCleary Family Farm
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number South Strong Road not for publication
city, town Strong vicinity
state Maine code ME county Franklin code 007 zip code 04983

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>4</u>	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>1</u>	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>5</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

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.

Carol S. Fitzsimonds 3/1/89
Signature of certifying official 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.

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 Entered in the National Register 4/7/89

[Signature] Signature of the Keeper Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling
Agriculture/Subsistence/Agricultural
Outbuilding
Agriculture/Subsistence/Agricultural
Field

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Federal

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone/Granite
walls Wood/Weatherboard

roof Metal/Tin
other Wooden Porch

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The McCleary Family Farm features a late Federal style two-and-a-half-story frame dwelling that has a long one-story ell. It is sheathed in weatherboards and shingles and has a metal roof. Attached to the ell are a piggery and chicken coop, and the entire house rests on a granite foundation. The house retains the majority of its Federal period architectural features, and it has decorative wall murals attributed to Jonathan D. Poor. A large barn, garage, and blacksmith's shop also stand on the property.

Like so many Federal style houses in Maine, the principal (east) facade of the house has five bays arranged symmetrically around the entrance. Flanked by paired two-over-two windows, which are probably late nineteenth century replacements of the original, the entrance is framed by sidelights, a louvered fanlight, and it has a six panel door. On the second story of this facade, the central twelve-over-twelve window is flanked by paired two-over-one windows. A narrow cornice extends across the facade and two symmetrically placed interior rear chimneys rise behind the roof ridge. The rear of the main block of the house has two first story and two second story windows.

The north gable of the main block has two first story two-over-two windows. The second story has a pair of two-over-one windows, and there is one six-over-six window in the attic. The molded raking cornice has a slight overhang and gable end returns. The south gable end has a similar fenestration pattern with the exception of a door on the west side which has a five pane transom. Running across this gable end and across part of the ell, which is abutted to the southwest end of the main block, is a hip roofed porch with a metal roof. It has nine chamfered posts with sawn brackets.

The south side of the ell has three two-over-two kitchen windows underneath the porch, a single-leaf door and five pane fixed window in the middle of the ell, and a two-leaf carriage house entrance with a four pane transom at the southwest end of the ell. Two openings to the loft area have been closed. Of particular

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interest are the two heavy timber girts that carry across the entire length of the ell. The north end of the ell is sheathed in weatherboards on the east (where the kitchen is located) and has two nine-over-six windows, a two pane fixed window, and a brick flue. The remainder of the ell on this side is shingled. A shed roofed chicken coop is attached to the gable end (west) of the ell and it is shingled with a single leaf door on the south elevation.

Projecting off the northwest side of the ell is the piggery, a one-story gabled building. It features board and batten siding and has two first story six pane fixed windows in the north gable end. One four pane fixed window is located in the gable peak.

Inside, the main block of the house has a full entrance hall with an open string stair. The parlor (north) has flush sheathed wainscotting, and features a complete set of wall murals. A small bedroom is behind this parlor. South of the entrance hall is the living room which has typical Federal style woodwork. The mantle is flanked by doors leading to the kitchen (one via the pantry). Beyond the kitchen is the woodshed, which then opens into the whitewashed carriage house. Both the woodshed and carriage house feature heavy timber framing which is typical of Federal period farms in Maine. On the second story, flush sheathed wainscotting covers most of the rooms, which include two larger and two smaller bedrooms.

Southwest of the house are two ancillary buildings. The one-story garage (20th century) is hip roofed, shingled, and has two sliding track-mounted openings. In the north gable end of the large barn the entrance has a large sliding track-mounted door, one nine-over-six double-hung sash window in the gable peak, and this side is sheathed in weatherboards. A shed roofed addition, used as cattle pens, is abutted to the south and has a window in each pen. On the west end of the north elevation is the original drive which was used until additions were made. Weatherboards, shingles, and board and batten siding sheath the remainder of the barn.

Located to the south of the house is a small one-story blacksmith's shop. It has a shed roofed addition on the east gable end. Covered in board and batten siding, the building has an entrance on the north with a one leaf door which has its original wrought iron hinges. Like the barn and ell, the inside of the blacksmith's shop is constructed of heavy timber framing, and it has the remains of its original forge.

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)

Agriculture
Architecture
Art

Period of Significance

c. 1828-1939
c. 1828
c. 1835-1840

Significant Dates

c. 1828
c. 1835-1840

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Poor, Jonathan D., Attributed Artist

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

The McCleary Family Farm is comprised of a two-story Federal style farmhouse believed to have been built sometime between 1825 and 1828, and a number of connected and detached ancillary farm buildings. Its exterior architectural features are typical of the period, the house being distinguished by its parlor wall murals attributed to Jonathan D. Poor, a nephew and pupil of noted artist Rufus Porter. For these reasons, the property is being nominated under National Register criterion A for its associative significance with local agricultural development and criterion C for its artistic and architectural significance.

Rufus Porter (1792-1884) was born in West Boxford, Massachusetts, the son of a prosperous farmer. Unlike his father, however, Porter would lead a life that carried him throughout New England, the mid-Atlantic states, and overseas, and expose his numerous talents as an artist, inventor and author. Working as an itinerant portrait painter from 1815-1824, Porter then published an instructional book called Curious Arts in 1825 and devoted the next two decades to landscape murals. About 1823 Porter is believed to have been joined in his traveling portrait studio by his nephew Jonathan D. Poor (1807-1845). Among the Porter school muralists, Poor was the most prolific, especially in the years 1830-40. A large number of the Maine murals are attributed to Poor, but they are also virtually undistinguishable from Porter's work, a fact that underscores Poor's strict attention to his mentor's guidelines.

The wall murals in the McCleary House are believed to have been painted in the period 1835-40. Utilizing bold colors and designs, the artist textured the McCleary parlor with rolling hills, mountains, Federal period houses and a water scene. Although one might be tempted to believe these murals depict local scenes, it is generally acknowledged that they are representative of the New England landscape as a whole. This explains the water

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Census of the United States, 1860-1890, Franklin County, Maine, Population and Agricultural Schedules, Microfilm at the Maine State Archives, Augusta, Maine.

Franklin County Architectural Survey, 1987-88.

Lipman, Jean. Rufus Porter: Yankee Pioneer. New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., 1968.

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 17

UTM References

A 119 | 4040510 | 495175910
 Zone Easting Northing

C 119 | 4041510 | 4951681510

B 119 | 4045110 | 495175910
 Zone Easting Northing

D 119 | 4040510 | 4951681510

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Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property occupies the Town of Strong tax map R-8, Lot 21A.

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Boundary Justification

The boundary of the McCleary Family Farm is drawn to include the four extant buildings and the seventeen acre parcel on which they stand. The accompanying field that stretches to the rear of the house and that is included in this nomination retains its historic integrity in relation to the buildings.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Tom Jester/Kirk F. Mohny, Architectural Historian

organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date January 1989

street & number 55 Capitol Street telephone (207) 289-2132

city or town Augusta state Maine zip code 04333

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scene in the McCleary house which is removed from the sea. Porter's guidelines in Curious Arts also point this out, and they explain Porter's format for a mural:

As a general rule, a water scene, - a view of the ocean, - should occupy some part of the walls... Other parts, especially over a fireplace, will require more elevated scenes, high swells of land, with villages or prominent and elegant buildings. On the more obscure sections of the walls, especially such as are expected to be obscured by furniture, high mountains with cascades or farm-hills may be represented. Small spaces between the windows and the corners, may be generally occupied by trees without much regard to the distance.

In this regard, the McCleary murals are no exception.

The over-mantel scene features a village resting on a knoll with a number of prominent trees in the foreground. On the large west wall mural, a low foreground of land above the wainscoting gives way to an expanse of water and an island, which has a number of buildings and a lighthouse. Three ships are dwarfed by monumental trees which playfully expand in the upper half of the mural and frame the sides. The north wall has a gentle landscape which features a farmstead on a hill with a number of long fences. On the east wall, which has two windows, the artist filled the smaller spaces with plain landscape and trees. With the exception of the over-mantel scene which has been somewhat stained by the accumulation of fireplace dirt, the murals are in remarkably good condition. The bold designs, using stencils for vessels and buildings, are accented with deep yellows, reds and whites.

The McCleary House was built for William McCleary (1793-1848), whose father, Robert, had cleared the land where the farm is now located. Tradition maintains that all of the lumber for the house was milled on the property and that the bricks for the chimney were made in a brickyard on McCleary Stream. The finish work - doors, sash, and blinds - is believed to have been completed by local carpenter John Wadsworth. The house is also believed to be one of the earliest surviving post-and-beam homes in Strong.

When William McCleary died in 1848 at the age of 55, his wife, Sally Hunter McCleary (1805-1904), was left with a family of ten. The oldest son, George, stayed on the farm for some time, but later left to start his own farm in South Strong. Fred McCleary, George's son, is believed to have returned to his grandmother's farm about 1889 to care for her after working in Minnesota for three years as a carpenter. He married Hattie Hunter, and raised sweet corn, potatoes, beans, and popcorn. He also made maple syrup

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Architecturally the McCleary house is representative of a late Federal period Maine residence. Its heavy post-and-beam framing, including solid timber girts which run the entire length of the ell, is intact, as is the interior detailing. The graining on some of the doors is noteworthy, and all of the mantels are intact, as is the sheathed wainscoting. Though modest in form, the McCleary house's refined Federal period detailing and wall murals make it one of the most notable late Federal period residences in Strong.

The agricultural significance of the farm stems from the integrity and completeness of the complex. Not only are the major features of house and barn intact, but also the house's ell which, in typical Maine fashion, forms a connected group of spaces including woodshed and carriage house. Unlike other's of its type, however, the McCleary ell features an attached chicken coop, piggery and privy. Furthermore, the farm retains a blacksmith's shop, a portion of the associated fields and an early twentieth century garage. In sum, it is the most intact nineteenth and early twentieth century agricultural complexes in the town of Strong and therefore an important reminder of the community's agricultural past.