

**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 any 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: Cornwall General Store

other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Location**

street & number: 2635 Route 30, Seth Warner Highway not for publication: N/A

city or town: Cornwall vicinity: N/A

state: Vermont code: VT county: Addison code: 001 zip code: 05733-9299

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this x 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 x meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_ nationally x statewide \_\_\_ locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Suzanne C. Daniels, National Register Specialist 6-22-05  
Signature of certifying official Date

Vermont State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official or other official and title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau



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**7. Description**

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**Architectural Classification:** (Enter categories from instructions)

Other: No Style

\_\_\_\_\_

other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Materials:** (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: Stone

roof: Asphalt

walls: Wood: Weatherboard

other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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**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.)

- 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 with the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance:**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance:**

1880-1940

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person:**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates:**

C.1880

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation:**

N/A

**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 for the National Register.
- Designated a National Historic Landmark.
- Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey No. \_\_\_\_\_.
- Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record No. \_\_\_\_\_.

**Primary Location of Additional Data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office.
- Other state agency.
- Federal agency.
- Local government.
- University.
- Other. Name of repository: University of Vermont Special Collection, Cornwall Town Hall

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreege of Property:** 1/3 acre

**UTM References** (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

See continuation sheet

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	18	643643	4869101	3.	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____	4.	_____	_____	_____

**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: Roger Lee Ciuffo

Organization: University of Vermont Historic Preservation Program Date: January 4, 2005

Street & Number: 83 F North Champlain Street Telephone: (802) 658-5288

City or Town: Burlington State: Vermont Zip Code: 05401

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## 12. Additional Documentation

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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)

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## 13. Property Owner

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(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

Name / Title: Don Shall, President

Organization: Cornwall Historical Society Date: January 4, 2005

Street & Number: 2629 Route 30, Seth Warner Highway Telephone: (802) 462-2775

City or Town: Cornwall State: Vermont Zip Code: 05753

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**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.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Keeper, National Register of Historic Places, 1849 "C" Street NW, Washington, DC 20240.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 1

Cornwall General Store  
Name of Property

Cornwall, Addison County, Vermont  
County and State

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**Narrative Description**

The Cornwall General Store, built in 1880, stands in a tiny village center bisected by Vermont Route 30 amid the gently rolling farmland of Addison County. The store, the Town Hall (also built in 1880), a Congregational Church erected in 1803, a small town common, several nineteenth-century houses, and a nearby cemetery form the nucleus of that community. Cornwall's store is a well-preserved example of an important building type in rural Vermont, combining both commercial and residential functions and demonstrating remarkable historic integrity in terms of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

The General Store is a small, three-by-five-bay, one and one-half story, gable-front frame structure with clapboard siding and an ashlar foundation of coursed limestone. The main block, which contains the store, is enlarged by a one-story, two-by-three-bay frame addition devoted to residential use, and its shed roof extends along the full northerly eaves side of that main block. The front or westerly facades of both the main block and its addition form a single plane that faces Route 30, set back approximately ten feet from the highway's shoulder. The shed roof of the addition is concealed along its front elevation, and along the first two bays of its side elevation, by a parapet forming a modest boomtown façade that rises to the height of the eaves on the main block. The commercial character of that boomtown façade disguises the existing residential plan of this addition.

A one-story porch, also with shed roof, extends across the full front façade of the main block and its addition, strongly unifying the two segments. Eight, square, chamfered posts with small cubed pedestals stand on a slightly-elevated (one step), wood-plank porch deck, and these posts support the porch roof; two posts are engaged with the wall. Small decorative brackets tucked beneath the porch eaves offer at least token additional support. A balustrade with square balusters connects the posts that stand in front of the residential addition, and a valance braced by square sticks and decorated by chamfered spindles extends across the porch's full length, adding a measure of architectural detail to an otherwise simple, vernacular building.

The center-bay entrance of the main block opens to the store and has plain casing with slightly peaked lintel and pronounced molding to frame that lintel. The entrance door has a large, single glazed panel above two, small, rectangular molded panels, and is protected by a simple screen door. The entrance is flanked on each side by a single, carefully placed window, each with two/two double-hung sash.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 2

Cornwall General Store  
Name of Property

Cornwall, Addison County, Vermont  
County and State

---

A third window is centered above the entrance and below the gable peak and contains paired, narrow one/one sash. Window casings for all three windows are wide and are embellished by molded frames, top and bottom; lintels are slightly peaked, and the gable window is protected by narrow drip molding.

Entrance to the residential addition is at the right bay of the front façade, and the door surround nearly abuts the corner board of the main block. Its casing is narrower than that surrounding the entrance on the main block, but the doors are similar. A large window with one/one double hung sash flanks the entrance to the left, and three similar windows, each with one/one sash and narrow drip molding, light the northerly interior of this addition.

Corner boards and fascia trim for both the main block and the addition are plain, and the roofs of the main block, addition, and porch are sheathed with asphalt shingles. Two brick chimneys rise from the northerly slope of the main block's gable roof. The grade surrounding the store drops front to rear, exposing the rear foundations of both the main block and the addition, although that on the main block is sheathed in clapboards.

On the rear façade of the main block, a single, horizontal, three-pane fixed sash opens at the foundation level. Two windows open at the first floor level; one is a six/six double hung sash with plank storm sash and plain surround with drip molding; and the other is a small, square window of uncertain vintage. A large window with two/two sash is located directly beneath the gable peak. A small, open frame deck extends across the rear façade of the addition and is elevated to a height of six steps. A single door opens to that deck, and the door is flanked on the right by a single window with one/one sash and plain surround, similar to the windows on the northerly elevation. An attached outhouse with two-seat, shed roof and plain corner boards extends from the rear façade of the main block at its southerly corner. No running water or other plumbing or septic systems have ever been installed.

The interior plan of the main block consists of a single large room in front with a smaller room behind. Plank floors, plaster walls, and pressed-wood ceilings with batten grids are dominant. Shelves and counters line both sides of the principal room, and a variety of fixtures including oil wall lamps survive. Modest decorative details include crown molding with diamond-shaped dentils on the shelves. Many of the store's furnishings are present as well, adding a measure of authenticity to the building. These include cash register, cabinets, display cases, a cash drawer with alarm, floor radio, and woodstove.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 3

Cornwall General Store  
**Name of Property**

Cornwall, Addison County, Vermont  
**County and State**

---

The residential addition contains three first floor rooms consisting of a living room, dining room and kitchen, with two small bedrooms located on the second floor level.

Immediately adjacent to the southerly elevation of the main block is a modest sized, one and one-half story, eaves front carriage barn that is connected to the main block by a false passage way. The exterior of the barn's west façade is sheathed with painted clapboard siding while the rear or east façade, is natural wood vertical plank siding. A large plank and track sliding door on the west façade opens to extra storage space that was once used by the general store. A single six-over-six double hung window is located to the right of the sliding door while a second floor small plank door used for access to the hay loft completes the openings on this façade. The rear façade features a single two-over-two window and a small plank wooden rear exit door. The gable peak on the south façade features a small three-pane horizontal window that allows natural light into the carriage barn. Similar to the main house, the carriage barn's roof is covered in asbestos shingles. This interior of the structure has rough, unfinished spaces, consisting of utility storage downstairs and an empty haymow upstairs. The carriage barn is in line with the front façade of the main block.

Attached to the carriage barn is a three-bay wide, one story, linear carriage shed with one open and two closed bays. The two closed bays are covered in wide painted vertical plank covering with one single access door on the first bay. The rear or east façade is covered in natural wood vertical plank siding, while the south façade is covered in painted asbestos shingles. The roof is covered in asbestos shingles similar to the carriage barn and main structure. The ridge line of its gable roof intersects the carriage barn just below the end gable; its front façade is flush with the front façade of the carriage barn and the main block. The carriage sheds on the south end have been substantially reinforced inside with new structural lumber and plywood; the space is dirt-floored and has no doors on the front (west) opening.

Historically, the carriage barns were located across the street behind the First Congregational Church of Cornwall and were used for hay storage as well as to house the parishioner's carriages and horses while they attended the weekly church services. These structures were purchased by Perry LaValley, c.1925, from the church and moved to their present location.



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 1

Cornwall General Store  
**Name of Property**

Cornwall, Addison County, Vermont  
**County and State**

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**Statement of Significance**

The Cornwall General Store, built c. 1880, is a well-preserved village store that once served a small, crossroads community in Addison County, Vermont for more than half a century. Although its owners ceased doing business about 1940, the building and its interior features remain as they were on the day its doors closed. Hoping to assure its long-term preservation, heirs of the former owners sold the structure to the town of Cornwall in 2000. The building is significant under Criterion C as an outstanding example of an important building type in rural Vermont. It is also significant under Criterion A as an integral component of a small Vermont village, where it served as an economic and social center and contributed to the broad patterns of local and state history.

Vermont's general stores often grew from humble beginnings. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, itinerant traders known as peddlers or drummers, traveled across the countryside selling their wares and accepting whatever medium of exchange available. These wares included combs, buttons, shoelaces, knives, woodenwares, iron cooking utensils, pins and needles, and even musical instruments. The Yankee peddler was a colorful figure regarded by many as an untrustworthy idler and a vagrant who moved from one remote settlement to another because he lacked the enterprise to set up a stable business of his own. In reality he was often a shrewd, ambitious, tough character whose tenacious courage and keen imagination played a vital role in America's social and economic development. In this sense, this early American troubadour/huckster reflected many of those values and traits long admired in the American character of rugged individualism.

By the first decades of the nineteenth century, these roving merchants had managed to form extensive trading networks in Vermont, contributing substantially to local and regional commerce. However, as towns and villages gained population, the Yankee peddler began to lose business to merchants who established permanent stores and quickly began to dominate local markets. Peddlers continued to ply their goods at remote farmhouses along country roads or on familiar routes in city neighborhoods and their arrival were often met with anticipation well into the twentieth century in many parts of the state. Yet community residents increasingly turned to the larger selection available at local general stores, and more than a few peddlers bowed to the changing times and became owners of their own stores. Joshua Stockwell was one of those wandering peddlers when he came to Cornwall in 1793. For some years he had been a peddler, and had become familiar with the mercantile business, possessing great energy and shrewdness, he opened a general store in Cornwall, possible the first in the area.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 2

Cornwall General Store  
Name of Property

Cornwall, Addison County, Vermont  
County and State

General stores also added to the physical form of villages and towns, becoming visible parts of streetscapes and centers of human activity. Storekeepers, who often lived above their stores, became important members of their communities as well, usually available when needed. Moreover, the advent of general stores changed the nature of local and regional commerce by giving buyers better opportunities to compare and select merchandise, a circumstance that encouraged storekeepers to offer a greater variety of products to meet the demands of their customers. Competition with other storekeepers also helped to keep prices reasonable, and even small villages sometimes supported two general stores. The Haskell General Store in Cornwall, located about one-half mile northerly of the village center and owned by Benjamin Haskell, had been operating for several decades by the time the Cornwall General Store was built by Carlton Frost next to the new town hall in 1880.

When Frost began his business, the town of Cornwall was in the process of establishing its village center. The First Congregational Church, erected in 1803, had long been a landmark, standing over a small, triangular-shaped village commonly used for picnics, church socials and special town events. When the town hall was built in 1880, a small village began to take shape, and Frost must have sensed a business opportunity. Proximity to the church and town offices gave Frost a clear advantage over Haskell, and although the latter's store still served as a stopping point for travelers entering town, Frost's business eventually surpassed its competitor, and Haskell's store close in c.1890.

Once firmly established, the Cornwall General Store assumed its place among other similar stores throughout Vermont. These stores became integral parts of their communities, part of daily life and generators of the local economy. Currency was often scarce, and bartered goods were typically an accepted form of exchange. Farm Produce such as butter, chords of wood, and even local services such as blacksmithing were used as payment for the store's wares, and storekeepers then became marketers of local products. Owners of these general stores, probably Frost among them, were typically asked to post letters, relay messages, arbitrate local disputes, witness and records deeds, as well as carry on business transactions. Indeed, the general store evolved into much more than just a place to buy goods.

Records of the store's merchandise do not exist, but if the Cornwall General Store was typical of other stores during this period, it offered for sale such merchandise as soaps and spices, salt, dishes, books and dry goods on its shelves. Hardware and leather goods also shared floor space with barrels of flour, sugar, and molasses. Axes, log chains, kettles, pots and pans, or kegs of nails could have been piled into corners or hung from rafters on chords to save what little space was available.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 3

Cornwall General Store

**Name of Property**

Cornwall, Addison County, Vermont

**County and State**

However, merchandise was not the only attraction that brought customers into Cornwall's store. It was also a post office where customers could pick up and leave mail and a place of congregation where local news and gossip could be exchanged. Sitting around the pot-bellied stove, men could discuss the latest farming techniques or the local news of Cornwall and the surrounding communities. Few occurrences in the social, political, and economic development of Cornwall escaped discussion at the store, as true in 1940 as in 1880.

The Cornwall General Store was purchased on September 9, 1918, by William LaValley from Carleton Frost for the price of twenty-five hundred dollars. On September 11, 1918, William LaValley, sold the store to his son Perry E. LaValley, who ran the store until 1940. Longtime Cornwall resident Mary Peet Green remembers visiting her friend May LaValley. The family lived in the north end of the building with the store in the south end and Ms. Green recalled that the general store was a gathering place for those who wanted to just sit around and "chew the fat." She remembers that if her mother ran out of cream of tartar or some other item, Mary would occasionally be sent to the store. One of the biggest town events, she remembers, was when the store started carrying bread, or "boughten bread" as it was called. It was the talk of the town but in her home her father said that it was alright to try but was certainly no substitute for Mother's bread.<sup>1</sup>

Perry LaValley, along with his wife Agnes and the two children, May and Elizabeth lived in the structure until Mr. LaValley left the area around 1940, causing his wife to close the store. After the death of Mrs. LaValley, her daughter May continued to live in the home until her death in 1997. During the years that May lived in the home she undertook minor improvements including a modern kitchen (1950s), a living room with a television, and a bedroom upstairs above the store. However, the store and many of its contents remained intact, essentially forgotten in time.

When May LaValley passed away in 1997, her niece, who remembered playing in the store as a child when she visited her relatives, inherited the building. She recognized the importance of the building to the Cornwall community and sold the building to the town in 2000 with the hope that it would be preserved.

<sup>1</sup> Green, Mary Peet. *Cornwall People and Their Times*, Antioch Press, New Haven, VT., 1993, p.102.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 4

Cornwall General Store

**Name of Property**

Cornwall, Addison County, Vermont

**County and State**

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The Cornwall General Store is an excellent example of a Vermont general store because it retains its original character-defining features including long wooden shelves and counters, worn plank floors, and a pot-bellied stove. These features were typical of this building type throughout Vermont. Because these buildings served both domestic and commercial functions, they shared features that are common to both. Though neglected, the structure remains undisturbed. The Cornwall General Store continues to exhibit its original architectural elements, exemplifying simple vernacular designs for combined commercial and residential buildings in rural Vermont for that period.

It retains not only its original features, including two-over-two windows and chamfered porch columns with turned spindle valances, but an interior that remains virtually untouched, taking those who enter back to 1940 when the store was closed. General stores, including the Cornwall General Store, are unique because they compliment the size, scale, and style of their rural neighbors while still exhibiting standard commercial features. As noted previously, the centrally-located building played an important role in social and economic development of the town, contributing to the unique character of the town of Cornwall.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 9 Page 1

Cornwall General Store  
**Name of Property**  
Cornwall, Addison County, Vermont  
**County and State**

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**Bibliographic References:**

Beck, Jane. *The General Store in Vermont: An Oral History*, Vermont Historical Society, 1980.

Carson, Gerald. *Country Stores in New England*, Sturbridge, Massachusetts: Old Sturbridge Village, 1955.

Dolan, J.R. *The Yankee Peddlers of Early America*, New York, N.Y., Potter Publishing, 1954.

Freeman, Larry. *The Country Store*, Watkins Glen, N.Y., Century House, 1955.

Gould, Ralph E. *Yankee Storekeeper*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co. 1946.

Green, Mary Peet. *Cornwall People and their Times*, Antioch Press, New Haven, Vermont, 1993.

Heinritz, Stuart F. *The John Barrett Store in Grafton and John Barrett's Customers*, Grafton: Grafton Historical Society, 1968.

Rollins, Ellen C. Hobbs. "The Country Store." *Old Time New England* 20:121-128, 1930.

Rose, Will. "The Passing of the Country Store." *Scribner's Magazine* 80:363-367, 1926.

Sanford, Beulah. *Two Centuries of Cornwall Life*, Sharp Printing, Rutland, Vermont, 1962.

Wilson, Charles Morrow. "The Country Store Survives." *Outlook and Independent* 157:142-143,157, 1931.

Wright, Richardson Little. *Hawkers and Walkers in Early America*, New York, N.Y., Ungar Publishing, 1927.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 10 Page 1

Cornwall General Store  
**Name of Property**  
Cornwall, Addison County, Vermont  
**County and State**

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**Geographical Data:**

**Verbal Boundary Description:**

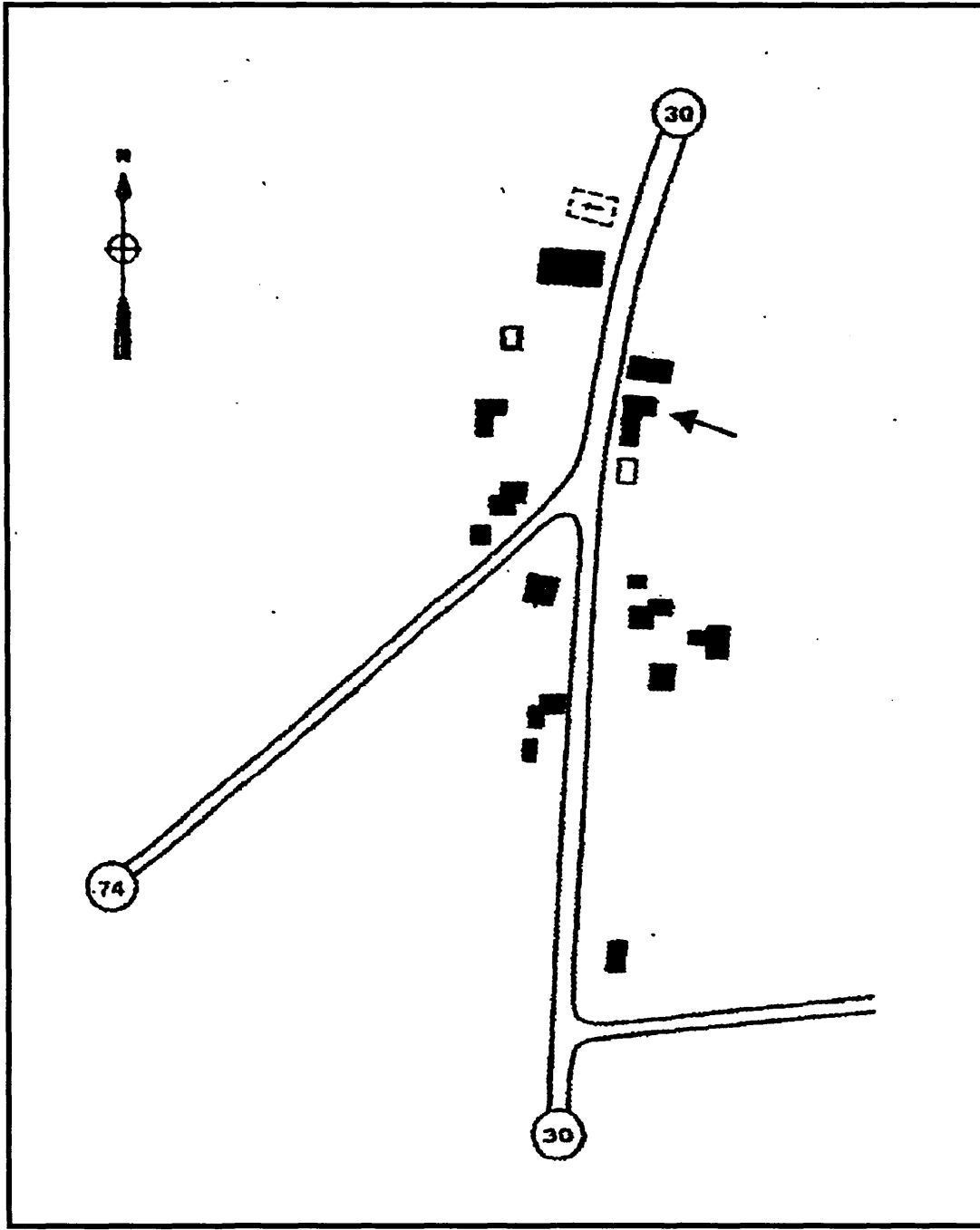
Commence at the southeasterly corner of the herein Grantees barn and run easterly along the lands of the herein Grantors, S 74<sup>0</sup> 51'E, 28.9 feet to an iron pipe, which said iron pipe marks the beginning and the southeasterly corner of lands of said Grantee and the southwesterly corner of the parcel being conveyed; thence run northerly along the easterly line of lands of the said Grantee, N 21<sup>0</sup> 09'E, 97.4 feet to a point in the southerly face of the Town Hall building, which said point marks the division line between the old portion of the building and the addition to the building; thence turn and run easterly along the southerly face of the said Town Hall S 69<sup>0</sup> 23'E, 16.0 feet to an iron pipe set at the southeasterly corner of the said Town Hall; thence turn and run southerly along the lands of said Grantors, S 21<sup>0</sup> 08'W, 95.8 feet to an iron pipe; thence turn and run westerly along lands of said Grantors, N 74<sup>0</sup> 51'W, 16.2 feet to the point of beginning. As recorded in Book 23, Page 283 of the Cornwall Land Records.

Containing 1,550 square feet of land.

**Boundary Justification:**

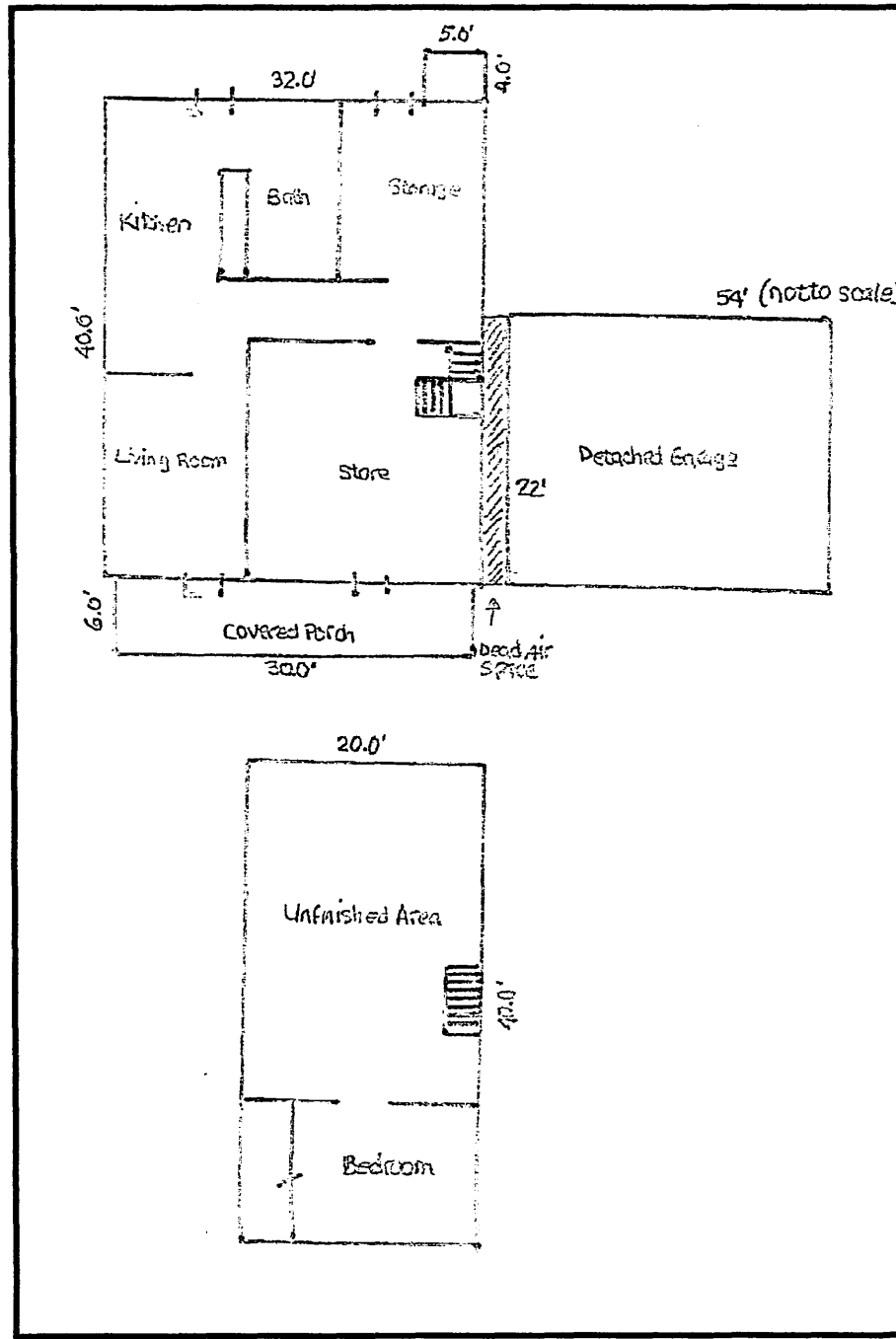
The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Cornwall General Store.

Site Plan Town of Cornwall, Addison County, Vermont



\* Arrow is marking the Cornwall General Store

Floor plan: Cornwall General Store  
Cornwall, Addison County, Vermont





**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

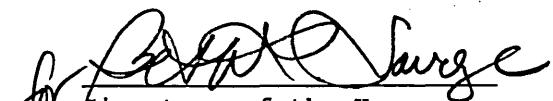
**SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD**

NRIS Reference Number: 05000804 Date Listed: 8/6/05

Cornwall General Store                      Addison                      VT  
Property Name                                      County                                      State

N/A  
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

  
Signature of the Keeper

8/6/05  
Date of Action

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Amended Items in Nomination:

**8. Statement of Significance: Area(s) and Criteria**

"Architecture" is the appropriate area of significance that corresponds to the building's importance as a representative of a building type under Criterion C.

This information was confirmed with Sue Jamele, National Register Coordinator, VTSHPO staff, by telephone.

**DISTRIBUTION:**  
National Register property file  
Nominating Authority (without attachment)