

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

130

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



1. Name of Property

historic name Howard-Odmin-Sherman Farmstead
other names/site number Hidden Pond Farm (current owner's name)

2. Location

street & number 393 Croll Rd not for publication
city or town Pittstown (mailing address Valley Falls) vicinity
state New York code 083 county Rensselaer code 89 zip code 12185

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Robert A. Peipert DBAPO 2/11/14
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register
 other (explain:)

For Nelson H. Beall 4.7.14
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**Howard-Odmin-Sherman Farmstead
Pittstown, Rensselaer, New York**

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
10	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
12	0	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Historic Farmsteads of Pittstown, New York

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC, single dwelling

AGRICULTURE, storage

AGRICULTURE, agricultural field

AGRICULTURE, animal facility

AGRICULTURE, agricultural outbuilding

DOMESTIC, single dwelling

AGRICULTURE, storage

AGRICULTURE, agricultural field

AGRICULTURE, animal facility

AGRICULTURE, agricultural outbuilding

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

MID-19th CENTURY: Greek Revival

MID-19th CENTURY: Italianate

MID-19th CENTURY: vernacular

MID-20th CENTURY: vernacular

Stone, concrete block, concrete

foundation: parge

walls: Wood, vinyl siding, corrugated metal

roof: Slate, corrugated metal

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The Howard-Odmin-Sherman Farmstead is located in the western half of Lot 110 and the eastern part of Lot 109 of the Pittstown Patent in the Town of Pittstown, Rensselaer County. The farmstead boundary listed on

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Howard-Odmin-Sherman Farmstead
Pittstown, Rensselaer, New York

the National Register encompasses 113 acres¹, all located on the north side of Croll Road. The land within the boundary is mainly open with acreage in corn, hay, and pasture. Additional acreage is kept in woodlot. The land is fenced using posts and high tensile wire.

The house and outbuildings, all on Lot 110, are reached by a long, nearly straight dirt drive running north about 300 yards from Croll Road to the buildings. The drive drops about 40 feet in elevation into a dip and rises again as the land gradually ascends to about 660' above sea level beyond the house and outbuildings.

The drive passes between the house on the east side and the carriage barn on the west side. Two additional small outbuildings dating to the historic period stand north of the carriage barn. The drive splits beyond the northerly one of these, the right (east) branch extending to a large, two-story hen house and the left (west) branch to the main barn. Two pole barns—one adjacent to the main barn and one north of the house—date to the 1950s. Two smaller frame buildings—a turkey coop and a small gable-roofed frame structure (recently moved)—stand east of the hen house. Virtually all of the historic period outbuildings have poured concrete reinforcing their stone foundations. The buildings display a variety of historic-period wood siding; except for the house all buildings have corrugated metal roofs dating to the mid-1900s. An ancient lane delineated by hedgerows extends the rectilinear layout of the house and outbuildings and accesses pastures north of the buildings.

Narrative Description

House (built ca.1860; contributing): The house is a wing-and-upright-form frame building located on the east side of the drive. The main entrance is flanked by sidelights and occupies the asymmetrically placed side hall position in the two-story, three-bay, frontal-gable main block. The four-bay, single-story wing extends eastward from the main (west) block. The fenestration plan of the wing suggests the frame of the fourth bay is longer than the other three bays. While the house retains its regular fenestration plan with six-over-six wood sash dating to its construction period, it has been recently resided in vinyl and the east wing roofed in asphalt shingles. The frontal-gable section retains a nineteenth-century slate roof, possibly dating to its construction. Its stone foundation is now skim coated with cement. The vinyl siding partially obscures the corner pilasters and pilastered door casing on the main block, but the roof cornice remains uncovered. The Italianate-style molding set in the angle between cornice and roof boards is similar to the one on the carriage barn and matches in taste the doors with paired round-arched panels in the two front façade openings of the house. Likewise, the interior trimwork typifies transitional—from Greek Revival to Italianate—taste. Details here include the heavy turned newel post, balustrade of turned spindles on the front stair, and the parlor moldings. The back ell and two-bay garage are recent stick-built additions built in phases over the past 30 years.

Carriage barn (built ca.1840-60; contributing): The one-and-a-half-story frame carriage barn faces the house across the drive. This frontal-gable frame building retains Greek Revival-style corner pilasters, partial returns,

¹ This figure differs from that in the historic-period description in the deed even though the boundaries described are intact. Digitization of the tax maps in Rensselaer County appears to have computed greater acreage than was described in the early twentieth century.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Howard-Odmin-Sherman Farmstead
Pittstown, Rensselaer, New York

and deep cornice boards. The wood siding (novelty on front façade and north side is probably a later change; clapboards on south side and back probably earlier) is nailed to studs made of up-and-down sawn lumber mortised into the frame. The front façade has two horizontally sliding wagon doors spanning most of the front of the building. The mow door is centered above the doors and is surmounted by a pair of windows in the peak of the mow. These openings appear to be a later change as the plate was altered to accommodate the casings. The main floor is divided into a front (wagon) compartment and a back (stable) compartment, each two bays deep. The floor of the mow is made of two layers of heavy boards. The frame is constructed of heavy hewn timbers and vertically sawn secondary members. The hewn rafters are butted at the ridge and notched into the plate.

Outbuilding (built ca.1840-60; contributing): The next building north is a small, lightly built frontal-gable frame building with a steeply pitched roof composed of butted rafters. It has a recently added shed-roofed addition with metal siding adjoining along its south long wall. The building's front wall is set back from the front line of the carriage barn to the south and the granary to the north. This building is now set up as a tractor shed, but the small mow above and hoist in the peak may indicate that it was designed as a small stock building. It retains hewn main timbers and rafters, but the sills are replaced with poured concrete. The wood novelty siding on the front wall post-dates the building's construction; it retains earlier vertical board siding on the other walls.

Grain house (built ca.1840-60; contributing): The grain house has a hewn frame similar in construction to the carriage barn. It retains the traditional frontal-gable form associated with grain storage buildings. Its center entrance has paired doors opening into a single compartment divided into bins. It now has a poured concrete floor and foundation replacing earlier wood sills and floor. It has a raking cornice and corrugated metal siding on the sides and back. The front is clad in later wood novelty siding. A window with wood six-over-six sash is set in the front peak. The grain house now has a metal roof.

Main barn (built ca.1870; contributing): The main barn is a gable-roofed frame building with south-facing banked stone foundation. Its ridge is oriented east-west, and the comparatively steeply pitched roof is supported by purlin posts mortised vertically into the crossbeams. The frame is composed of four symmetrically spaced bays with dropped plates and displays a sophisticated reuse of timbers from earlier buildings. All the main timbers are hewn, and some are scribed for matching, either for an older building or for reuse in this one. The mortises of at least one post suggest that an older Dutch barn provided some of the timber used here, as do the hewn rafters notched for collar ties. The horizontal board siding is laid over studs mortised into the frame. The studs and braces mostly display circular sawn kerfs. These small frame members were probably prepared for use in this barn rather than an earlier one and so suggest the construction date for the overall structure. A hay track runs under the ridgeline. There are sliding doors made of vertical boards on the mow entrance centered in the north wall.

The barn has several additions including two frame stanchion areas added in the mid-1900s. These extend south from the basement. The shed-roofed milk house is attached to the east wall of the basement, and a concrete block silo stands adjacent to the west side.

Henhouse (built 1940s; contributing): The two-story, gable-roofed, frame henhouse has regularly spaced, paired

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**Howard-Odmin-Sherman Farmstead
Pittstown, Rensselaer, New York**

windows with two-over-two wood sash in its south long wall. Three metal ventilators are set at evenly spaced intervals on the ridgeline, and the building rests on a poured concrete foundation. It retains wood novelty siding and an asphalt shingle roof with exposed rafter tails.

Turkey coop (built ca.1930; contributing): A small frame, shed-roofed turkey coop stands east of the hen house, its ridgeline angled slightly off the axis of the hen house. Like the hen house, it has novelty wood siding and windows in the south-facing wall.

Small outbuilding (built ca.1900; contributing): A small, single-story, gabled-roofed windowless frame outbuilding stands southeast of the turkey coop. It has wood clapboard siding and raking cornices. A door flanked by windows are in the south eave wall. It was moved to its present site in the historic period.

Two pole barns (built ca.1960; contributing): Two pole barns, both with corrugated metal siding and roofs, stand on the property. One stands on the east side of the drive, north of the house, and west of the hen house. Its ridgeline runs east-west. A second barn of similar size and construction with a shed roof is located at the northwest corner of the main barn. Both barns are constructed of dimensional lumber posts and trusses secured using plywood plates.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Howard-Odmin-Sherman Farmstead
Pittstown, Rensselaer, New York

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

ca.1840 - 1963

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

Summary Paragraph

The Howard-Odmin-Sherman Farmstead, located in the Town of Pittstown, Rensselaer County, New York, satisfies National Register of Historic Places Criterion C as an intact and representative example of an historic farmstead in the Town of Pittstown. It is additionally significant under Criterion A, in the area of agriculture, for its longstanding and continuous use as a farm. This property is being nominated in association

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceHoward-Odmin-Sherman Farmstead
Pittstown, Rensselaer, New York

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

with the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) entitled "Historic Farmsteads of Pittstown, New York." The Howard-Odmin-Sherman Farmstead retains an intact building assemblage embodying characteristic types and construction features of the region during the cited period of significance. These exhibit distinctive and qualifying attributes as outlined in the associated MPDF context. Among the farmstead's contributing resources are the house, a carriage barn, a grain house and another small outbuilding, a bank barn with twentieth-century additions for a dairy herd, a two-story hen house, a turkey coop, and two mid-twentieth-century pole barns. These resources survive in an intact rural setting, which provides an appropriate context for this substantially intact Rensselaer County farm set in the context of its surrounding landscape.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Ownership of the Howard-Odmin-Sherman farmstead, ca.1850-2013

William C.[ash] Sherman² (1817-1889) assembled the land comprising the Howard-Odmin-Sherman farmstead via purchases from different members of the Brownell family during the 1850s. By this period, the Brownells were a numerous clan in Pittstown, having descended from at least one ancestor, Simeon (1759-1832) and his wife Sarah Hoag (1764-1849), who came to Pittstown before 1790.³ The 1800 census also recorded David and William Brownell as heads of household in Pittstown and neighboring Hoosick respectively, providing at least three Brownell households in the northern tier of Rensselaer County by then. The Brownells appear to have descended from Thomas Brownell (1608-1664/5), who arrived in southeastern Massachusetts during the Puritan Great Migration of the 1630s. Thomas was among those who moved to Rhode Island; at least some of his descendants were among the Quaker settlers in Pittstown. As a group, the Brownells became significant landholders and, it seems, occasional speculators based on the number of non-family transactions in Pittstown recorded in the second quarter of the nineteenth century.

William C. Sherman was the eighth child and fourth son of Joseph and Sarah Cash Sherman. He grew up on his parents' farm on Lot 87 in the Pittstown Patent, which Joseph bought with Jonathan Shearman (relationship unknown⁴) from Cadwalader Colden in 1812. At least eleven children are recorded for Joseph and Sarah, and after Joseph's death sometime between 1850 and 1855, his widow, Sarah, 72, was recorded living on a property valued at \$6,000 with four of her unmarried offspring in the 1855 state census. By that time, however, William was established on his own farm—the portion of the Howard property encompassed by this nomination. A year later, in 1856, William's brother Jonathan (b.1810) bought out his siblings' shares of the property on Lot 87 following the settlement of their father's estate.⁵

² Until about 1860, the surname was spelled Shearman.

³ "United States Census, 1790," index and images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/XHKP-5NY> : accessed 06 Oct 2013), Simeon Brownel, 1790. Cemetery list at <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nyrensse/cems7.htm> shows that Nancy Sherman's maiden name was Lamb. Birth and death dates for William and Nancy taken from cemetery records cited above.

⁴ The Gifford farmstead, previously listed under the same MPDF, was jointly acquired by brothers.

⁵ Information gathered by a member of Pittstown Historical Society and filed in their collections. No deed reference provided.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceHoward-Odmin-Sherman Farmstead
Pittstown, Rensselaer, New York**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

In 1850, the federal census recorded Joseph, a native of Massachusetts, still living and aged 72, residing with his wife Sarah, 66; Sarah Elly Sherman, 45; and four children—Jonathan C., 39; Sarah, 37; Mary, 29; and Louis (or Lois), 23.⁶ William C. Sherman, farmer aged 32, was listed separately and heading his own household. He had married Nancy Lamb (1825–1913) in 1846, and they had two daughters: Mary C., age 2, and Emily A., an infant.⁷ Stewart Lamb, a farmer aged 22 and probably Nancy's brother, and George A. Link, aged 13 and attending school, also lived with them.⁸ William does not appear to have yet owned land.

In April 1852, William bought from Reuben (ca.1797–1859) and Alse [Sherman] Brownell land in the west half of Lot 110 of the Pittstown Patent.⁹ Alice Brownell (b.1775) is recorded in some sources as the sister of Joseph Sherman, and thus William's aunt.¹⁰ Two exceptions in the deed totaled slightly under twelve acres from the original 89.75-acre parcel. A third exception allowed the Brownells to continue to use a burial site on the lot.¹¹ The last exception surely indicates that a Brownell household occupied this parcel from early on when burial on the home farm was standard practice. This purchase comprised the 76-acre farm valued at \$3,850 that Sherman reported in the 1855 New York state census. That year, his household—his wife Nancy, their two daughters, and an Irish-born 15-year-old laborer named Cornelius Rogers—lived in a frame house valued at \$300.¹²

In two further transactions carried out in 1856 and 1857, Sherman added acreage adjacent to his first purchase. The first was a small parcel of 2.03 acres bought from Nathan and Orpha Brownell in March for \$162.¹³ Sherman bought approximately 17 acres from Moses H. (1826–94) and Elizabeth Brownell (1827–76) the following February for \$800.¹⁴ Sherman reported owning 100 acres in the 1860 census, a total reflecting these additions. That year, his real estate was valued at \$5,000 and personal estate at \$1,200. Nancy had born a

⁶ "United States Census, 1850," index and images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MC1Z-D4J>) : accessed 15 Oct 2013), Joseph Sherman, Pittstown, Rensselaer, New York, United States; citing dwelling 866, family 933, NARA microfilm publication M432, roll 585.

⁷ Marriage date 10 September 1846 according to source cited in FN 3.

⁸ *United States Census for 1850*, Town of Pittstown, Population schedule, p.125, Household 867. (Manuscript census at Office of Rensselaer County Clerk, Troy, New York)

⁹ "United States Census, 1850," index and images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MC1Z-DW1>) : accessed 17 Oct 2013), Reuben Brownell, Pittstown, Rensselaer, New York, United States; citing dwelling 863, family 930, NARA microfilm publication M432, roll 585. This record spells Reuben's wife's name Alace. In 1850, Reuben was reported to be 63, born in New York. His wife was eight years his senior and born in Rhode Island. George Hait (or Hayt), age 17, lived with them. Pittstown cemetery records provide Reuben's death date.

¹⁰ Constance Kheel, Brownell family genealogy compiled from various sources and filed in Pittstown Historical Society Collections.

¹¹ *Book of Deeds* 82/83. Present owner Frederick Howard says that the burying ground is just west of the main barn. There are a few illegible stones, all toppled. The Odmins used it as pasture; Howard has continued this practice. Subsequent deed references use form ##/##.

¹² Transcription of information from 1855 *New York State Census* in files of Pittstown Historical Society.

¹³ 100/2.

¹⁴ "United States Census, 1850," index and images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MC1Z-RRQ>) : accessed 18 Oct 2013), Moses H Brownell, Pittstown, Rensselaer, New York, United States; citing dwelling 1086, family 1166, NARA microfilm publication M432, roll 585. Brownell was recorded as 24 years old in 1850; his wife Elizabeth was two years his junior. They had a two-year-old son Albert, and Irish immigrant Connor Cronan, age 31, was a laborer living with them. Cemetery records at <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nyrensse/cemb17.htm> record Moses and Elizabeth's burials in Tomhannock Methodist cemetery.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceHoward-Odmin-Sherman Farmstead
Pittstown, Rensselaer, New York**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

third daughter, six-month-old Angelina J. The two older girls attended school, and George A. Link, 24, now making a living as a carpenter, had returned to Sherman's household.¹⁵ Later on, Sherman conveyed seven acres of the last parcel to Patrick Madigan. The 1880 census listed Madigan (b.1814 in Ireland) living in Pittstown with his wife Ann and two children born in Ireland (Margaret, age 34, and James 23) and a younger son John, age 11, born in New York.¹⁶

The 1875 census shows that Sherman had bought additional land, apparently a second farm not contiguous with the property listed here. Mapping shows that Sherman considered the property in Lots 109 and 110 his home farm and primary residence.¹⁷ By this time, Sherman now 58, headed a household consisting of two of their daughters, Caroline, 28, and Angeline, 16; his wife Nancy, 46; and "servant" Silvester Turner, 16.¹⁸ William C. Sherman died in 1889; his wife Nancy died in 1913.

In 1922, Maria Keerl, a widow living in Pittstown, and her unmarried son Alfred G. Keerl sold the farm assembled by William Sherman minus the parcel Sherman sold to Madigan to Steven and Agnes Odmin of Troy, New York.¹⁹ No deed recording the sale to the Keerls is filed in Rensselaer County, and they appear to have eluded census takers throughout their tenure. Maria's husband George (1860-1916) was buried in the Nortonville Cemetery in Pittstown, but it appears that neither she nor her son is interred in the town.²⁰

The Odmins were Polish immigrants. Steven Odmin, Sr., (d.1960) shortened their name from Odminowsky to make it easier to say. In Troy, he worked at the Burden Iron Works. He and his wife married in 1916, and their first two children, Steven, Jr., (b.1917) and Helen (b.1921), were born before they moved to the farm in Pittstown. They borrowed money from a cousin to buy the property. Their third and youngest child Angela was born on the property in 1928. During World War II, both Steven, Jr., and Helen commuted daily to Schenectady, where he worked at American Locomotive, and she worked at General Electric. Angela began work at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute by the late 1940s. She commuted to Troy from the farm during her entire working life. Her siblings, however, returned to farm work alongside their father after the war.

In 1949, Steven, Sr., subdivided a two-acre house lot with road frontage off the southwest corner of the original Sherman acreage bought from members of the Brownell family. This he sold to Donald Rose, who built a house soon after. Rose later subdivided the lot for a second dwelling. Steven Odmin, Sr., died in 1960. His

¹⁵ *United States Census for 1860*, Town of Pittstown, Population schedule: 45 (Household 341).

¹⁶ 1337/756. "United States Census, 1880," index and images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MZF8-46D> : accessed 15 Oct 2013), Patrick Madigan, Pittstown, Rensselaer, New York, United States; citing sheet 155A, family 0, NARA microfilm publication T9-0921.

¹⁷ F.W. Beers, *County Atlas of Rensselaer, New York, from recent and actual surveys and records under the superintendence of F. W. Beers*. (New York: F.W. Beers & Co., 1876); Lake, D. J., and S. N. Beers. *Map of Rensselaer County, New York, from Original Surveys*. (Philadelphia: Smith, Gallup & Co. Publishers, 1861); A. E. Rogerson. *Map of the County of Rensselaer*. (Troy, New York: E.A. Balch, 1854).

¹⁸ *New York State Census for 1875*, Town of Pittstown, 1st election district, population schedule: 46 (Household 402).

¹⁹ 406/165.

²⁰ <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nyrensse/cemk2.htm>. Angela Odmin believes that Alfred Keerl was an engineer who worked in India, and that he had been an absentee owner for some time. (Angela Odmin (b.1928), interview with author, 15 April 2009).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Howard-Odmin-Sherman Farmstead
Pittstown, Rensselaer, New York

widow Agnes and their children continued on the property until 1979, when she died. Soon after that Steven, Jr., developed heart trouble, and in August 1981, the Odmin heirs sold the old Sherman farm to Frederick (b.1943) and Marilyn (1944–2005) Howard. After Marilyn's death, Fred married Michele (b.1944). They still live on the farm, which has been placed in a trust.

Architectural and agricultural development of the Howard–Odmin–Sherman farmstead

The architectural record of the Howard–Odmin–Sherman Farmstead encompasses a dwelling house, a carriage barn, a main barn, two mid-twentieth-century pole barns, a hen house, a turkey coop, a grain house, and two small frame outbuildings dating to the historic period. William C. Sherman paid \$3,700 for the property he bought from Reuben and Alce Brownell in 1852; three years later in the census, it was valued at \$3,850. The relatively small difference in figures suggests that Sherman changed little on the property early in his ownership. The 1855 census valued the frame dwelling house at \$300, an amount probably indicating a small settlement-era house rather than the much larger wing-and-upright one standing today. The wing of the existing dwelling might incorporate some, or all, of the earlier dwelling, but this is mere conjecture without more complete knowledge of its construction. The heavy framing and construction details of the carriage barn might indicate that this building predated Sherman's purchase in 1852. Similarly, Sherman may also have found the two small outbuildings, the grain house, and the building next to it, on the property when he bought it. If so, either or both may have stood elsewhere.

The \$3,850 valuation of the farm and details recorded in the agricultural schedule of the 1855 state census indicates that the land was well-developed with 60 acres improved land and only 16 acres unimproved. Like virtually all of his neighbors Sherman practiced a diversified agriculture that supplied the home farm and also commodities to be sold. In 1855, he was not yet 40 years old, and the figures may indicate a degree of interest in new ideas and markets alongside established practice. The improved land included 10 acres of meadow (yield 6 tons of hay). He sowed 12 acres in oats (180 bushels harvested), one acre in buckwheat, one in spring wheat (12 bushels harvested), and four acres in corn (40 bushels harvested). Sherman also recorded harvesting seven bushels of apples. This figure may indicate that the trees were young, or that he was reworking an older cider orchard by topdressing the trees with new scion wood to produce whole fruit for sale and home use. He was among those Pittstown farmers who raised flax that could be sold for lint and seed. He sowed 7 acres yielding 2,500 pounds of lint and 60 bushels of seed). Sherman's stock was valued at \$500. He kept cattle (two cows under one year, four milk cows, and a team of oxen, and two other cattle) producing the comparatively large amount of 300 pounds of butter and 600 pounds of cheese. He had one pig and 8 shoats. His poultry (valued at \$40) and egg sales (\$14) were relatively high compared to his neighbors. The last figure may indicate that he carried eggs to Troy where few people kept poultry. He used 1½ tons (cost \$7) plaster, or lime, to manure some of his land. He kept four horses and valued his implements at \$150, a relatively high figure in Pittstown at the time.²¹

²¹ *New York State Census for 1855*, Town of Pittstown, Agricultural Schedule. Recorded and filed in Pittstown Historical Society files.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceHoward-Odmin-Sherman Farmstead
Pittstown, Rensselaer, New York**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Sherman's property value rose to \$5,000 in the 1860 federal census—a figure surely reflecting the addition of the acreage purchased for a total of \$962. The increase may also reflect rising land values and possibly minor improvements; Sherman might have used his share of his brother Jonathan's purchase of their father's farm from his siblings in 1856 to improve his own property. Sherman's farm now encompassed 86 acres of improved land and 14 acres unimproved. His personal estate included \$400 in implements and \$522 in stock, which included 3 horses, 4 milk cows, 4 more cattle, and 16 pigs. Sherman recorded 129 pounds of wool despite not listing sheep. Field crop harvests included 20 bushels wheat, 40 bushels rye, 15 bushels corn, 130 bushels oats. He also cut 10 tons of hay.²²

The valuation in the census—a middling figure relative to other farms in the neighborhood—suggests that the property was on a stable economic footing. The figures do not suggest significant construction projects, but the residence of George Link, now 24 and a carpenter, in the household may help date work undertaken soon after.²³ The stylistic details of the current house and the decorative scheme of the carriage barn appear to date to this period although both exemplify forms popular somewhat earlier. In the case of the barn, its construction details also appear to be earlier than the mid-1860s. Both incorporate transitional Italianate-style moldings popular at the time. The application of later details to somewhat earlier forms and buildings is characteristic in rural areas. Further, the physical relationship of the house and carriage barn, facing each other across at the end of the long drive, and the emphasis on the gable end of each building to present a handsome entry to the building cluster of the farm exhibit a consciousness of taste while also responding to the physical characteristics of the lot.

The 1875 state census records a house valued at \$3,000—surely the house in much the form it retains today.²⁴ Sherman's overall property was valued at \$7,000, but this reflects the addition of a second property. His acreage now totaled 200. Thus, the \$2,000 in outbuildings, \$600 in stock, and \$300 in tools was in some fashion probably divided between the earlier farm and his more recently acquired acreage. The newer property appears to have been largely unimproved as his improved acreage only rose to 92 acres, but unimproved acreage now stood at 100. There were also eight additional acres of woodlot. Thus, the second purchase appears to have not included a house, but provided necessary fuel and building materials. The property may also have included a sheep barn, as in 1874, Sherman sheared 170 sheep for 650 pounds of wool (a very large per sheep clip) and raised 60 lambs. In 1875, he sheared 215 for 900 pounds and raised 80 lambs. His efforts at improving his acreage may be reflected in his very productive 20 acres of meadow, from which he cut 30 tons of hay in 1874. He continued growing flax (two acres yielding 12 bushels seed and 500 pounds of lint), but as on many Pittstown farms, these figures are lower than a decade earlier. Even so, he reduced corn acreage in 1875 to two acres and doubled his flax acreage. Sherman is in an enclave of flax growers in this schedule.²⁵ He milked five cows and the farm

²² *United States Census for 1860*, Town of Pittstown, Agricultural schedule: 9–10 (line 14).

²³ *United States Census for 1860*, Town of Pittstown, Population schedule: 45 (Household 341).

²⁴ *New York State Census for 1875*, Town of Pittstown, 1st election district, population schedule: 46 (Household 402).

²⁵ These include Leonard Reed (line 14), Smith Herrick (line 15), John Tewitt (line 17), Albert Stover (line 18), Thomas Birmingham (line 21), James M. Yates (line 23), Nathan Welling (line 27), and Patric Carrall (line 34) who continued to raise flax although mainly on reduced acreage. *New York State Census for 1875*, Town of Pittstown, 1st election district, Agricultural schedule: 13–17.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Howard-Odmin-Sherman Farmstead
Pittstown, Rensselaer, New York

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

produced 500 pounds of butter. He kept three horses and butchered 1,200 pounds of pork. He sold \$15 of poultry. He spent \$12 on manures, most likely plaster, or lime.

The 1875 census recorded outbuildings valued at \$2,000, a relatively high figure, on Sherman's property. Among these is surely the neatly constructed bank barn, or main barn, located on the Howard-Odmin-Sherman farmstead. While in the earlier years, Sherman's grain and hay production were on the low side compared to his neighbors, by this time, his hay production had risen considerably, and a larger barn would have provided him with mow storage out of the weather. Sherman's later property acquisition may have included buildings in addition to the main barn, carriage barn, and the two small outbuildings on the drive that are part of that sum. If there were additional buildings on the Howard-Odmin-Sherman property, however, Odmin family photographs show that they were gone by the time they bought the farm in 1922. The turkey coop and the small gable-roofed frame shed now standing nearby are both built of dimensional lumber typical of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Lacking documentation of the transfer from Sherman to Kheerl, these might date to either ownership.

Steven Odmin, Sr., appears to have run his property much as his neighbors did in the 1920s. He grew potatoes for market and raised pigs for family use. When they bought the farm, there was an established orchard in the field east of the house, which they continued to manage. This may have been the orchard recorded in the 1855 census. In 1926, Odmin started a dairy herd with nine cows. During the war, he bought his first tractor, which allowed him to expand the milking operation. The single-story frame additions to the south wall of the basement of the main barn date to this era.

The property retains three other outbuildings dating to this period. These include the two-story hen house and two pole barns built for hay storage. Steven, Jr., developed the egg trade and delivered his own route before 1950. The hen house was divided into two floors, one for white layers and one for brown, to meet customer demand for one or the other. The tillage land was used to raise corn, oats (used mainly in chicken feed), and hay. The feed was prepared at the Wiley Bros. mill in Valley Falls and later at the Hoosick Farmers Exchange into the early 1980s. After Steven, Sr., died in 1960, Steven, Jr., and Helen partnered in the dairy operation.²⁶

Steve Odmin, Jr., developed heart trouble and stopped milking about 1980, and the Odmins sold the farm to the Howards in 1981. For a time, the Howards leased the land to another farmer, who brought his own dairy herd, but the cows were gone by 1983. Frederick Howard continued raising hay in a part-time basis and changed over to beef cattle; he learned much about managing a farm from Steven Odmin, Jr., who lived nearby until his death. The Howards currently raise grass-fed Black Angus cattle for beef production. Their property encompasses the Sherman farm as assembled by 1857 with the sole exception of a two-acre subdivision divided off in the historic period by Steven Odmin, Sr. The Howard property today also includes a separate parcel adjacent on the west line acquired by the Howards; this parcel lies outside the boundary of this nomination.

²⁶ Angela Odmin provided information about the Odmin tenure and management of the property in interview with author, 15 April 2009.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Howard-Odmin-Sherman Farmstead
Pittstown, Rensselaer, New York

city or town Cooperstown state New York zip code 13326

e-mail jravage@stny.rr.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

List of digital photographs for NY_Rensselaer County_Pittstown Farmsteads_Howard-Odmin-Sherman Farmstead

Photographs of property shot by Jessie A. Ravage (34 Delaware Street, Cooperstown, NY, 13326, 607-547-9507, jravage@stny.rr.com), July 2013.

0001: Overview of property looking north from Croll Rd, showing house right of drive, carriage barn and main barn to left

0002: House viewed from southeast

0003: Main barn viewed from east-northeast showing milkhouse addition

0004: Grain house and small outbuilding viewed from east showing front facades

0005: Carriage barn viewed from northeast

0006: Three outbuildings (small outbuilding, grain house, and carriage barn) on west side of drive viewed from north

0007: Small outbuilding southeast of turkey coop and hen house, viewed from southeast

Property Owner:

name Howard Family Living Trust

street & number 393 Croll Rd telephone _____

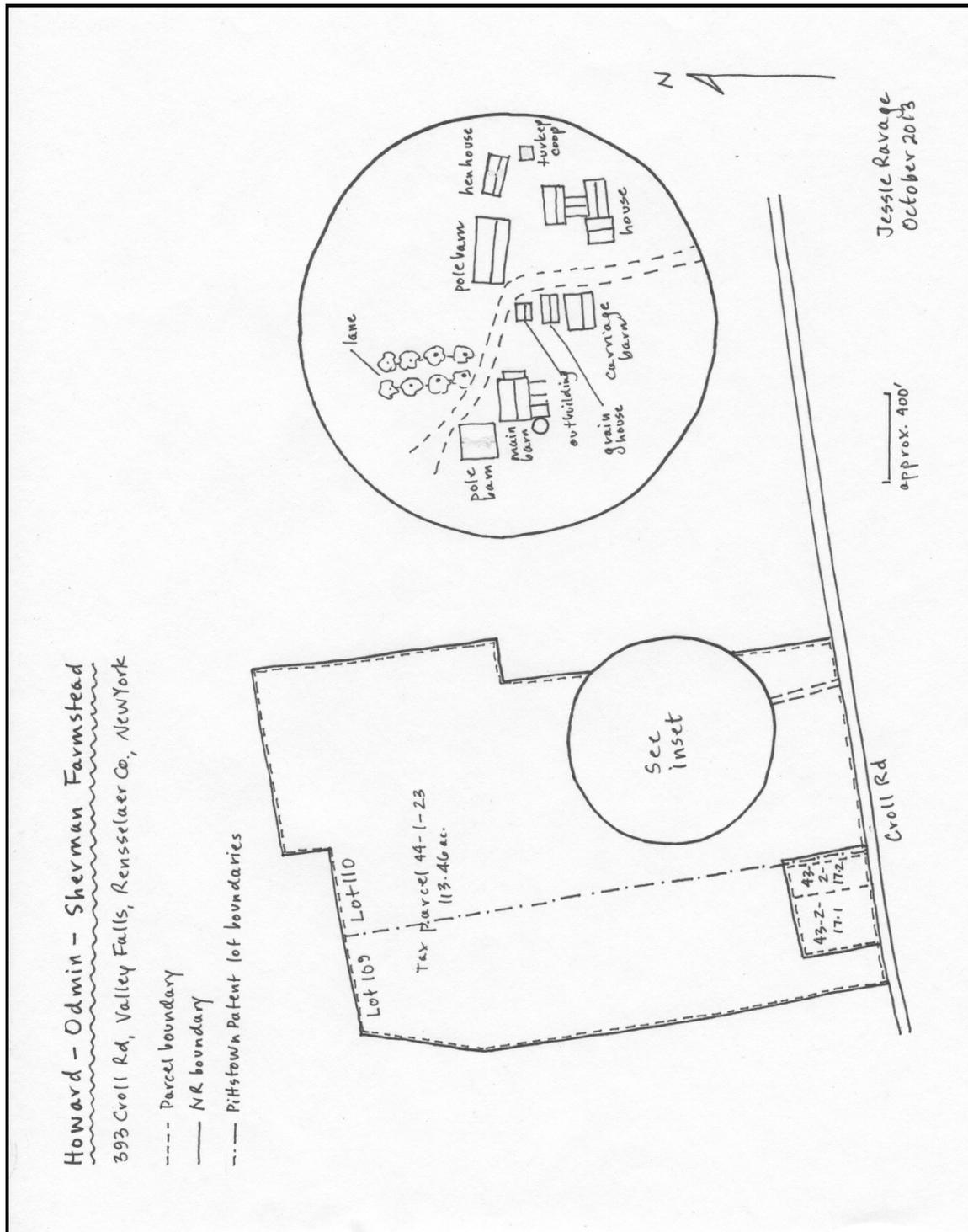
city or town Valley Falls state New York zip code 12185

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

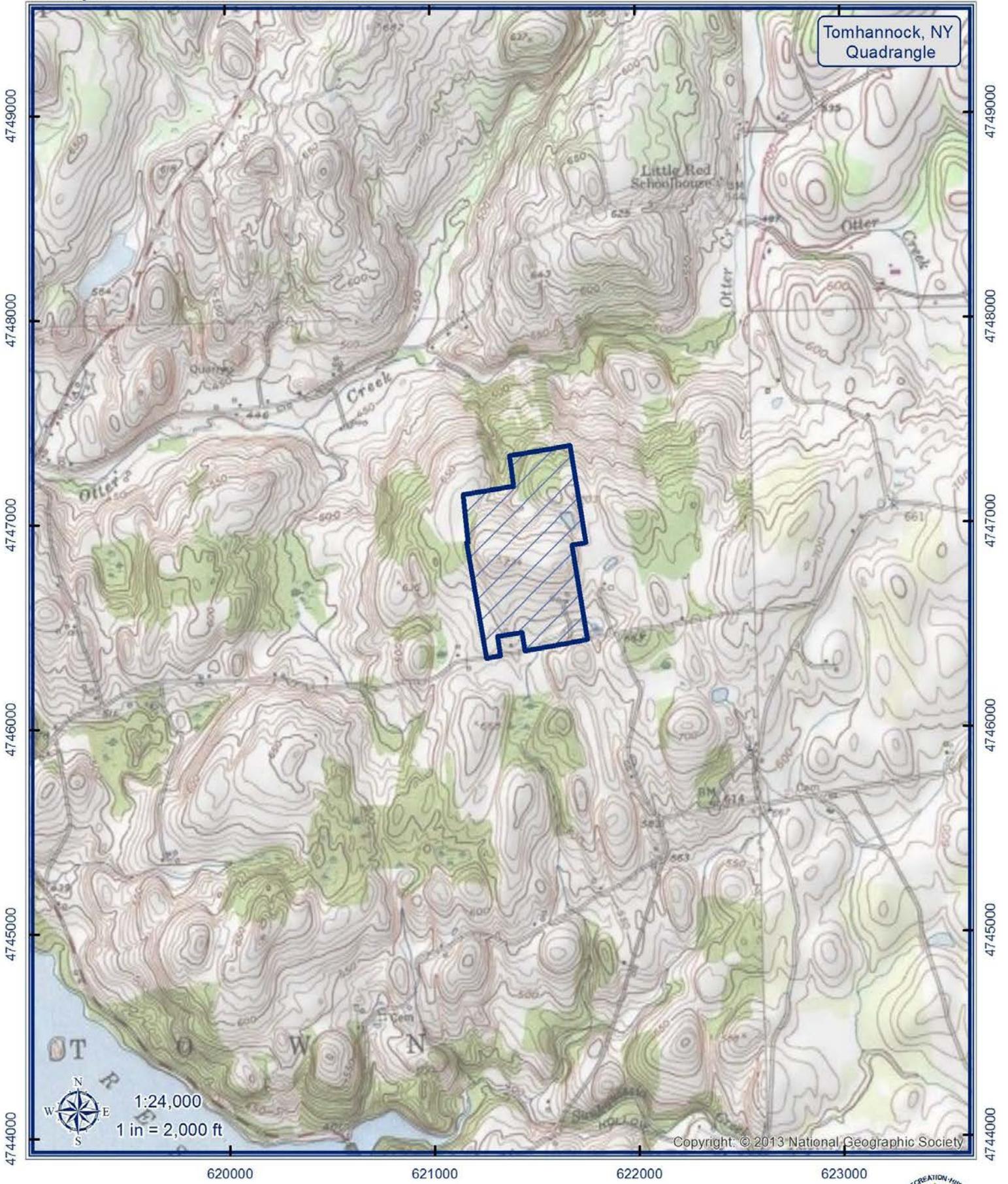
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Howard-Odmin-Sherman Farmstead
Pittstown, Rensselaer, New York

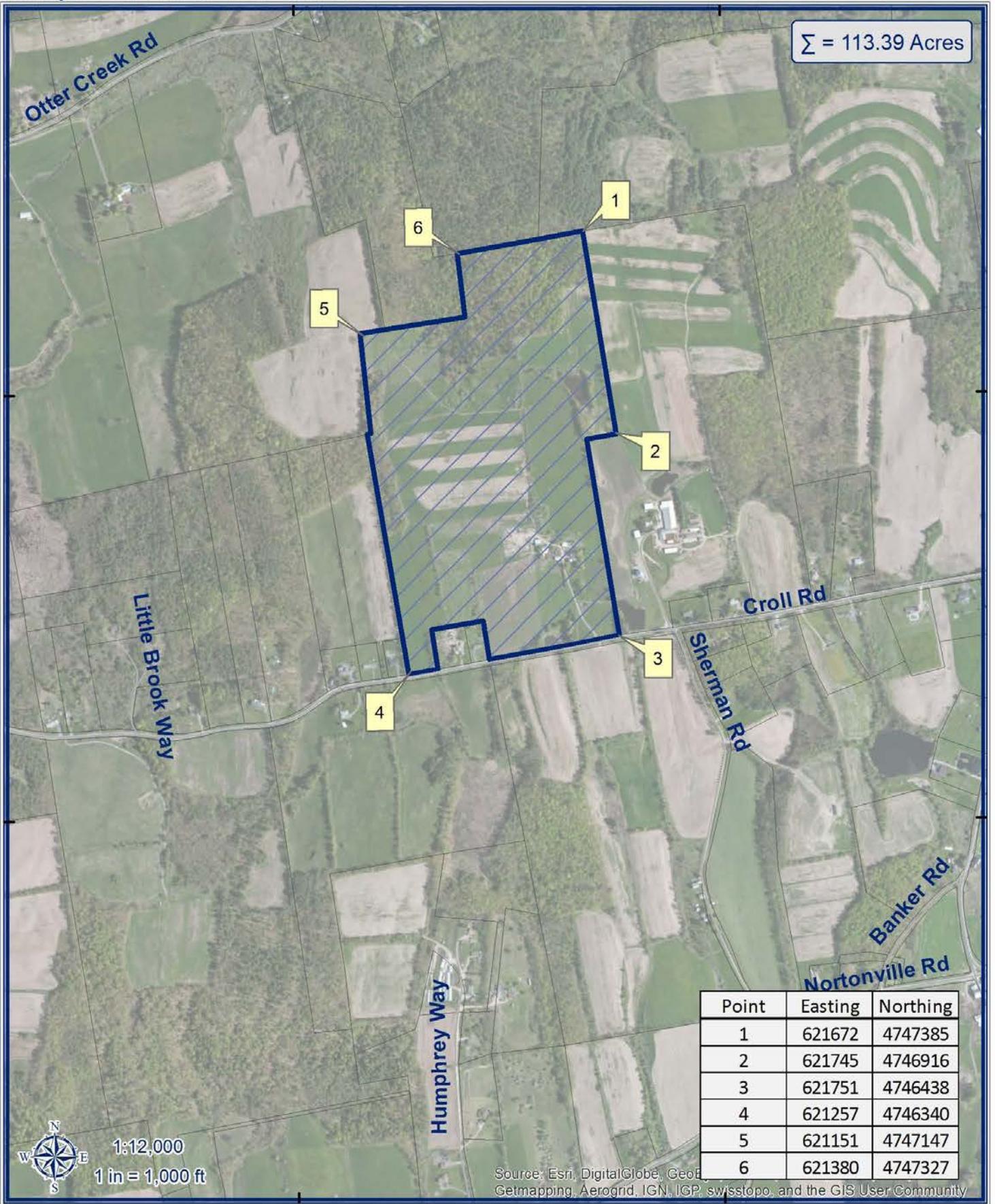


Howard - Odmin - Sherman Farmstead
393 Croll Rd, Valley Falls, Rensselaer Co, New York

- Parcel boundary
- NR boundary
- . - Pittstown Patent lot boundaries



$\Sigma = 113.39$ Acres



Point	Easting	Northing
1	621672	4747385
2	621745	4746916
3	621751	4746438
4	621257	4746340
5	621151	4747147
6	621380	4747327

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, AeroGRID, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community



1:12,000
 1 in = 1,000 ft



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
 Projection: Transverse Mercator
 Datum: North American 1983
 Units: Meter



Tax Parcel Data:
 Rensselaer Co. RPS
www.rensco.com/countymaps.asp



$\Sigma = 113.39$ Acres

4747000

4747000



1:5,000
1 in = 417 ft

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, i-cubed, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

621000

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



Tax Parcel Data:
Rensselaer Co. RPS
www.rensco.com/countymaps.asp

















UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Howard--Odmin--Sherman Farmstead

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Rensselaer

DATE RECEIVED: 2/19/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 3/18/14
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 4/02/14 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 4/07/14
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000130

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 4.7.14 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Division for Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189
518-237-8643

Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor

Rose Harvey
Commissioner



13 February 2014

Alexis Abernathy
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: National Register Nominations

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to enclose the following six National Register nominations, all on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

Odd Fellows Lodge and Temple, Onondaga County
Shadowcliff, Rockland County
Howard-Admin-Sherman Farmstead (Pittstown Farms MPDF), Rensselaer County
Jonesville Cemetery, Saratoga County
New York, Ontario and Western Railway Company Middletown Station, Orange County
Northbrook Lodge, Franklin County

Please feel free to call me at 518.237.8643 x 3261 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank
National Register Coordinator
New York State Historic Preservation Office