

**HISTORIC RESOURCES**

**BUILDING AND STRUCTURES**

Please send completed form to: Stacey Vairo, National Register and State Register Coordinator,  
State Historic Preservation Office, Department of Economic and Community Development,  
One Constitution Plaza, 2nd Floor, Hartford CT 06103

\* Note: Please attach any additional or expanded information on a separate sheet.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Building Name (Common) Mad Mares Farm Record No. 121  
 Building Name (Historic) Northernmost Doolittle Farmstead  
 Street Address or Location 329 Downs Road  
 Town/City Bethany Village \_\_\_\_\_ County New Haven  
 Owner(s) Forman, David; Outremont, Gilda; 329 Downs Road, Bethany CT 06524  Public  Private

**PROPERTY INFORMATION**

Present Use: Agriculture/Subsistence: agricultural outbuilding; Domestic: single dwelling  
 Historic Use: Agriculture/Subsistence: agricultural outbuilding; Domestic: single dwelling

Accessibility to public: Exterior visible from public road?  Yes  No  
 Interior accessible?  Yes  No If yes, explain \_\_\_\_\_  
 Style of building English bank barn, Vernacular style Date of Construction 19th c.

Material(s) (Indicate use or location when appropriate):

- |  |  |                                      |                                       |  |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clapboard             | <input type="checkbox"/> Asbestos Siding           | <input type="checkbox"/> Brick       | <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle | <input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt Siding  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fieldstone | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board & Batten | <input type="checkbox"/> Stucco      | <input type="checkbox"/> Cobblestone  | <input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum Siding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete (Type _____) | <input type="checkbox"/> Cut Stone (Type _____)    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |                                       |  |

**Structural System**

- Wood Frame  Post & Beam  Balloon  Load bearing masonry  Structural iron or steel  
 Other Square rule framing

**Roof (Type)**

- Gable  Flat  Mansard  Monitor  Sawtooth  
 Gambrel  Shed  Hip  Round  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**(Material)**

- Wood Shingle  Roll Asphalt  Tin  Slate  Asphalt Shingle  
 Built up  Tile  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Stories: 1 1/2, B Approximate Dimensions 30' x 40'

Structural Condition:  Excellent  Good  Fair  Deteriorated

Exterior Condition:  Excellent  Good  Fair  Deteriorated

Location Integrity:  On original site  Moved When? \_\_\_\_\_

Alterations?  Yes  No If yes, explain: Basement dairy stable converted to horse stalls

**FOR OFFICE USE:** Town # \_\_\_\_\_ Site # \_\_\_\_\_ UTM \_\_\_\_\_

District:  S  NR If NR, Specify:  Actual  Potential

**PROPERTY INFORMATION (CONT'D)**

**Related outbuildings or landscape features:**

- Barn     Shed     Garage     Carriage House     Shop     Garden
- Other landscape features or buildings: 1-bedroom cottage, stone walls

**Surrounding Environment:**

- Open land     Woodland     Residential     Commercial     Industrial     Rural
- High building density     Scattered buildings visible from site

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

See continuation sheet.

• Other notable features of building or site (*Interior and/or Exterior*)

See continuation sheet.

Architect \_\_\_\_\_ Builder \_\_\_\_\_

• Historical or Architectural importance:

See continuation sheet.

• Sources:

Cunningham, Jan, Connecticut's Agricultural Heritage: an Architectural and Historical Overview, Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation & State Historic Preservation Office, 2012.

See continuation sheet.

Photographer Charlotte Hitchcock Date 5/22/2012

View Multiple Views Negative on File CTHP

Name Charlotte Hitchcock Date 6/04/2012

Organization Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517

• Subsequent field evaluations:

Latitude, Longitude:  
41.414795, -72.958647

**Threats to the building or site:**

- None known     Highways     Vandalism     Developers     Renewal     Private
- Deterioration     Zoning     Other \_\_\_\_\_     Explanation \_\_\_\_\_

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

This site is located on the west side of Downs Road in the northeastern part of Bethany, at the corner of Carmel Road and close to West Rock Ridge, one of the distinctive traprock ridges that are characteristic of Connecticut’s central rift valley.

The primary village centers of Bethany were historically located along Amity Road (Route 63), which runs north-south along a height of land further to the west. The Congregational and Episcopal Churches are located on Amity Road near the northern edge of the town, with the Christ Episcopal Church carriage shed listed on the State Register of Historic Places. The c. 1807 Wheeler-Beecher House, on Amity Road slightly north of the two churches, is also a National Register-listed property. Farmsteads in Bethany that are also included in this thematic State Register listing are: the Abram Carrington Farmstead (Cherry Tree Farm), 144 Bethmour Road; the Russell Homestead, 20 Round Hill Road; Clover Nook Farm, 50 Fairwood Road; the Davidson Farmstead, 539 Litchfield Turnpike, Rojo Farm, 312 Litchfield Turnpike, and the Bishop-Tuttle-Megin Farmstead, 163 Carrington Road.

The barn is to the southwest of the farmhouse with which it is associated. The ridge-line of the Farmhouse is oriented east-west, perpendicular to the road. The c. 1850 house is a 2 ½- story gable-roofed structure with its formal entry in the east gable-end facing the road. The three-bay side-hall plan has the entry in the left (south) bay with six-over-six double-hung windows in the center and right bays and the three bays of the second floor. The attic has a horizontal rectangular window opening with a modern awning sash. The gable-roofed entry porch is of late 19<sup>th</sup>-century style with turned posts and a modestly ornamental stickwork frieze and pediment. The foundation is of local traprock (basalt) random ashlar masonry, which would have been quarried locally from West Rock Ridge. The house is of vernacular character with a hint of Greek Revival in the fenestration and Victorian detailing of the porch. At the west end a series of smaller additions include a side entrance and an attached garage.

The barn is set back slightly further from the road. A stone wall runs east-west along the north property line of the 4.25-acre lot. A driveway from the road runs to the west between the house and barn, connecting to an attached garage at the far west end of the house and a paved parking area in front of the north eave-side of the barn. There is a small gable-roof shed near a vegetable garden on the west side of the garage. The area west of the buildings is open land with vegetable gardens and horse paddocks. A corn crib is located to the west of the garage. There is a small 1-story gable-roofed c. 1920 rental cottage near the south border of the property. There is a wooded hill at the far end of the property to the west and a reservoir, Lake Bethany on the west side of the ridge. To the east the land slopes down to the West River’s headwaters and beyond to the east is West Rock Ridge. The area surrounding the site is rural, residential, and woodland.

• Other notable features of building or site (*Interior and/ or Exterior*):

**Architectural description:**

Inventory of structures (C – contributing, NC – non-contributing):

Farmhouse	c. 1850	C
Barn	19 <sup>th</sup> c.	C
Corn crib	19-20 <sup>th</sup> c.	C
Cottage	1920	C

**Barn:**

This is a 1 ½-story, gable-roofed three-bay English bank barn. The main eave-side faces north and the ridge-line of the barn is oriented east-west, perpendicular to Downs Road. Grade slopes down from west to east, and the lower grade to the east exposes the basement on the east gable-end. Siding is board-and-batten, foundations are of local traprock (basalt) fieldstone and random ashlar masonry, and roofing is asphalt shingles.

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**Exterior:**

The three bays are of unequal width, the east bay being 16' wide while the center and west bays are 12' wide. The main entry is a pair of tall hinged doors in the center bay of the north eave-side. A hinged weather door is in the left (east) leaf. The battens on the siding extend across the long strap hinges of the doors, indicating that the barn was originally plain flush boards. The rest of the north eave-facade is blank. The siding shows signs of patching along the lower edge and at the height of the door head in the east bay. Grade is at the level of the door sills on the north side.

The grade decreases sharply on the east gable-side of the barn so that the basement story is exposed. There is a stone retaining wall at the northeast corner of the barn, extending to the north and then to the east as a transition to a level paddock area at the lower level. There are two exterior sliding doors at the corners of the basement story of the east gable-end. Between them are two pairs of fixed windows: the inner windows are narrow with a horizontal orientation, and the outer windows are larger and nearly square. A shallow hood covering the door track extends from end to end on the east gable-side of the barn. A painted sign with the name "MAD MARES FARM," is mounted on the main level wall. The rest of the east-gable side of the barn is blank.

Grade inclines along the east bay of the south eave-side and a stone retaining wall extends to the south approximately one-third of the distance along the south wall. There is a three-part window unit consisting of a multi-pane picture window flanked by six-over-six double-hung sash in the exposed basement story on the far right (east) end. The main level of the south eave-side has a pair of hinged barn doors corresponding to the north side, with a six-pane sash in the left (west) leaf and a six-pane fixed window located close to grade near the left (west) corner, giving light into the basement level.

The west gable-end has a six-pane window in the attic near the peak. Adjacent to the west wall is the circular foundation of a silo; the silo itself is said to have been sold to a neighbor, Shepherd's Farm (1990 Litchfield Turnpike, Woodbridge) and relocated. A small areaway connecting to the barn allowed silage to be transferred into the stable area. To the west of the silo site another stone retaining wall creates terraces as the grade rises.

**Interior:**

The interior of the basement level is a three-sided traprock foundation wall made with randomly sized and irregularly coursed blocks, some dressed and others appear to be naturally faced. Some of the blocks are large. The three bays have different framing layouts: the center bay has the plank floor of the main level laid over full-width unfinished pole girders running north-south across the width of the foundation. The end bays have joists supported at a higher elevation forming a step up at the main level. The east bay is framed with dimension lumber, suggesting a remodeling subsequent to the earliest construction. An open-riser stair oriented north-south connects the basement and main level. The floor is concrete, with manure gutters from a period of dairy use filled in by the current owners. Along the east wall two horse stalls have been inserted.

The interior of the main level has a square rule post and beam pegged frame with four bents, two interior and one at each end wall. These have a single interior post at the center, a dropped tie girt, and queen posts supporting purlin plates at the center of the span of the common rafters. The rafters are square hewn members butted at the ridge with no ridge-board and with birds-mouth toes at the plate. Deck boards are random width; original wood shingle roofing has been replaced by asphalt shingles over plywood. Some repairs to the frame have been made at the southeast corner, with steel plate connections reinforcing a split post in the area of the dropped girt connection. Frame members appear to be a mix of chestnut and oak. The floor level in the end bays is stepped up approximately six inches above the elevation of the drive bay; the matching barn doors in the eave-sides allowed for a hay wagon to drive through. The hay track and fork are extant suspended below the ridge. As in many barns, the upper cross ties at the top of the queen posts have been cut and removed to make room for the hay loading process. The west gable-end wall siding has been replaced in recent years to match the existing. Electricity was installed in 1995 at the time of the CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) farming operation.

• Historical or Architectural importance:

Applicable Connecticut State Register Criterion:

2. Embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction.

This barn is significant as a well-preserved extant example of an English bank barn with post and beam dropped girt construction, retaining its original rafters. It is unusual among bank barns in having its narrow gable-end wall open to the lower level grade. Another unusual feature is the well-built foundation wall of local traprock.

**Historical background:**

This house was built by Alfred Doolittle probably about 1850. He is listed that year as owning two houses. The cellar hole of one of these may still be seen on the north side of Hoadley Road. Alfred's grandson, Lewis Grant Doolittle (d. August 3, 1942) remodeled and improved the house in 1905, employing W. D. Lounsbury, a carpenter. New Windows and doors were put in and an addition built. It remained in the Doolittle family until 1953 (Bunton).

This was the most northern of a series of farms belonging to Doolittle family members along Downs Road and Litchfield Turnpike in Bethany.

Lewis and his brother Dwight acquired this property from their grandparents in 1881, and three years later Dwight quit-claimed the title to Lewis. In 1948 the estate of Lewis Grant Doolittle transferred title to his children Gordon L. Doolittle and Pansy Frances Quinn. Pansy Quinn sold the property in 1953 to Charles W. and Janice M. Forman. Charles (Chuck) Forman has retired and passed the place to his son David. Dave grew up here and after living in New Haven for a number of years, he returned to Bethany. He farmed for a time, running a CSA operation, and using the barn. At present the lower level has been converted to a stable for two horses.

While this barn has long been thought to be from late in the 18th century or early in the 19th century the construction details and siting suggest that it was built at the same time as the associated house, c. 1850 (Sexton Field notes, 2006). The barn represents the early type of English barn with a through-drive for the threshing bay, and then the conversion to ground level stable use for dairy cows.

**Architectural significance:**

This barn is significant as a well-preserved extant example of an English bank barn with post and beam dropped girt construction, retaining its original rafters. It is unusual among bank barns in having its narrow gable-end wall open to the lower level grade. Another unusual feature is the well-built foundation wall of local traprock. The owners recall the importance of keeping the barn above freezing (as the cows would have done) because their water line ran from the well through the barn basement; this may have played a role in the good condition of the stonework, protected from frost heaving. A rather unique structure is the stone areaway in the west wall of the basement which connected to the silo located one level above. A window in the main level was installed as a sort of clerestory giving light into the banked basement. These custom features adapted the original barn to the needs of 20<sup>th</sup>-century dairy farming in a sloping site that was perhaps not optimal for the purpose.

The barn and farmstead derive additional significance from their association with a local family, the Doolittles, who have lived and farmed in the area for more than 150 years.

• Sources (*continuation*):

Photographs and field notes by James Sexton, 8/2006; Charlotte Hitchcock, 5/22/2012.

Interview with David (Dave) and Charles (Chuck) Forman, and Gilda Outremont; 5/22/2012, at the site.

**Map resources:**

Town of Bethany Assessor's Record [http://www.prophecyone.us/fieldcard.php?property\\_id=1826523](http://www.prophecyone.us/fieldcard.php?property_id=1826523)  
Parcel ID: Map 130/15

Aerial views from:

<http://maps.google.com/> and <http://www.bing.com/maps/> accessed 6/04/2012.

UTM coordinates: <http://itouchmap.com/latlong.html>

**Print and internet resources:**

Barnett, Joni, The Barns of Bethany, Bethany Historical Society, video, 1996.

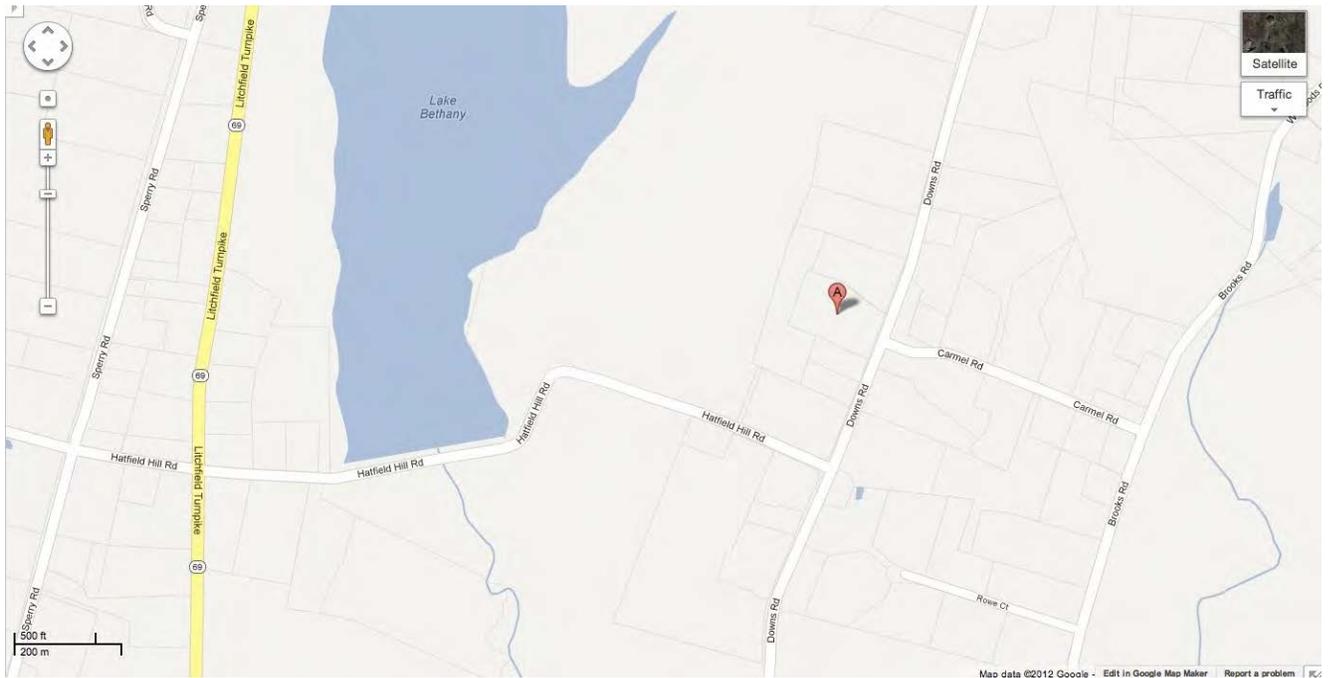
Bunton, Alice Bice, Bethany's Old Houses and Community Buildings, Bethany Library Association of Bethany Connecticut, 1972.

Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, Historic Barns of Connecticut Resource Inventory, 2010,  
<http://www.connecticutbarns.org/121> .

Cunningham, Janice, Connecticut's Agricultural Heritage: an Architectural and Historical Overview, Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation & State Historic Preservation Office, 2012.

Sexton, James, PhD; Survey Narrative of the Connecticut Barn, Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, Hamden, CT, 2005, <http://www.connecticutbarns.org/history>.

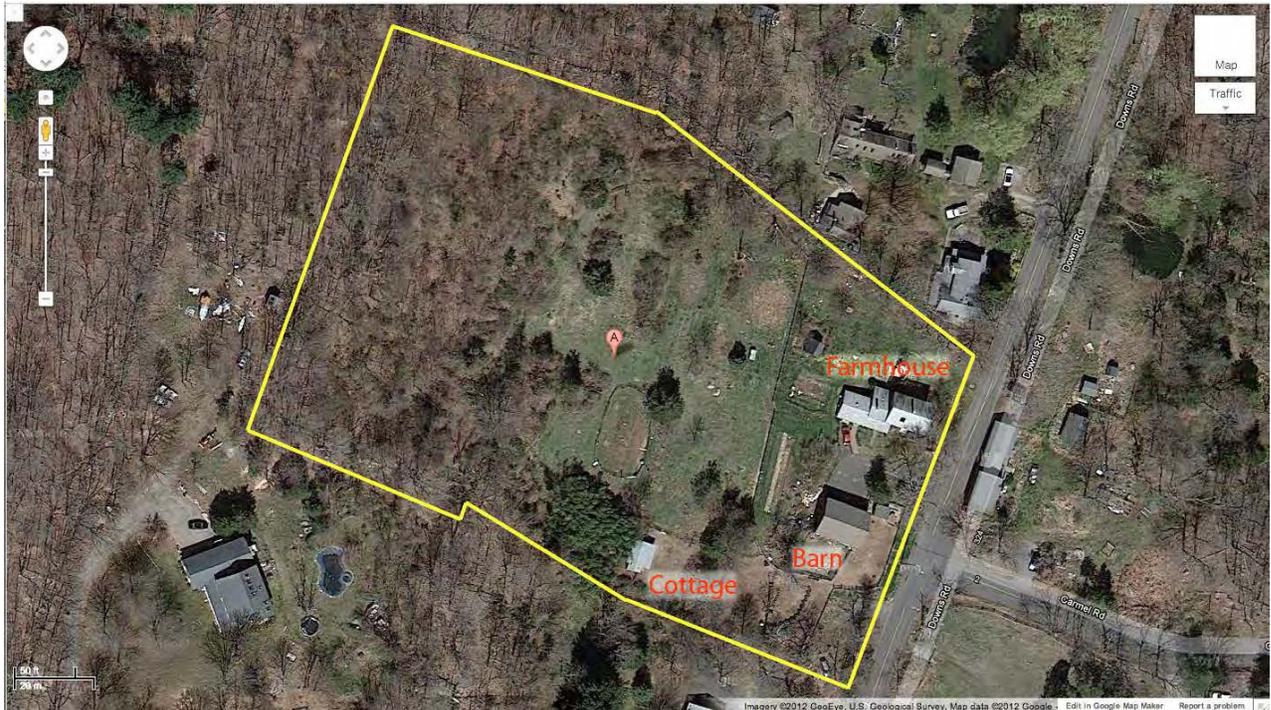
Visser, Thomas D., Field Guide to New England Barns & Farm Buildings, University Press of New England, 1997.



1. Location map of 329 Downs Road, Bethany CT – from <http://maps.google.com/> accessed 6/04/2012.



2. West view – aerial “bird’s-eye” map of 329 Downs Road, Bethany CT – <http://www.bing.com/maps> accessed 6/04/2012.



3. Parcel map of 329 Downs Road, Bethany CT – from <http://maps.google.com/> accessed 6/04/2012.



4. Southeast view of 329 Downs Road, Bethany CT, camera facing northwest. Barn is at left, house at right rear.



5. East view of Farmhouse, camera facing west.



6. Southwest view of Farmhouse, camera facing east, showing rear additions and garage, main block at rear.



7. Detail view of Farmhouse southeast corner, camera facing south. Note traprock foundation masonry, porch with turned posts.



8. South view of corn crib, camera facing north.



9. North view of Barn, camera facing south.



10. Southeast view of Barn, camera facing northwest. At right is Chuck Forman, who bought the property from Pansy Doolittle Quinn in 1953.



11. East view of Barn, camera facing northeast.



12. West view of Barn, camera facing southeast.



13. View of silo foundation at west end of Barn, camera facing north. Dave Forman, left, is the current owner, Chuck Forman, right rear.



14. Detail view of north side doors, camera facing south. Note iron strap hinges and weather door.



15. Interior view of Barn basement southeast corner, camera facing south. Note traprock masonry.



16. Interior view of Barn basement south wall, camera facing south. Note framing: at left is the center bay with full width joists and at right joists are oriented east-west with floor planks elevated and perpendicular to center bay. At right is the clerestory window that can be seen in the south eave-side exterior view..



17. Interior view of Barn main level northeast corner, camera facing northeast, showing typical timber framing.



18. Interior view of Barn main level roof framing, camera facing east. Hand-hewn tie girt and post are in foreground; hay track and horse fork are at peak of the roof.



19. Interior view of Barn main level southeast corner, showing area of timber framing repair.



20. Southeast view of Barn, camera facing northwest.