

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) Potter, Clare / Rossiter, Christopher Columbus, Farmstead Record No. 8125

Building Name (Historic) Rossiter, Christopher Columbus, Farmstead

Street Address or Location 594 County Road

Town/City Guilford Village North Guilford County New Haven

Owner(s) Chandler, Wm. Knox and Caroline T., 594 County Road, Guilford CT 06437 Public Private

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Domestic: secondary structure/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 Occasional open studio and gallery events

Style of building English bank barn, Vernacular style Date of Construction c. 1842

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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <u>Vertical wood siding</u> | | |

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 Barn I: 30' x 40' & 20' x 30' wing; Barn II: 20' x 30'

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: 1998 conversion of lower level to pottery studio

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: Corn crib, pond, stream

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 Barn I 1998 restoration: Jonathan Wuerth

• Historical or Architectural importance:

See continuation sheet.

• Sources:

Cunningham, Janice, *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 6/26/2012

View Multiple Views Negative on File CTHP

Name Charlotte Hitchcock Date 7/01/2012

Organization Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517

• Subsequent field evaluations:

Latitude, Longitude:
41.362114, -72.726748

Threats to the building or site:

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

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

The site includes parcels on the both the north and south sides of County Road, a short distance to the east of its intersection with Long Hill Road in the North Guilford section of Guilford. On the north side is the Farmhouse, a c. 1842 2 ½-story Greek Revival-style house with its ridge-line oriented north-south and its three-bay gable-end facing the road. The entry is in the left (west) bay; it has a surround with engaged pilasters and a lintel and projecting cornice. The windows are six-over-six double-hung. The attic has a full pediment with a horizontal attic window infilled with four louvered panels. A 1 ½-story ell on the west side has an entry in the south eave-side off a three-bay porch with a low-pitch roof and Italianate-style posts and trim. Siding is wood clapboards with corner board trim; the roof has wood shingles. The foundation is of reddish sandstone oversize ashlar masonry. A former wagon shed wing attached at the west has been converted to a studio. The main block is approximately 26' x 34', and the west wing 20' x 50'.

A small pond is north of the house where an open meadow stretches north to the edge of woodlands.

The Farmhouse is located on a site totaling about 3.5 acres spanning both sides of the road, with nearly two acres surrounding the house on the north side, and approximately three-fourths of an acre on the south including Barn II, known as the Red barn. Also on the south side of County Road, is Barn I, the Gray barn, on a .75-acre parcel adjoining to the east. A Corncrib is located behind and to the south of Barn II. A modern shed roofed shelter southeast of Barn I contains a pottery kiln.

The two barns are set close to the street line and to each other. The property stretches south down a slope which is a grassy meadow, to a stream with wooded banks. Beyond the stream is a substantial area of about 25 acres that has been preserved as open space through a combination of town ownership and conservation easements.

County Road runs east to intersect Durham Road (Rte 77), a major connecting route between Guilford and Durham to the north. The area is residential, a mix of historic farmhouses and 20th-century homes, with areas of open fields and second-growth woodlands. Six miles to the south, centered on the Guilford Town Green, is the Guilford Town Center National Register Historic District, a large district encompassing much of the town between the West River and East Creek; within this area are two Local Historic Districts. Nearer to the site, a half mile north along Long Hill Road, is the Meetinghouse Hill National Register Historic District, focusing on two historic churches located on Ledge Hill Road and forming the historic center of the farming community of North Guilford.

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

Architectural description:

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

Farmhouse	c. 1842	C
Barn I – Gray barn	c. 1842	C
Barn II – Red barn	19 th c.	C
Corncrib	19 th c.	C
Kiln shed	after 2000	NC

Barn I:

This is a 1 ½-story three-bay gable-roofed side- or eave-entry English bank barn with its ridge-line oriented north-south perpendicular to the road. The main eave-side of the barn faces east. A 1 ½-story, gable-roofed wing extends westward off the north half of the west eave-side of the main barn. Grade slopes down toward the south, exposing the basement level at the lower grade on the south side.

Exterior:

The main entry is a pair of double-height, hinged doors with iron strap hinges located off-center to the south in the east eave-side of the barn. A stone retaining wall extends to the east off the southeast corner of the barn, creating a

level entry approach at street elevation and a transition to the lower grade at the south gable-end of the barn, where a basement level is exposed. The south gable-end has three sliding patio door openings at the basement level and four twelve-pane window openings at the first-floor level.

The west eave-side has a patio door at the basement level, a twelve-pane window toward the left at the main level and high under the eave. The west wing is attached across the northern part of the west eave-side.

The south eave-side of the wing has, at the basement level, an open bay toward the left (west) and a pair of tall twelve-pane windows flanked by short eight pane sash in the right part of the wall. At the first-floor level of the south eave-side, there are three eight-pane unevenly-spaced windows and another three smaller windows just below the eaves. Inside the open bay is a stair to the main level and a well.

The west eave-side of the barn is very close to Barn II, located to the west. In the north half of the basement level, there is a three-pane window. At the first-floor level of the west gable-end of the addition, there are two six pane, fixed-sash, stable windows unevenly placed, and there are three six- or eight-pane windows in the gable attic. Cut lines in the siding suggest that there may have been an attached addition at one time. The grade at the west gable-end of the addition slopes sharply to meet the higher grade at the north side of the structure.

The north eave-side of the addition has a hinged door located roughly in the center and flanked on each side by a twelve-pane, fixed-sash, wood window. A hay door is located above at the loft level. The north gable-end of the main barn is blank. The main barn structure has dropped girt line siding divides, while the west wing has a siding divide on the north side indicative of a second floor level added subsequent to the ground floor.

The barn has unpainted, vertical flush-board siding and fascias, with white window trim.

The fieldstone foundation wall is visible along the west side as the grade slopes down, and at the interior. The roofs are covered with asphalt shingles with little or no overhangs. There are wood gutters supported by wood brackets along the north and east eaves.

Interior:

The main barn structure is a post and beam frame of three unequal bays, with a mix of hand-hewn and sash-sawn timbers, and pegged square rule mortise and tenon joinery. The northern bay is 18' wide, the threshing bay 12', and the southern bay only 9' wide. Each bent has two interior posts below a dropped tie girt. Above the tie girts, a pair of queen posts is offset a few inches toward the center from the post below, and the queen posts support purlin plates running longitudinally. These support hewn common rafters which are butted at the ridge without a ridge board. Several posts and other members have been replaced or spliced during the restoration work, using traditional joinery. Tension cables have been left in place both lengthwise and crosswise, following the work of winching the structure back from its deteriorated and leaning condition. There are also some metal reinforcing straps at the joints between posts and dropped girts. Much of the exterior siding has been replaced, with old material re-planed and used for flooring. An example of the previous owners' repairs using materials such as concrete to repair timber posts, have been preserved and made into a bench.

The west wing is constructed with a variety of un-matched additive timber frames. At the north side adjacent to the main barn frame, a 1-story one-bay frame of hand hewn timbers is thought likely to pre-date the rest of the barn, as its cross girts are low and its post supports are independent of the adjacent main frame. The upper level and western section appear to be later additions, as the frame components are randomly arranged, not discontinuous with adjacent components, and the roof framing is dimension lumber.

At the basement level, the structure consists of round log posts and joists supporting the upper floor. Part of the interior has been finished and insulated as a pottery studio, while a section at the north side retains the old wood and iron cow stanchions. The foundation retaining walls are exposed at the interior, and consist of large random granite stones. A portion of the east wall was rebuilt during restoration. The basement of the west wing contains an electric kiln room, while the westernmost bay has a well and a stair to the upper level in an area open to the lower level grade.

Barn II:

This is a 1 ½-story three-bay gable-roofed side- or eave-entry bank barn. The main eave-side facade faces north and the ridge-line of the barn is east-west.

Exterior:

The main entry is a pair of hinged doors with iron strap hinges (antique hinges re-used here) located in the center bay of the north eave-side of the barn. Another pair of shorter swinging hinged doors was formerly located in the left (east) bay of the north eave-side of the barn but has been removed during recent re-siding. At the attic level, a hinged hay door is located above the east leaf of the main entry. The grade at the east gable-end of the barn declines sharply, revealing a basement level. The basement level has two window openings. The remainder of the east gable-end of the barn is blank, with a dropped girt line siding divide.

The south eave-side of the barn has an open basement at the left (west) and center bays, an enclosed basement with two tall twelve-pane windows at the right (east) bay, and two six-pane stable windows in the main level. The grade at the west gable-end of the barn inclines to the main level., with fieldstone masonry partially exposed, consisting of large and small random granite stones. The west gable-end has two six-pane stable windows off-center toward the right (south).

The barn has vertical flush-board siding and fascia boards without overhangs, painted red. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. There are wood gutters supported by wood board brackets along the eaves.

Interior:

The framing of Barn II is at the basement level a mix of round logs, hewn timbers, sash-sawn timbers, and modern dimension lumber. The upper level has a sawn square rule post and beam frame with dropped tie girts and pegged mortise and tenon joints. The roof framing is common rafters of dimension lumber with random width roof deck planks. Repairs include tension cabling and modern framing with metal joist hangers.

- Historical or Architectural importance:

Applicable Connecticut State Register Criterion:

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

The site represents a substantially intact example of a mid-19th-century farmstead including a Greek Revival-style farmhouse, two barns, and a corn crib. Barn I, the Gray barn, preserves an outstanding example of square rule timber frame construction, exhibiting the alterations over time as its use evolved, and recently having been carefully restored and re-used. The ownership by one family from the 1840s until 1955 adds significance as a historical portrait of the family farm in North Guilford. Land conservation that has occurred in the valley to the south preserves the rural character of the farmland.

Historical background:

North Guilford was not settled until long after Guilford. It was first divided in 1705, and, as the Guilford historian Bernard Steiner records, “Soon after this, men were accustomed to go up from the First Society on Monday of each week to clear their lands and to return on Saturday. From the circumstance of their dwelling together through the week, the place began to be called Cohabit, a name which it long retained.” Farms were widely scattered and the population thin, as they have remained to this day. Nevertheless, barely ten years later the “North farmers of Guilford” petitioned for a minister, and in 1717 land was allotted to them for a meeting house (Brown, Section 8).

Settlement accelerated when permission was granted for the Second Church Society. There is some thought that the northeast corner of the west wing of Barn I may have been an ox shelter dating from the “Cohabit” period before 1720.

The house at 594 County Road is dated as c. 1842, with the main block of Barn I thought to be contemporary, built during the ownership of Christopher Columbus Rossiter. A record of C. C. Rossiter's father, Abel Rossiter's purchase of window sashes and frames in 1842 is the evidence for the construction date of the house.

Various alterations occurred, including probably the second level of the west wing, and the introduction of dairy stables in the basement level, a typically 20th-century usage. The west wing was also adapted to poultry for a time. Barn II appears to be a somewhat later structure; although its basement and first floor framing incorporate hand-hewn timbers it is difficult to guess whether these were recycled or cut for the purpose. The upper level appears to be a later 19th-century frame of sawn timbers.

The following family history was told to Caroline Chandler by Clarence Potter in 1972:

Christopher Columbus Rossiter married Marietta Potter in 1842. She died in 1847.

He married Elvira Bishop in 1849 and in 1850 daughter Luella Amelia Rossiter was born.

Christopher Columbus Rossiter died in 1855.

Elvira Bishop Rossiter, his widow, married Edgar P. Rossiter in 1856; they lived in the house for a time.

Luella "Minnie" Rossiter married Dwight David Chittenden in 1870.

They had two daughters, Ruth and Mabel. They must have lived in the house as well, since Edgar Rossiter built the house next door at 610 Country Road in 1878, and he and Elvira moved over there.

Mabel Chittenden married Ernest Hemingway Potter and moved out.

They had three sons, Dwight, Clarence (Clare) and Robert.

After Edgar's death in 1905, Elvira returned to live with Luella and Dwight David Chittenden, and Ruth.

Luella died 1907 and Elvira died in 1909 Dwight David died in 1926.

In his later years the house was used only seasonally; daughter Mabel Potter and grandsons Clarence and Robert spent the summers with Dwight David Chittenden.

1926-33: the Potters lived in the house summers; during some winters it was rented to tunnel builders for the water company.

1934: the Potters lived in the house year-round, with Ruth Chittenden joining them until her death in 1947.

Clare Potter married Signe Smith 1938 and they lived at 708 County Road until Ruth's death; then they returned to the house.

Mabel and Robert Potter both died in 1951; Clare, Signe, and children Susan and John stayed until 1955.

The house was vacant in 1955-1956, then occupied by the Eugene Jacobs family 1956-1962 and the Aldrich Edwards family 1962-1971.

In 1971 it was purchased by William Knox and Caroline Chandler, the current owners.

In the mid-20th century, Dan Rossiter of 610 County Road next door, purchased Barn I, the Gray barn, from Clare Potter. Following the death of Dan Rossiter, his widow Eileen sold it back to the owners of 594, Caroline and Knox Chandler (since 1971), with Caroline Chandler as the present owner.

Barn I, the Gray barn, was rehabilitated in 1997 by contractor Jonathan Wuerth. The upper level was carefully restored with historic joinery techniques while the lower basement level was converted to an insulated pottery studio. Dairy cow stanchions remain in the northern section, which is used for storage. Additional windows have been inserted on the south side at both levels, where they are not visible from the road. The upper level serves as a seasonal art gallery.

Barn II, the Red barn, has had a campaign of repairs in recent years, restoring the exterior but utilizing modern framing to stabilize the interior.

Architectural significance:

The group of buildings with Farmhouse, two barns, and corncrib, represents a substantially intact example of a mid-19th-century farmstead. The Farmhouse exterior, with some intact interior spaces such as the entry hall, is among the best examples of the Greek Revival style in Guilford. The pedimented gable façade and entryway exemplify the characteristics of the style. The western porch addition to the house, and the evolution of the barn's lower level for dairy cow stabling, provide examples of the typical evolution of a small family subsistence farm into the dairy production of the Victorian period and early 20th century. Barn I, the Gray barn, preserves an excellent example of square rule timber frame construction, exhibiting the alterations over time as its use evolved, and recently having been carefully restored and re-used.

The ownership by one family from the 1840s until 1955 is significant in terms of the historical portrait of the family farm in North Guilford.

The land conservation that has occurred in the valley to the south preserves the rural character of the farmland. The present owner's restoration of Barn I and creative re-use are also contributing to the preservation of the farmstead as a historic resource.

• Sources (*continuation*):

Field notes and photographs by Caroline Chandler 03/12/2009.

Interview with Caroline Chandler, 6/26/2012, at the site, including information told to her by Clarence (Clare) Potter in 1972, taken from her scrapbook.

Map resources:

Town of Guilford Assessor's Records <http://www.guilfordgis.com/>
Parcel IDs: 105012-015, 10500901.

Aerial views from:

<http://maps.google.com/> and <http://www.bing.com/maps/> accessed 7/05/2012.

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

Print and internet resources:

Brown, Elizabeth Mills, Meetinghouse Hill National Register Historic District Nomination No. 87002132, National Park Service, 1987.

Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, Historic Barns of Connecticut Resource Inventory, 2010, <http://www.connecticutbarns.org/8125>, <http://www.connecticutbarns.org/8118>.

Guilford Preservation Alliance, Survey of the historic architecture of Guilford, Connecticut, 1981-1982, including essays by Susan Darling and Elizabeth Mills Brown, survey by Dorothea Penar, Connecticut Historical Commission, 1982.

Guilford Preservation Alliance, Survey of the barns and outbuildings of Guilford, Connecticut, 2008-2010.

Helander, Joel E., A Treasury of Guilford Places, Joel E. Helander, 2008.

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

U.S. Federal Census, accessed at <http://persi.heritagequestonline.com/hqoweb/library/do/census/search/basic>

Visser, Thomas D., Field Guide to New England Barns and Farm Buildings, University Press of New England, 1997, 213 pages.



1. Location map of 594 County Road, Guilford CT – from <http://www.guilfordgis.com/> accessed 7/09/2012.



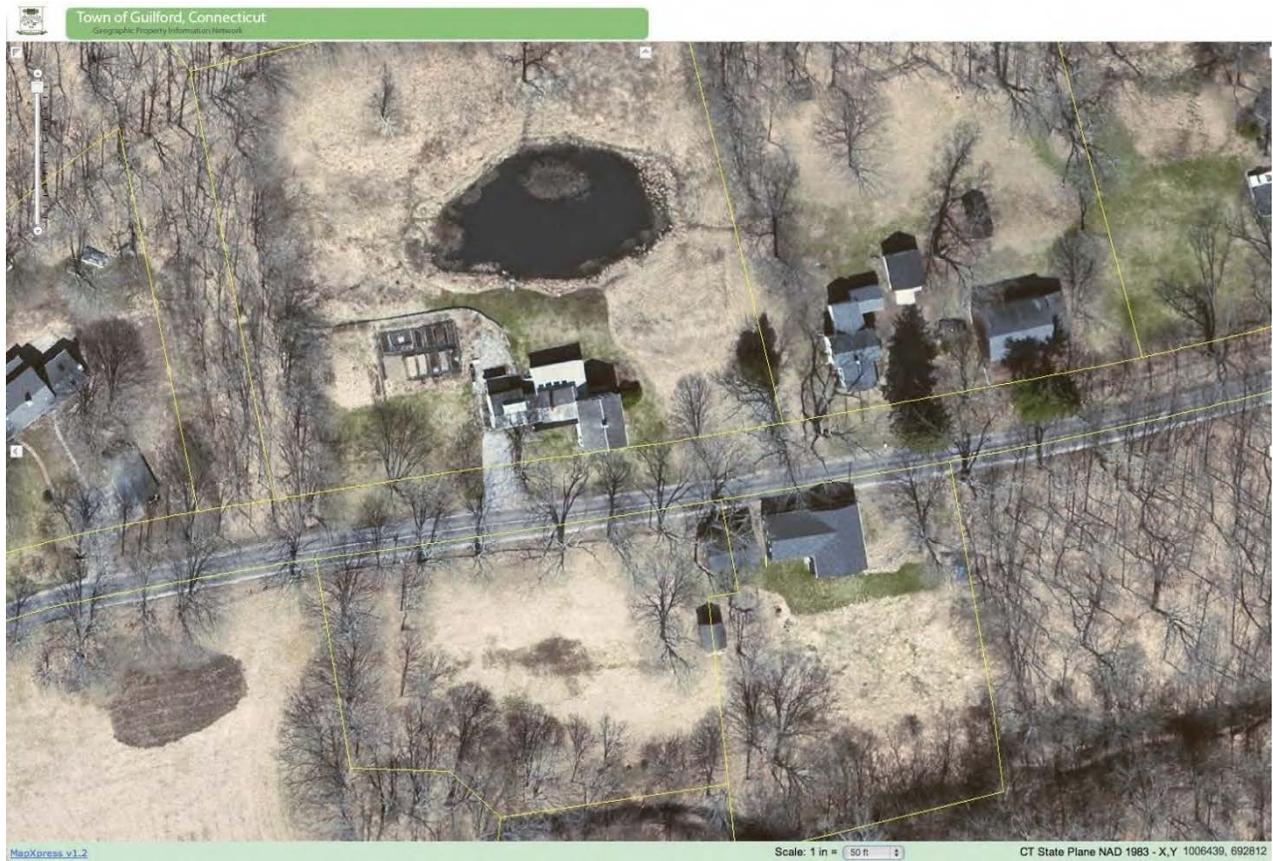
2. Southwest view – aerial “bird’s-eye” map of 594 County Road, Guilford CT – <http://www.bing.com/maps> accessed 7/09/2012.

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3. Parcel map of of 594 County Road, Guilford CT – from <http://www.guilfordgis.com/> accessed 7/09/2012.



4. Detail Site Plan Sketch showing contributing resources, base image from <http://www.guilfordgis.com/>.

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5. Southwest view of Farmhouse, camera facing northeast.



6. Southeast view of Farmhouse, camera facing northwest.

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7. Northwest view of Farmhouse, camera facing southeast. Modern alterations include screened porch and conversion of the carriage shed to a studio with north-facing skylight.



8. Northwest view of barns from the Farmhouse, camera facing southeast. From left to right: Barn I – Gray barn, Barn II – Red barn, Corncrib.

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9. Northwest view of Corncrib, camera facing southeast.



10. Northwest view of barns, camera facing southeast. Barn I – Gray barn at left, Barn II – Red barn at center, and Corncrib at right rear.

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11. Northeast view of Barn I – Gray barn, camera facing southwest. Barn II is at right rear.



12. Southwest view of Barn I, camera facing east. Barn II is at left; the main block of Barn I is the projecting structure at right, with the west wing at left. This view shows additional windows added during renovation. Shed roof for the kiln is at the right rear.

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13. Northwest view of Barn I & II prior to restoration; courtesy of Caroline Chandler.



14. Southwest view of Barn I prior to restoration; courtesy of Caroline Chandler.

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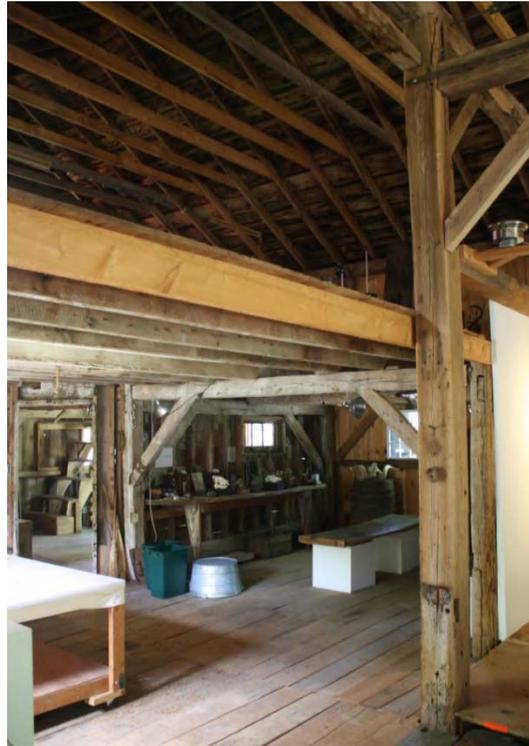
15



15. Interior view of Barn I main level, camera facing northeast; showing typical framing and art gallery. At lower right foreground is a bench made from a post “repaired” with concrete, an artifact of the barn’s history.



16. Interior view of Barn I framing at northeast corner, camera facing east.



17. Interior view looking from the main block of Barn I northwest into the west wing. The light gray frame at rear is the material thought to be oldest.



18. Interior view of basement level of Barn I, pottery studio; camera facing northeast. The east retaining wall is visible at rear.

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19. Interior view of basement level of Barn I, northeast corner; camera facing northeast. The east retaining wall is visible at rear and dairy cow stanchions are at left. The concrete floor has been filled in level; old location of manure gutter is visible at center.



20. Northeast view of Barn II, camera facing southwest. The corner of Barn I is at left. View after renovation.

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21. Northeast view of Barn II, camera facing southwest. View before renovation, courtesy of Caroline Chandler.



22. Southwest view of Barn II, camera facing northeast; Barn I at right rear.



23. Northwest view of the barns in 1888 blizzard, camera facing southeast, courtesy of Caroline Chandler.



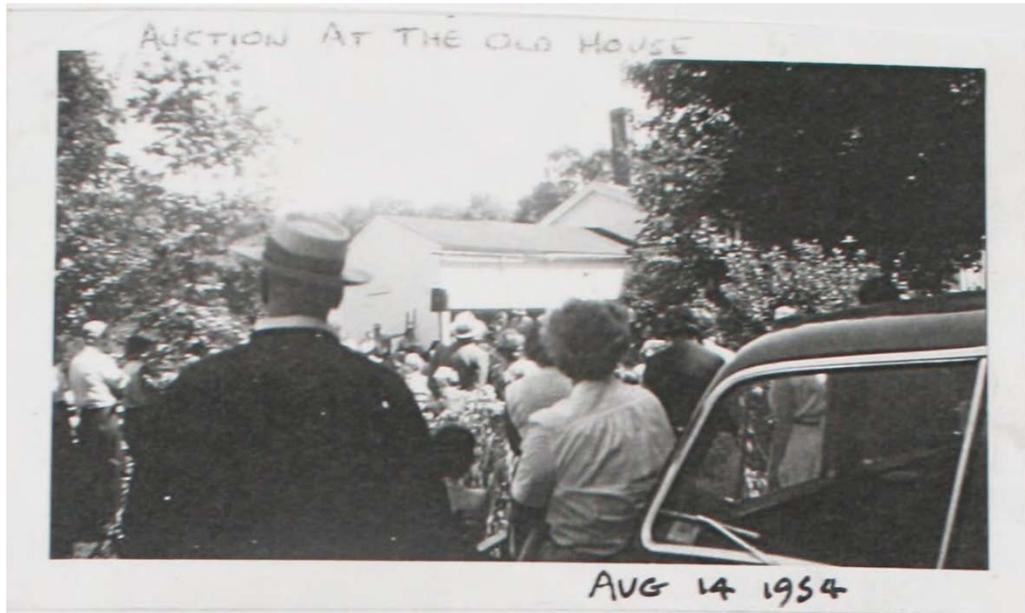
24. Northwest view of County Road with barns, entitled "1937 Ralph Spang and me [Clare Potter]. Ben Coles old Ford" Courtesy of Caroline Chandler.

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25. Southwest view Farmhouse with wagon shed in 1954, courtesy of Caroline Chandler.



26. Northwest view of County Road with barns, Clare Potter with oxen, courtesy of Caroline Chandler.