

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) Holmberg Orchards Record No. 15225
 Building Name (Historic) Avery, Edward, Farmstead / Holmberg, Adolf, Farmstead and Orchards
 Street Address or Location 12 Orchard Lane
 Town/City Ledyard Village Gales Ferry County New London
 Owner(s) Richard and Diane Holmberg, 4 Orchard Lane, Gales Ferry, CT 06339 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 Wine tasting room only during events
 Style of building English barn and Poultry houses, Vernacular style Date of Construction 19th-20th c.

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

- | | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clapboard | <input type="checkbox"/> Asbestos Siding | <input type="checkbox"/> Brick | <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concrete (Type _____) | <input type="checkbox"/> Cut Stone (Type _____) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <u>Vertical wood siding, metal</u> | | |

Structural System

- Wood Frame Post & Beam Balloon Load bearing masonry Structural iron or steel
 Other _____

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: Various Approximate Dimensions See continuation sheet

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: Conversions to tasting room, apple storage, wine storage

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: Orchards, parking, stone walls, cell tower, deer fencing

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 10/10/2012

View Multiple Views Negative on File CTHP

Name Charlotte Hitchcock Date 10/12/2012

Organization Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517

• Subsequent field evaluations:

Latitude, Longitude:
41.469165, -72.056193

Threats to the building or site:

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

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

Orchard Lane (aka Orchard Drive) is located just east of Route 12 (Military Highway) near the east bank of Poquetanuck Cove, an inlet to the Thames River north of the village of Gales Ferry in the Town of Ledyard. The orchard property consists of approximately 150 acres of cultivated orchards, vineyards, and berry patches, surrounded by woodlands. The main cultivated area is set on a hillside elevated above Route 12 and facing west toward the Thames River. The vicinity is moderately densely developed with residential subdivisions of the late 20th century. A 250-acre nature preserve is located immediately east of the orchard property.

Ledyard has a number of historic resources that are recognized through listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Nathan Lester House and Farm and the Sawmill are individually listed as Local Historic Property/District. The village of Gales Ferry, 3 miles south of this site along Route 12, has the Gales Ferry Historic Districts No. 1 and 2. The Mashantucket Pequot Reservation is a Historic District. A thematic nomination of 18th-century houses includes properties throughout the town, most of which are rural farmsteads.

Orchard Lane rises steeply from Route 12 south of the Holmberg Orchards retail store at 1990 Route 12, and curves from east toward the northeast. This road dates from between 1941 and 1952; previously access to the site turned off Route 12 north of the Holmberg Orchards retail store and climbed south up the hill along what is now a sliver parcel belonging to the Holmbergs. The public road ends at a high deer fence with cattle guard gratings. Beyond this is the orchard property. The drive circles counter-clockwise, rising further and passing a group of chicken coops and a hoop house on the right and the historic farmhouse on the left, then arriving at a parking area surrounded by the complex of buildings. The drive continues around the east and north sides of the farmhouse, and slopes down to exit to the public road.

The c. 1762 farmhouse, approximately 28' x 38', is prominently sited on the crest of the hill looking out westward toward the Thames River.

12 Orchard Drive [sic] is a two-story, gable-roofed Federal/Colonial house. There is a small shed-roofed ell at the north rear corner. The main entrance in the center of the five-bay façade is Federal in style. Its six-paneled, possibly original door is flanked by paneled pilasters. The six-light transom is surmounted by a high frieze with an unusual dentil course composed of small pegs. Most of the windows of the main block have replacement two-over-two sash except for the two in each gable peak which have six-over-nine sash. Those in the ell have six-over-six (Cunningham).

The center chimney is extant and in the basement it has an arched cavity at its center, supported by two end piers. A flue opening runs vertically from the top of the arch up through the chimney to where it meets the other fireplace flues. The basement has a walk-out doorway in its east side.

The house plan consists of two parlors flanking a porch with stair and front door facing west, and a kitchen across the rear (east) with the cooking hearth and bake oven. The kitchen mantle is extant. Fireplaces in the two parlors appear to be in existence, though covered by furniture or partitions. A rear stair rises from the northeast corner of the kitchen to the second floor which is believed to have been added c. 1810. In the attic the original rafters are extant, having apparently been re-erected when the roof was raised over the added second floor. On the chimney are the flashing marks of the earlier lower position of the roof. The six-over-nine attic windows also appear to be remnants of the earlier 1 ½-story cape-style house. The building has wide shingle siding but retains corner board trim and Federal-style rake and eave trim.

Other outbuildings are ranged to the north, east, and south of the farmhouse. Barn I, is the oldest of the outbuildings. Barn II is to the north of the farmhouse. Barn III is a former retail store converted to wine storage. Coop I is a chicken coop converted to apple storage and altered by a large addition on the south side. Coops II and III are vacant chicken coops; Coop II is planned for re-use as an equipment storage building while Coop III is in poor structural condition and likely to be demolished.

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM – BUILDING AND STRUCTURES continuation sheet

12 Orchard Lane, Ledyard CT Record No. 15225

4

A stone retaining wall to the east of the farmhouse formed the west wall of a banked glass greenhouse. Currently a plastic-covered hoop house occupies the flat area east of the wall. Another plastic-roofed hoop house sits to the south of Barn III, and a concrete masonry storage building is located east of the Coop I/apple storage building.

The orchards extend to the north and east of the building complex. A 7-acre vineyard plot is located at 1980 Route 12, abutting the south boundary of the 142-acre main orchard parcel. Several house lots along Orchard Lane have single-family homes built in the mid-20th century, some belonging to Holmberg family members.

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

Architectural description:

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

Farmhouse	c. 1763, 1810	C
Barn I	c. 1850	C
Barn II	1939	C
Barn III (former retail store)	20 th c.	C
Coop I /Apple storage	1930s, converted 20 th c.	C
Coop II & III	1930s-1950s	C
Storage	20 th c.	NC
Retail store	20 th c.	C

Barn I:

Barn I is a 1 ½ story 1-bay gable-roofed structure, 18' x 18', with its ridge-line oriented north-south. The east eave-side façade has a centered pair of sliding barn doors, the north gable-end has three six-pane stable-type windows, and the east eave-side has a single sliding door. The doors are reproductions matching the c. 1940 door extant on Barn II. The interior is a square rule post and beam structure with dropped end tie girts and round pole common rafters. New vertical siding has been installed over the original, which is visible at the interior. Siding is unpainted, roofing is asphalt shingles. Several courses of the un-mortared fieldstone foundation are visible. The original small barn, previously a cider mill, has been renovated for use as a wine tasting room. Renovations include new entrance and exit doors, ramp access via a deck on the west and north sides, new sills, climate control and lighting, and an interior serving counter. Renovation work used recycled period timbers for repairs and a tension rod between the rafter plates made from old iron.

Barn II:

This building, 24' x 80', is a gable-roofed combination garage, wagon shed, and apple crate storage loft, built in 1939, oriented with its ridge-line north-south. It has a 2 ½-story portion with four open equipment bays facing east. Steel posts separate the bays. At the south end an enclosed bay has a paneled door with eight glazed panes above four panels, and a second floor loft level has two hay-type doors. A 1-story garage wing attached at the south end has two garage bays with overhead doors and at the left (south) end an enclosed bay with a pass-through door and to its left two multi-pane windows. The west side has a row of four stable-type windows in the ground floor of each of the main portion and the garage addition, which also has an exterior brick chimney at the right (south) enclosed portion. Walls are balloon framing with wood shingles and the roofs have exposed rafter tails and asphalt shingles. Foundations are cast-in-place concrete.

Coop I / Apple storage:

This structure, 70' x 75', consists of a northern portion, a narrow structure oriented east-west, which began as a chicken coop and was later converted to apple storage, and a southern addition which matches the length of the coop and extends southward. The roof is flat, pitched minimally to north and south from a high point at the south wall of the original coop structure. The north side reveals a concrete foundation, two small window openings near the east corner, and remnants of asphalt siding and plywood siding. The newer portion of the building has metal vertical panel siding, and the older coop portion is planned to have matching red metal siding installed.

Coop II:

This is a very low-pitched gable-roofed two-story chicken coop building, 20' x 60', oriented east-west, with an unmortared fieldstone foundation and wood-framed walls with horizontal wood board siding. Along the north wall, the foundation steps down toward the west along the slope of the hill. There is a series of four widely spaced horizontal windows on both levels. The west wall has doorway openings at the center on both levels (for shoveling manure out of the building) and a six-pane window to the left (north) of the doorway. The south face has bands of poultry windows on both levels along the left (west) portion, and an open wall with a roofed porch area extending south along the remainder. Siding is vertical wood on the north and west, horizontal lap siding on the south, and plywood siding on the east. Roofing is built-up or roll roofing.

Coop III:

This is a low-pitched two-story wood-framed shed-roofed chicken coop building, 26' x 110', oriented east-west with four doorway-sized openings spaced along the north facade. The south facade has bands of strip windows alternating with full-height openings (a few have twelve-pane glazing extant). The west gable-end facade has a projecting square shaft under which a wagon could be positioned to collect manure. The walls have horizontal wood lap siding and the roof is roll roofing. A foundation is visible as the grade slopes down toward the west, and consists of a hybrid concrete with fieldstones which were embedded in the formwork. The structure exhibits considerable deformation and is likely to be demolished in the near future.

• Historical or Architectural importance:

Applicable Connecticut State Register Criteria:

1. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, history of immigrant farmers;
2. Embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction.

This site and its buildings are significant for the 250-year history of continuous agricultural use, and for the exceptionally well-preserved house dating to the 1700s. Although most of the other structures date from much later, the farm represents an important example of the migration pattern of European immigrants in the first half of the 20th century transforming Connecticut agriculture from subsistence to commercial scale. In this case the Holmbergs developed a poultry business and later moved entirely to fruit-growing.

Historical background:

Ledyard was a “daughter town,” several stages removed from the settlement of the oldest parent community, New London, and the second stage community of Groton, as European settlers pushed inland from the coast in the early 18th century. Threats of Native American (Indian) attack were no longer a problem and people moved into remote areas to build farms widely separated from neighbors, in contrast to the earlier settlements focused on proximity to a meeting house. Native Americans remained a significant presence, with the Mashantucket Pequot tribal reservation first dating from the 1660s.

As one of the last sections of Connecticut to be settled by Europeans, Ledyard contains some of the least desirable acreage for farming, located in a post-glacial landscape of bedrock and boulder-strewn glacial till. The land was acquired by descendants of the New London proprietors. Small farms, water-powered mills, lumbering, and fishing provided means of support. An exceptional level of family cohesiveness evolved in Ledyard, with family ties taking precedence over community. Several local population centers became small village clusters, including Gales Ferry.

Ledyard citizens played a significant part in the Revolutionary War. Later, in the 19th and 20th centuries, subsistence farming shifted to dairy and poultry farming to serve the urban markets of New London and Norwich. The maritime and naval shipbuilding of the Thames River later influenced the residential development of Ledyard, while the growth of the tribal casinos brought further growth in the late 20th century (Cunningham).

The farmhouse here dates from the 18th century:

This exceptionally well-preserved farmhouse, traditionally associated with the Avery family, is also significant for its later association with descendants of Swedish immigrants. Tradition holds that the first house on this site, possibly incorporated in the present structure, was built in the early 1700s by Edward Avery (1676-1759). He married Joanna Rose, daughter of Thomas Rose, in 1699 and they had 11 children. Edward was the second son of James Avery, Jr., and the grandson of the first James Avery who settled in Groton on land granted to him in 1653. This property may be part of the original grant. This house was built, or raised to its present two-story configuration, in the early 1800s, a tradition confirmed by both exterior and interior style features which are typical of the Federal period. By 1900 the farm was owned by Adolph Holmberg, the grandfather of the present owner. The first of the family to come to America, he worked in the Pennsylvania coal mines before coming to this area and becoming established as a truck farmer. The extensive orchards on this property were first set out about 1935 by his son Harold E. Holmberg, the father of the present owner (Cunningham).

The small barn (Barn I) is the oldest outbuilding. Various timbers were cut on up-down and circular saws, suggesting dates in the mid-19th century. To maintain the historical appearance of the interior, as much of the original siding as possible was left in place and new pine siding was placed on the exterior. This building had multiple past uses from fertilizer barn, to cider mill barn, to storing wood and tools. Its present use is as wine-tasting room.

When Adolph and Harold Holmberg first began farming here in the 1930s, they raised chickens for eggs and planted the orchards. It took a number of years for the trees to grow and the orchard to become profitable; during those years chickens were the main business. After the orchards were successful, chickens were phased out. One chicken coop is incorporated into the apple storage barn, although it has been substantially reconstructed over the years; the management of moisture and condensation is challenging in apple storage. Of the two remaining vacant coops, the long one is likely to be demolished, but the shorter one will be retained as equipment storage.

The wagon shed building west of the farmhouse, was built in 1939 using lumber harvested as salvage from a pine forest, near the former Norwich State Hospital, that blew down in the hurricane of 1938. The upper level was used for apple crate storage, the lower level for equipment.

Just south of the farmhouse, a retaining wall is the remnant of a glass greenhouse which was banked into the hill. The Holmbergs raised flowers for some of the wealthy people of Norwich. The building now used for wine storage was built as a retail store. It proved unsuccessful up on the hill and so the current store is located right on Route 12.

Architectural significance:

This site and its buildings are significant for the 250-year history of continuous agricultural use, for the exceptionally well-preserved house dating to the 1700s. Although most of the other structures date from much later, the farm represents an important example of the migration pattern of European immigrants in the first half of the 20th century transforming Connecticut agriculture from subsistence to commercial scale. In this case the Holmbergs developed a poultry business and later moved entirely to fruit-growing. They have developed and evolved the business and the crops, moving into pick-your-own, winery, and a retail shop as ways to survive and flourish up to the present time. Several historic or older buildings have been re-purposed to serve changing uses, thereby preserving the historic fabric of a small barn and some of the chicken coops.

• Sources (*continuation*):

Field notes and photographs by Anne T. Roberts-Pierson 12/07/2009, Charlotte Hitchcock 10/09/2012.

Interview with Richard and Russell Holmberg, 10/09/2012, at the site.

Map resources:

Town of Ledyard Assessor's Records and GIS Viewer:

http://www.mapsonline.net/ledyardct/web_assessor/search.php#sid=4c2fbec9ed53a905ccd831436510d2a8
Parcel ID: 24-1790-12, 24-2120-1990, 24-1790-1980.

Aerial views from:

<http://maps.google.com/> and <http://www.bing.com/maps/> accessed 10/11/2012.

Historical aerial photography and maps accessed at UConn MAGIC:

http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/mash_up/1934.html
http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/historical_maps_connecticut_towns.html .

Beers, F.W., Atlas of New London County, 1868, Beers, Ellis & Soule, New York & Danbury.

USGS Historical Maps accessed 10/11/2012 at <http://historical.mytopo.com/> .

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

Print and internet resources:

Avery, John, History of the Town of Ledyard, 1650-1900, Noyes & Davis, Norwich CT, 1901.

Connecticut State Library online: [iconn.org](http://www.cslib.org/iconnitemap/staff/SiteIndex.aspx#directories) or <http://www.cslib.org/iconnitemap/staff/SiteIndex.aspx#directories>

Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, Historic Barns of Connecticut Resource Inventory, 2010,
<http://www.connecticutbarns.org/15225> .

Cunningham, Jan, A Historic and Architectural Resource Survey of the Town of Ledyard, Ledyard Historic District Commission, 1992.

Foster, Kit, Ledyard Town Historian, history of Ledyard

<http://www.town.ledyard.ct.us/index.aspx?NID=279>
<http://www.town.ledyard.ct.us/index.aspx?NID=280>
<http://www.town.ledyard.ct.us/index.aspx?NID=281> .

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>

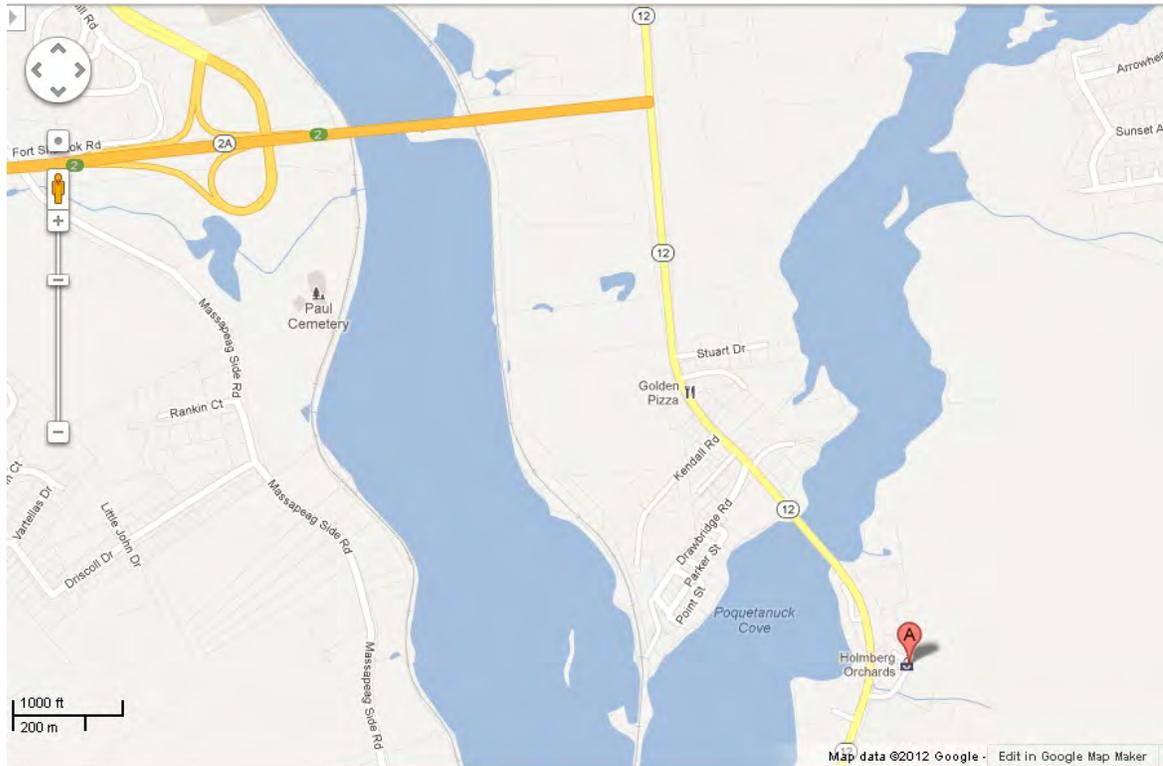
Visser, Thomas D., Field Guide to New England Barns & Farm Buildings, University Press of New England, 1997.

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM – BUILDING AND STRUCTURES continuation sheet

12 Orchard Lane, Ledyard CT

Record No. 15225

8



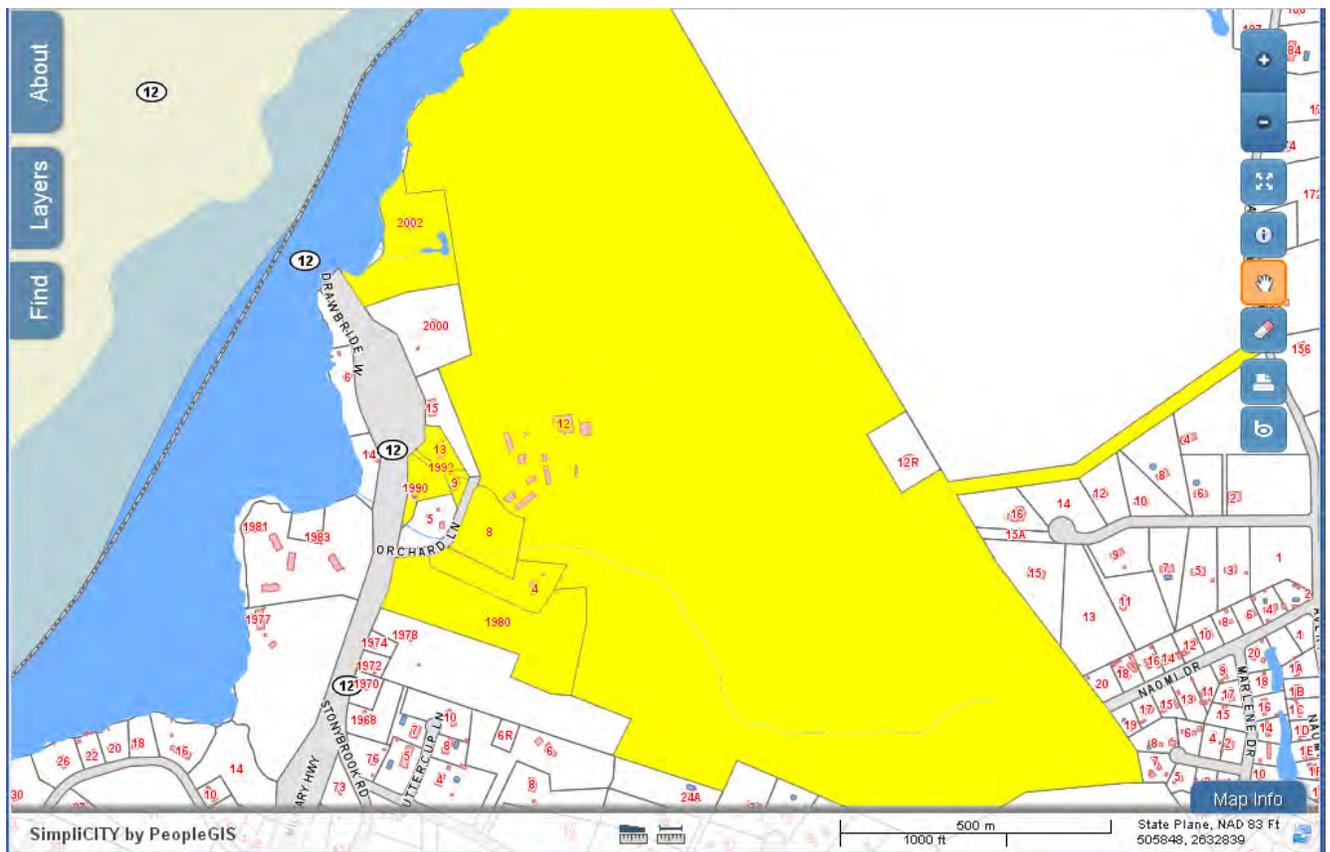
1. Location map of Holmberg Orchards, 12 Orchard Lane, Gales Ferry, Ledyard CT – from <http://maps.google.com/> accessed 10/12/2012.



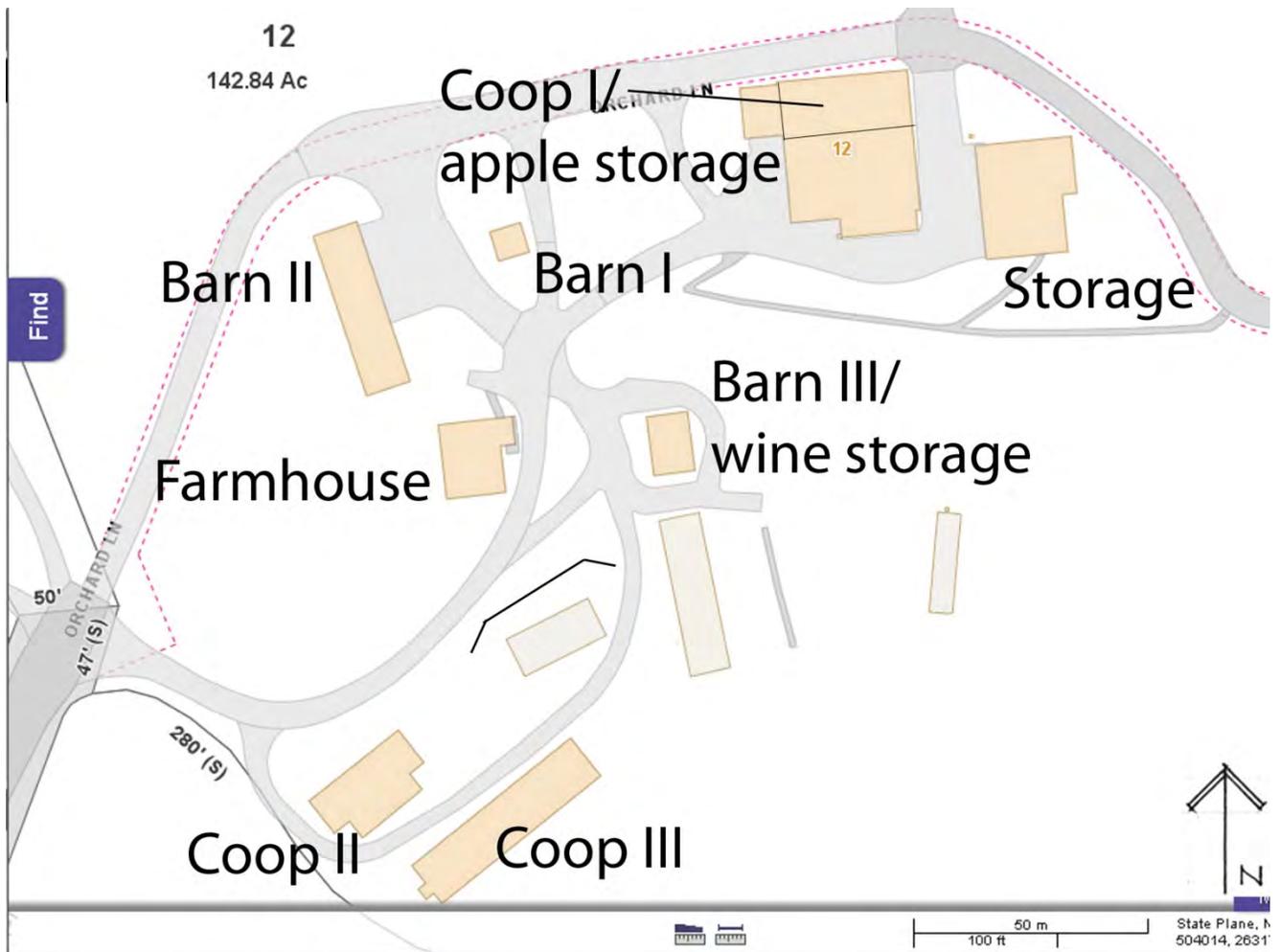
2. South aerial "bird's-eye" view of Holmberg Orchards, 12 Orchard Lane, Gales Ferry, Ledyard CT – <http://www.bing.com/maps> accessed 10/15/2012.



3. South aerial “bird’s-eye” detail view of Holmberg Orchards, 12 Orchard Lane, Gales Ferry, Ledyard CT – <http://www.bing.com/maps> accessed 10/15/2012. At the lower left is the retail store on Route 12. At the upper right is the orchard building complex.



4. Parcel map of Holmberg Orchards, 12 Orchard Lane, Gales Ferry, Ledyard CT – from Ledyard Assessor's Records. Highlighted parcels are under Holmberg family ownership.



5. Detail Site Plan Sketch identifying contributing resources. Unlabeled features are temporary structures including plastic-covered hoop houses and a mobile home.



6. Southwest view of Farmhouse, camera facing northeast; Barn III at right rear.



7. Northeast view of Farmhouse, camera facing southwest; Coop III at left rear. Note extant six-over-nine sash in attic windows, 19th-century two-over-two sash at lower floors.



8. Southeast view of foundation wall of former greenhouse, camera facing northwest; Farmhouse at right rear.



9. Southwest view of foundation wall of former greenhouse, camera facing northeast. Heating pipes ran underground along the north wall.



10. West view of retail store at 1990 Route 12, camera facing east.



11. Northeast view of Barn I, camera facing southwest; rear (east) of Farmhouse at left, Barn II at right rear.



12. Southwest view of Barn I, camera facing northeast; Coop I / Apple storage is at right rear.



13. Interior view of Barn I, camera facing south.



14. Interior detail view of Barn I framing, camera facing southeast.



15. Southwest view of Farmhouse, camera facing northeast; Barn III at right rear.

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM – BUILDING AND STRUCTURES continuation sheet

12 Orchard Lane, Ledyard CT

Record No. 15225

16



16. Southwest view of Barn II, camera facing northeast.



17. Southwest view of Barn III, camera facing northeast. During renovation for wine storage, the configuration of the original retail building was observed, with store windows in the west eave-side.



18. Northeast view of Barn III, camera facing southwest. Farmhouse is at right rear.



19. Northeast view of Coop I / Apple storage barn, camera facing southwest.



20. North view of Coop I / Apple storage barn, camera facing south. Storage building and cell phone tower at left.



21. Northwest view of Coop II, camera facing southeast. Coop III is at right rear.



22. Southwest view of Coop II, camera facing northeast.



23. Northeast view of Coop II, camera facing southwest.



24. Northeast view of Barn II, camera facing northeast.



25. Northwest view of Barn II, camera facing southeast.



26. Southwest view of Coop III, west end; camera facing northeast.



27. Southwest view of Coop III, south side; camera facing northeast.