

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) Community Farm of Simsbury Record No. 53257
 Building Name (Historic) Town Poor Farm / Town Farm Dairy
 Street Address or Location 69 Wolcott Road
 Town/City Simsbury Village _____ County Hartford
 Owner(s) Town of Simsbury, 933 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury CT 06070 (see p. 2) Public Private

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Agriculture/Subsistence: agricultural outbuilding; Domestic: multiple dwelling
 Historic Use: Agriculture/Subsistence: agricultural outbuilding; Domestic: single dwelling; Institutional: poor house
 Accessibility to public: Exterior visible from public road? Yes No
 Interior accessible? Yes No If yes, explain During events or by appointment
 Style of building English hybrid & gambrel bank barns, Vernacular style Date of Construction c. 1870, 1937

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

- | | | | | |
|---|---|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clapboard | <input type="checkbox"/> Asbestos Siding | <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concrete (Type <u>Cast-in-place</u>) | <input type="checkbox"/> Cut Stone (Type _____) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <u>Horizontal lap & vertical wood siding</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: 1 1/2, B Approximate Dimensions Gambrel barn: 40' x 90'; Bank barn: 35' x 80'

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: Conversion of farmhouse to multiple dwelling units, 1993-94.

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: Stream, pastures, fenced paddocks, field crops

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.

Owner address continued - farm leased to:
 Community Farm of Simsbury
 Mark Nolan, Executive Director
 73 Wolcott Road, Simsbury CT 06070

Architect _____ Builder _____

• 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, Rachel Carley Date 2/21/2013

View Multiple Views Negative on File CTHP

Name Charlotte Hitchcock and Rachel Carley Date 7/10/2013

Organization Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517

• Subsequent field evaluations:

Latitude, Longitude:
 41.915451, -72.782294

Threats to the building or site:

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

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

This site, formerly the Town Poor Farm, is located on both sides of Wolcott Road, a local road which runs northeastward from Hopmeadow Street (US Route 202/CT Route 10) to Hartford Avenue (CT Route 189). For purposes of description, Wolcott Road will be taken as east-west. The farmstead is in the flood-plain of the Farmington River, which runs northward just to the east of the site, and then turns sharply east as it cuts through the basalt Metacomet Ridge at the Tariffville Gorge and continues east to meet the Connecticut River. The farmstead includes a 9.13-acre parcel on the north side of the road, where the farmstead buildings are located, and another 91-acre parcel of agricultural land to the south, extending to the bank of the Farmington River. Munnisunk Brook runs southward along the west border of the northern parcel and through the center of the southern acreage, toward the Farmington River.

The center of Simsbury is 2.5 miles to the southwest of the site along Hopmeadow Street. Nearby are four National Register Historic Districts. Just east of the site on the east side of the river, the Tariffville Historic District is a mill village along the gorge of the Farmington River where water powered manufacturing developed in the 1820s. Terry's Plain Historic District and the East Weatogue Historic District (the latter also a Local Historic District) occupy the narrow band of land between the east bank of the Farmington River and the steep slope of the Metacomet Ridge. The Simsbury Center Historic District includes much of the town center. The surrounding landscape is a mix of historical agricultural land, where tobacco farming has been a focus of activity, and residential development from the mid- to late-20th century.

The Farmhouse associated with this site is located at the southeast part of the northern parcel, with its south eave-side side facing Wolcott Road. The oldest portion of this large building is a rectangular, center-hall Federal-period house (18' x 35'), which fronts Wolcott Road. The symmetrical five-bay façade features an imposing entry notable for its transom and sidelights, designed with an intricate leading pattern of connected circles. The entire entry is set in a shallow recess framed by pilasters and entablature. A triple window framed by pilasters appears above. The gable ends are each enclosed by a returning triangular cornice and punctuated by attic windows shaped as elliptical fans set in flush-board siding. A corbelled brick chimney rises near the west gable end. The building has been extended rearward with a large, midsection that incorporates a recessed porch (facing west) and a rear gabled section to the north, roughly mirrors the original front building. The midsection has a flat-roofed center at the elevation of the adjacent roof ridges, and pitched sections sloping down to the west and east. The siding is clapboards with corner board trim, painted white. Roofing is asphalt shingles. The building was converted to multi-family use in 1993-94.

To the rear (north), a narrow wood-framed outbuilding structure, 20' x 45', has its ridge-line east-west. It includes a 1 ½-story block at the west end, a 1-story Woodshed or Wagon shed with an open bay in the south eave-side, and contains a privy. Siding is a mix of narrow and wide horizontal clapboard. This connects to the house via a narrow connector and there is a small 15' x 20' 1-story ell (off the northeast corner), thus creating a small U-shaped barnyard immediately to the north of the main Farmhouse building.

North of the Farmhouse is a gable-roofed 18' x 36' 2 ½-story building, the Bunkhouse, built on a stone and brick foundation with its ridge-line oriented east-west parallel to the road. The entrance is located in a small enclosed shed-roofed porch on the south eave-side. The two-bay gable-ends of the building are set under overhanging eaves with full pedimented cornice returns, and finished with a horizontal board infill. The very slight overhang between the first and second story is an unusual feature. Narrow brick chimneys are at the two gable ends – exposed at the east end but interior at the west. Windows are six-over-six double-hung, some replacement sash. Siding is clapboard with narrow cornerboards; the attic pediment has flush-board siding. Roofing is asphalt shingles, and the foundation is mortared fieldstone, visible along the north side.

The next structure to the north of the Bunkhouse is a 1-story gable-roofed Garage building 35' x 40' built in 1937, used later as a retail dairy shop during the late 20th century. It has a brick foundation, hinged multi-pane glazed doors, and a shed-roofed utility wing added to the rear. Siding is horizontal Dutch lap siding painted red with white trim; roofing is asphalt shingles.

North and west of the Garage/dairy shop is the main barn (see below).

West of the gambrel-roofed block of the barn is a 15' x 25' 1-story Manure shed with its ridge-line oriented east-west. The shed is on a brick foundation partially banked into the hill, which slopes down toward the west. A wide opening in the east end of the basement permits access to the accumulated manure. The upper level has been converted to a chicken coop with a fenced run on the south side. The wood-framed upper part is covered in horizontal Dutch lap wood siding matching the gambrel portion of the main Barn, also painted red.

South of the Manure shed is a former Bull barn. This 1-story gable-roofed frame structure on a mortared fieldstone foundation has its ridge-line oriented east-west. A pass-through door at the left corner of the south eave-side provides access from a paddock. To its right are three six-pane windows. In the east gable end there is a pair of hinged doors, off-center toward the right (north). Grade slopes down toward the west, exposing the foundation. Siding is vertical tongue-and-groove boards, painted red.

Along the east property line there is a 20th-century multi-bay town garage, with overhead doors recently installed in the openings of the six bays.

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

Architectural description:

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

Farmhouse	c. 1830 & later	C	Bull barn/chicken coop	1937	C
Bunkhouse	1908	C	Manure shed	1937	C
Garage/dairy shop	1937	C	Town Garage	20 th c.	NC
Barn	c. 1870, 1937	C			

Barn – gambrel dairy barn wing:

This dairy barn complex comprises three connected buildings. The largest section is a 1937 gambrel-roofed barn of the ground level stable type, 40' x 90', built on a poured concrete foundation with brick and frame walls, with its ridge-line oriented east-west, and clad in horizontal wood Dutch lap siding. Two concrete silo foundations are located at the northeast corner, and two metal ventilators topped by weather vanes are mounted on the roof ridge.

Exterior:

The horizontally massed south eave-side, level with grade, has brick walls extending up to the window sills, and displays a long, even row of 9-pane hopper stable-type windows. Adjacent to the south wall is a gable-roofed 1-story milk room (now converted to restrooms) with its ridge-line east-west parallel to the main gambrel roof. The milk room is connected by a passageway to the main barn. Due to the sloping site, the barn gains a higher foundation at its west gable-end, where hinged barn doors provide access; a sliding hay door to the loft is located above, and a panel of four 6-pane windows with a single window above, are in the gable peak. The east gable-end of this block is attached to the connected wing to the east.

Interior:

The main floor interior consists of an open dairy stable with a central, concrete-floored aisle (metal cow stanchions have been removed). Two longitudinal wood girders support the upper loft level floor, and these are carried on two rows of steel columns. The lower exterior walls are of exposed brick with the upper wall surfaces finished in flush wood paneling between the hopper windows. The ceiling is flush wood planking; all wood surfaces are painted. A pair of hinged doors at the west end leads to the exterior where a concrete ramp transitions to the pasture. An opening in the east end connects to the adjacent block to the east.

The upper loft level is a typical clear-span open space framed with canted scissor trusses meeting at the peak, these formed from sawn dimension lumber. Notable is the use of trusses at every rafter where some barns were framed with trusses at intervals and common rafters between. Enclosed shafts connect from the lower level to the metal

ventilators, and framing to protect trap doors for pitching hay down to the lower level, can be seen on both sides. A continuous track for a hay fork is suspended from the ridge, extending through to the older wing to the east.

Barn – bank barn wing:

At its east gable end, the gambrel block adjoins an earlier L-shaped bank barn, built in two blocks, possibly from recycled parts, and entered at grade on the south (lower level) and north (upper level). This appears to be a hybrid of two structures built a different times – an English and a New England block. Clad in vertical barn board, this building is a pegged square rule post and beam structure, fabricated with a combination of hewn and milled timbers including rafters of sawn dimension lumber.

The northern block of this building, a 35' x 40' structure, stands on a very deep fieldstone foundation that is banked into the slope. Its ridge-line is oriented east-west, aligning with that of the gambrel block abutting on the west. The interior structure consists of pairs of full-height posts which form three aisles and which support purlin plates carrying the sawn rafters. At the east side, part of the south pitch of the roof is truncated by the extension of the east pitch of the intersecting wing of the southern block. This northern block has a pair of hinged doors centered in the gable-end – its framing and door layout mark it as a New England barn, possibly of the late-19th century. There is a triangular attic window or vent opening high in the gable.

The southern block is a four-bay gable-roofed section – an extended English barn, 30' x 40', that is perhaps the oldest part of this complex. It stands perpendicular to the northern block, with its ridge-line oriented north-south. An open bay entry is located on the west side at the basement level. To the south of this opening there is an enclosed portion with a sliding door and a hay door above. The sliding door provides access to a basement area with three stable windows in the west side (one in the door) and four more in the south gable-end where the wall is partially exposed as grade rises from west to east. The rising grade along the south side transitions to the upper grade-level of the east side. A large triangular hay hood projects over the south gable-end and a pair of diagonally-sliding hay doors is set into the upper part of the attic gable. On the east eave-side, access to the main level is by two pairs of hinged doors with iron strap hinges, located in the second and fourth bays (from south to north). This east eave-side is flush with the gable-end of the northern block.

• Historical or Architectural importance:

Applicable Connecticut State Register Criteria:

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

The period of greatest agricultural significance is that of the Town Poor Farm, donated by Amos Eno. The construction of the major farmstead structures occurred during this time, including the 19th-century post and beam framed barns, the 1937 gambrel dairy barn, the bunkhouse, and other outbuildings. The working farm complex and surrounding agricultural land preserve the cultural landscape of the historical farmstead.

Historical background:

This property has many layers of significance, beginning in 1675, when a tract at this location was laid out to Simon Wolcott. Simon was the father of Roger Wolcott, colonial governor of Connecticut. In the 1680s the Wolcott farm was absorbed into the John Higley homestead on the south to create a larger property that straddled the road. The Higley homestead was later torn down in 1827.

The front section of the present house at 69 Wolcott Road was probably erected around that time, perhaps as a replacement by owner Alexander Holcombe for the old Higley homestead across the street. By 1855, the property owner is identified as C. H. Roberts on the Woodford map, he was one of many owners in the 19th century. The state of Connecticut assumed the property under a complicated mortgage foreclosure in 1879.

Amos R. Eno, successful New York businessman and philanthropist, and Simsbury native son (whose summer home at 731 Hopmeadow Street is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is also in the Simsbury Center Historic District), purchased the farm from the state in 1882 for \$3,000 and donated it to Simsbury for use as

the Town Poor Farm. Here the poor and indigent under the town's care received shelter in return for working the farm, which produced dairy products, eggs, vegetables, tobacco and other products. Around that date the house was enlarged to the north to accommodate more tenants. There is some speculation that the rear portion, which had a center-hall plan like the front, was a pre-existing house, also c. 1830 (possibly moved). The two parts were joined with the central section, originally a large kitchen space fronted by a recessed porch. The entire upstairs was configured with a long passageway accessed from the center-hall staircases in the front and back sections; bedrooms opened off either side. The last tenant left in 1980 and the building was converted into two five-bedroom affordable-housing units in 1993-1994. The woodshed and privy structure appears to pre-date the c. 1883 conversion, and the small wing to the northeast contains a very old hearth.

The Bunkhouse is significant as part of the Town Poor Farm and is named the Amos Eno Home in honor of Eno's donation of the property. The structure, pieced together from scrap lumber, was erected as a bunkhouse for single men, and also reportedly served as the town "drunk tank." An exterior staircase originally led to the second story.

The 1937 gambrel-roofed dairy barn was a Depression-period Works Progress Administration (WPA) -funded building project. At the time, the use of federal money and an outside work force was initially opposed by the town Board of Finance. The project eventually gained approval with the barn erected by local men who had been on the town relief rolls. The plans were from Star Line, an Illinois manufacturer, and local builder Harold Case served as contractor. The Manure shed and Bull barn may also date from 1937.

After maintaining a mixed herd of Jerseys and Guernseys for decades, the town eventually phased out the dairy business. In the 1950s the barn was leased for a time to a French dairyman. In the 1960s Baker Nurseries took out a long-term lease on the property, using about forty acres on the south side of the road to propagate nursery stock; Baker workers, including a Puerto Rican family, occupied this house.

The most recent lessees were Bill and Agnes Walsh, beginning in 1989. Bill took on dairying full time in 1990. Starting small, his Town Farm Dairy delivered milk to stores and restaurants in the Avon-Simsbury area, then established a home-delivery route. At its peak the Town Farm Dairy herd consisted of 40 registered Jerseys. In 1994 the Walshes opened a creamery retail store in the old Garage building, selling fresh yogurt, cheese and other cultured dairy products. Agnes, who studied cheese making in Ontario, made two kinds for sale: Colby and Almshouse. The family also raised chickens and pigs. They closed the retail shop in 2003.

The Friends of Town Farm Dairy, a non-profit organization, formed in 2005, and when the dairy closed in 2008, the Town, the Ethel Walker School of Simsbury and Hartford's Billings Forge Community Works came together to create a collaborative effort to run the farm, consistent with the original mission of serving the disadvantaged. The managing body, the Community Farm of Simsbury, Inc., leases 75 acres. The group sponsors educational programs and oversees teaching gardens, donating produce to local food-distribution services. A summer farmstand also sells produce. The Garage/Dairy store now serves as a meeting room for the Community Farm.

Architectural significance:

The barn complex is highly significant for its history as the dairy barns that served the Town Poor Farm, established on this site in 1883. The post-and-beam English bank barn block may pre-date the town ownership, and the northern block, the New England bank barn, could date from after 1883. The Dairy barn is an outstanding intact example of the gambrel ground level stable barn.

The property has significance for its early history, including ownership by Simon Wolcott, father of the colonial governor Roger Wolcott, and Alexander Holcombe who built the Federal-style Farmhouse. The period of greatest agricultural significance is that of the 100 years as the Town Poor Farm following the donation by Amos Eno. The construction of the major farmstead structures occurred during this time. The farm complex and surrounding agricultural land preserve the cultural landscape of the historical farmstead and remain in continuous agricultural use.

• Sources (*continuation*):

Photographs and field notes by Charlotte Hitchcock 2/21/2013.

Research by Rachel Carley for Historic Resource Inventory, January/2013; interview with Bill Walsh, formerly Town Farm Dairy, January 2013.

Map resources:

Town of Simsbury

Assessor's Records <http://www.equalitycama.com/tvweb/mainsearch.aspx?city=Simsbury>

GIS Viewer <http://www.crcog.org/GPV/Viewer.aspx> Parcel ID: I02-439-002, I03-439-008.

Aerial views from:

<http://maps.google.com/> and <http://www.bing.com/maps/> accessed 7/08/2013.

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 .

USGS Historical Maps at <http://historical.mytopo.com/> accessed 7/08/2013.

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

Print and internet resources:

Brockmeyer, Christine, Amos Eno House National Register Nomination No.75001935, National Park Service, 1975.

Carley, Rachel, Simsbury, Connecticut: Historical and Architectural Resources Inventory, West Simsbury and Wolcott Road Areas, 2013.

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

Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, Historic Barns of Connecticut Resource Inventory, 2010, <http://www.connecticutbarns.org/53257> .

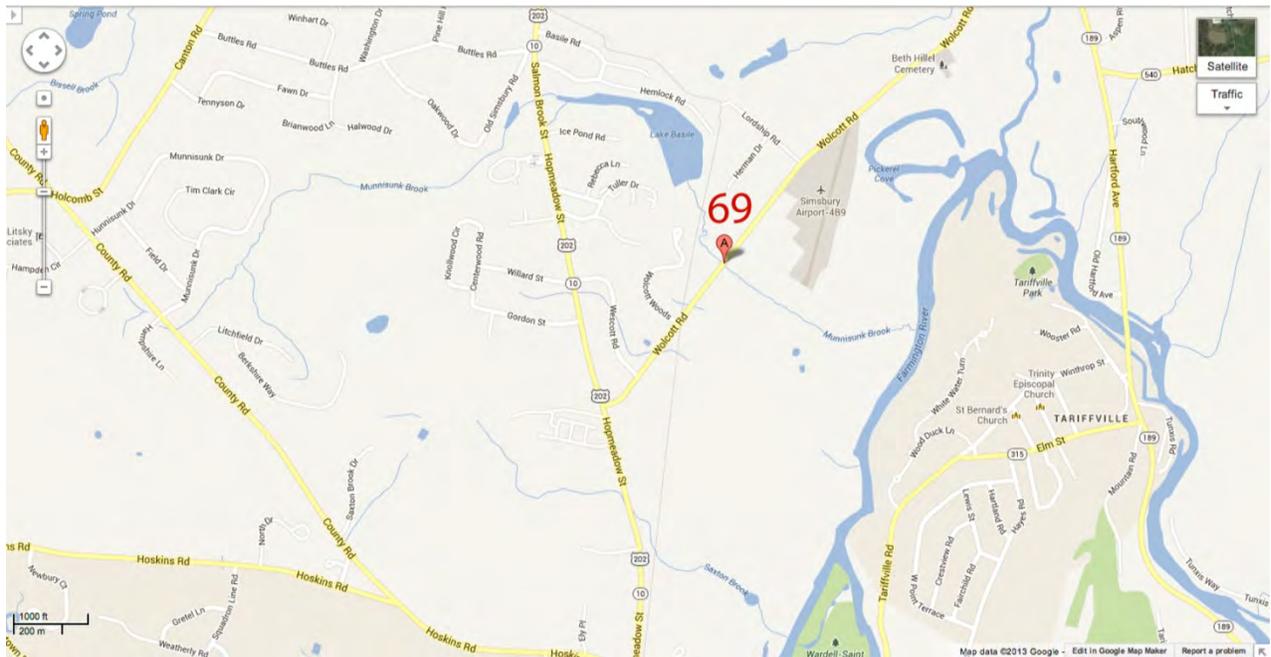
Cunningham, Jan, Connecticut's Agricultural Heritage: an Architectural and Historical Overview, Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation & State Historic Preservation Office, 2012.

Ransom, David F., Simsbury Center National Register Historic District Nomination No. 96000356, National Park Service, 1996.

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.



1. Location map of 69 Wolcott Road, Simsbury CT – from <http://maps.google.com/> accessed 7/08/2013.



2. South view – aerial “bird’s-eye” map of 69 Wolcott Road, Simsbury CT – <http://www.bing.com/maps> accessed 7/08/2013.



3. Detail Site Plan Sketch showing contributing resources, base image from Google Maps.



4. West context view of the Town Poor Farm site, camera facing northeast. From left to right: Manure shed, Bull barn, Gambrel dairy barn with Milk room in front, 19th-c. barn block, Garage/dairy shop, Bunkhouse, Woodshed, Farmhouse.



5. North context view, camera facing south. From left to right: Farmhouse with Woodshed, Bunkhouse, rear additions to Garage/dairy shop, 19th-century barn blocks (English and New England), Gambrel barn block, Manure shed.



6. Southwest view of the Farmhouse, camera facing northeast. At right is the c.1830 block, at left the later matching block, with the connecting wing constructed for the Poor Farm. At left is the Woodshed block connected to the Farmhouse.



7. West view of the Woodshed/privy connected to the north side of the Farmhouse, camera facing east.



8. Northeast view of left to right: Farmhouse with 1-story ell and Woodshed/privy additions; Bunkhouse; rear of Garage/dairy shop, camera facing southwest.



9. Southwest view of the Bunkhouse with Garage/dairy shop to the left, camera facing northeast.



10. Northwest view of Garage/dairy shop with Bunkhouse at right rear, Farmhouse at far right rear; camera facing southeast.



11. Southeast view of Bull barn, camera facing northwest toward Munnisink Brook.



12. Northeast view of Bull barn, camera facing southwest.



13. Southeast view of Manure shed converted for poultry, camera facing northwest.



14. West view of Manure shed with Gambrel barn at rear, camera facing east. Rachel Carley photograph.



15. South view of Barn, camera facing north, showing the 1937 gambrel dairy barn with the Milk room at center front. At right are the attached older barn wings, Garage/dairy shop, and the corner of the Bunkhouse.



16. South view of the gambrel wing of the Barn and the Milk house, camera facing northwest.



17. Southwest detail view of the post and beam southeast wing of the Barn, camera facing northeast. Note the banked basement and the upper loft level with the diagonally-sliding hay doors and projecting hay hood. The west side of the modern Town garage is visible at the right rear.



18. East view of the Barn, camera facing west, showing at left the English bank barn portion and at right the New England bank portion of the barn.



19. North view of the Barn showing the north eave-side of the gambrel block, camera facing southwest. Note the brick partial wall and concrete block masonry foundation below the brick. Manure shed is at right. Note the repair to the roofing at left, indicating where a silo has been removed.



20. Interior view of the gambrel wing of the Barn as seen from the east doorway of the New England block, camera facing west. Note the balloon-framed scissor truss roof framing.



21. Interior view of Barn, northeast part of the New England barn block, upper level, camera facing northeast. Note the post and beam frame with full height posts supporting a purlin plate; sawn rafters which may indicate a newer roof installed over an older frame. Rachel Carley photograph.



22. Interior view of the basement level of the New England bank barn block, camera facing northeast.



23. Interior view of the ground (lower) level of the gambrel block of the Barn, camera facing west.



24. South detail view of the Barn, camera facing north. Note the Milk house at left (now restrooms), the large stable windows and metal ventilator in the gambrel portion, and the intersecting volume of the older gable-roofed barn with the newer gambrel portion. The brick lower walls are uncommon, with concrete or block masonry more frequently seen.