

**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) Massaro Community Farm / Massaro Farm CSA, Inc. Record No. 6039

Building Name (Historic) Massaro, John, Farmstead

Street Address or Location 41 Ford Road

Town/City Woodbridge Village \_\_\_\_\_ County New Haven

Owner(s) Town of Woodbridge, 11 Meetinghouse Lane, Woodbridge CT 06525  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 By appointment and during farm events

Style of building Ground level stable (Wisconsin) barn, vernacular style Date of Construction c. 1940

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 type="checkbox"/> Fieldstone                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Board & Batten         | <input type="checkbox"/> Stucco                                       | <input checked="" 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</u> |   |  |

**Structural System**

- Wood Frame  Post & Beam  Balloon  Load bearing masonry  Structural iron or steel
- Other Cast-in-place concrete

**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 Approximate Dimensions Barn I: 32' x 60' Barn II: 22' x 25'

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: Removal of shed additions & silo (2009), Barn I restoration 2010.

**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: Agricultural fields & fencing, plastic greenhouses and hoop houses.

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

See continuation sheet.

Photographer Woodbridge Conservation Commission, Charlotte Hitchcock Date 2007-09, 2/28/2012

View Multiple Views Negative on File CTHP

Name Charlotte Hitchcock Date 3/27/2012

Organization Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517

• Subsequent field evaluations:

Latitude, Longitude:  
41.33813, -73.041841

**Threats to the building or site:**

None known  Highways  Vandalism  Developers  Renewal  Private

Deterioration  Zoning  Other \_\_\_\_\_  Explanation \_\_\_\_\_

• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

The Massaro Farm is a property of 57.85 acres, located on a height of land at the western edge of the town of Woodbridge. Ford Road, running north-south along the crest of a broad hilltop, forms the boundary with the neighboring municipality of Ansonia. This location is a short distance north of the intersection with Ansonia Road (CT Route 243). The property extends east of the road, with a series of open fields in agricultural use ranging north to south along the roadside. Wooded acreage slopes down toward the east to a network of small streams draining generally southeast.

The farm buildings form a cluster close to the road. The main barn (Barn I – Gambrel) is at the north of the complex, and is oriented east-west with its gable-end facing the road. Barn II – Stone barn, is to the south and slightly east. Sheds formerly attached to its west and east sides formed a long linear chicken coop structure extending eastward, but the wood-framed sheds have been removed. A wood stave silo formerly stood west of the barn. The farmhouse is to the south, a gable-roofed structure with its ridge-line oriented north-south. To the northeast of the house is a small one-story gable-roofed shed (Shed III) with a concrete foundation and wood-framed walls. The ridge-line is oriented east-west. Additional new metal-framed hoop houses with plastic glazing are located east of Barn I and II, some utilizing the concrete slab floor of the demolished structures. Extensive deer fencing has been installed to enclose several large garden plots for the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm.

The main block of the farmhouse is a 2 ½-story structure, 31' x 26' with its four-bay eave-side facing west toward the road. The front entry is off-center in the second bay from the left (north), through a 1-story 5-bay hip-roofed porch. The porch has low walls of cobblestone masonry with a concrete cap. Five neo-classical columns sit on the wall and support the roof. The porch is entered through an opening at its south end. Windows on all sides are six-over-six double-hung sash. A 1-story shed addition is attached at the northeast corner. A 1 ½-story wing 25' x 27' extends south of the main block. Its west eave-side elevation has a door near the left (north) with two double-hung windows to the right. Windows are also six-over-six double-hung.

The foundation has a concrete exterior; the first story of the main block has a stucco exterior while the upper floor has wood clapboard siding and the attic has wood shingle siding. The south wing has clapboard siding at the main level and wood shingle siding in the attic gable. The siding has been recently restored, with removal of a top layer of added siding. Roofing is asphalt shingles; there are small cornice returns at the gable-ends of the north elevation, but not at the south.

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

**Architectural description:**

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

House	c. 1930	C
Barn I (Gambrel)	c. 1940	C
Barn II (Stone)	1931	C
Shed III	20 <sup>th</sup> c.	C

**Barn I – Gambrel barn:**

This is a 1 ½-story Dutch gambrel-roofed ground level stable barn, 32' x 60.' The ridge-line is oriented east-west. The structure is partially banked into a grade which slopes down toward the east, such that the cow stable floor is entered at grade mid-way along the north and south eave-sides. The foundation and lower walls of the stable level are constructed of cast-in-place concrete. There is a crawl space below the concrete floor, accessible from the southeast corner where the grade is lowest. Prior to conversion to CSA farming, there was a wood-stave silo and a 1-story shed, probably the milk room, attached at the west end of the barn; these have been demolished. The original siding appears to have been vertical boards, later covered by green hexagonal asphalt shingles. Following

renovation, the new siding is again vertical wood, painted red with white trim. The roof has overhangs at the rakes and eaves, and is asphalt shingles.

**Exterior:**

The west gable-end faces the road. It has a double door at ground level, and two four-pane windows in the attic gable just below the purlin line. The center area was formerly where the silo abutted the barn wall.

The south eave-side has the concrete foundation wall up to sill height. A row of seven six-pane hopper-type stable windows is equally spaced along the wall above the foundation, with a single door between the second and third from the left (west). A cellar crawl-space is accessed via a large opening near the right (east) corner. A shed dormer in the lower roof pitch is located off-center toward the left (west) and has an eight-over-eight double-hung window. A metal roof ventilator is on the center of the ridge-line. Two banks of photo-voltaic solar panels are on the upper pitch of the roof.

The east gable-end has the concrete foundation to below the window sills and a pair of hinged doors at the center flanked by six-pane hopper stable windows. These doors exit several feet above the grade which declines toward the east; it is unclear what the original configuration may have been, although the opening was used for discharge of manure. Above at the loft level a four-pane window is located near each of the outer corners, just above the line of the flared pitch of the roof. High in the attic is a large multi-pane picture window, filling an opening which was likely a former hay door opening.

The north eave-side is similar to the south, with three six-pane hopper windows in the left (east) portion of the wall, a blank section near the center, and a pass-through door followed by two six-pane windows at the right end. Grade inclines from left to right. A shed-roofed porch has been newly constructed for use by the CSA for harvest preparation.

**Interior:**

The barn exhibits characteristic features of a purpose-built ground level stable barn of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The width of the barn at 32 feet is sufficient for two rows of cows, in this case facing out toward the windows. The two lines of posts support longitudinal girders carrying the floor joists for the loft level. Concrete flooring has gutters for cleaning and there were metal stanchions for the milking cows – a few of these have been preserved as a historical exhibit, along with the suspended manure trolley which was arranged to unload manure via the east doorways. The concrete lower walls were considered optimal for durability in this type of barn. The evenly-spaced hopper windows on both side walls provided ample light for the cows and for milking.

At the loft level, a four-foot knee wall is integrated into the design of the scissor truss roof framing system. Major trusses constructed of sawn dimension lumber are placed every ten feet, with minor trusses at two feet on center. Pairs of trusses meet at the ridge forming a clear interior span. Tension cabling has been added to stabilize the span. At the ridge-line, the track for a hay loading system remains, although the original hay doors have been removed. Cribs along both sides protect the floor openings for pitching hay to the cows below. At the gable-end walls, diagonal braces are let in to the walls and triangular trusses extend perpendicular to brace the height of the framed end walls. A new stair opening has been created to provide access from the lower level. The floor is wood planks, and the roof ventilator can be seen through an opening in the roof framing.

**Barn II – Stone barn:**

This is a 1 ½-story structure 22' x 25' with the ridge-line of its gable roof oriented north-south. It is constructed of concrete and cobblestones; it appears as if the concrete was formed with cobblestones added into the forms, although it may have been laid up as cobblestone masonry with very thick mortar infill. Window and door openings have concrete lintels and sills. The masonry and concrete walls terminate at the eave-line, and the attic gables are wood-framed with dimension lumber.

There are two six-over-six double-hung windows in each of the east and west eave-sides, and one in the north gable-end. A wide opening in the south gable-end is now filled by an overhead garage door; the lintel has the date "1931"

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formed into the concrete. The attic gables have two two-pane windows in each of the north and south ends, while the south gable-end also has a pass-through or hay door at the center, extending down to the top elevation of the door lintel. The gable-ends are sided with wood shingle siding. The roof has overhangs at the eaves and rakes, with exposed rafter tails, and is asphalt shingles. The east and west exterior walls show marks where sheds were formerly attached. The windows and roof are deteriorated and awaiting planned renovations.

The interior is unfinished and used for storage. A steep open-riser stair in the southwest corner leads to the loft level.

• **Historical or Architectural importance:**

Applicable Connecticut State Register Criteria:

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

The Massaro Farmstead, with its two barns, is significant as a substantially intact representative of the type of small family farm operated by Southern and Eastern European immigrant families in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Historical background:**

The 1868 Beers, Ellis, & Soule map of New Haven County shows H. Cooper at the site; no census records confirm the family name. Title research shows that the farm and its structures were owned in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century by James Baldwin, whose family can still be found in Woodbridge. In 1892 the property was sold to Kate, John, and Mary Brennan, who held it until the Massaro purchase.

John Massaro, a stone mason from Italy, immigrated in 1899 at the age of 18 and worked as a railroad laborer in Bridgeport for a few years (U.S. Census, 1900). Massaro purchased the property in 1916. By the 1920 census he lived at this farmstead and was listed as 37 years old, a “general farmer” in Woodbridge. With him were his wife Mary B., age 32, and two sons Antonio and Luigi, ages seven and three (U.S. Census, 1920). The current house dates from the late 1920s or 1930s, although part of the foundation appears to be older and oral histories suggest that a fire damaged or destroyed an earlier house, leading to the rebuilding of the present structure. The gambrel barn is thought to date from the 1940s, according to oral histories and photographs. The stone barn has its date of 1931 cast into its door lintel. The barn’s original siding was vertical boards later covered with hexagonal asphalt siding.

The barn first had a hay track, for moving loose hay, suspended from the ridge, extending through a hay door in the east gable-end. Later the extant dormer was added to the south side of the loft roof, for use with a hay elevator and baled hay.

John Massaro died in 1947 in an automobile accident not far from the farm. His sons, John and Anthony, took over the farm while a third son, Louis served in the military during World War II and later moved to the west coast. The farm continued to be operated by John, Anthony, and Mary; with dairy cows and chickens, hay and wine. Mary died in 1971 and Anthony in 1991.

A silo attached at the west gable-end of the barn was of wood stave construction with a conical roof. It was demolished in the late 1990s. An attached milk room addition was removed in 2009. Chicken coops attached to the Stone barn were also demolished. An additional barn was located west of the Stone barn; this was used to store equipment. It was struck by lightning and burned, date unknown but local citizens still remember the scene.

At the time of John’s death in 2007, the Massaros gave their farm to the Town of Woodbridge. Competing proposals for the site suggested recreational use for ball fields, or use as a community farm on the Community Supported Agriculture model. Members of the Town Conservation Commission researched the feasibility of restoring the main barn and establishing the CSA. With the assistance of grant funding from the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation for feasibility studies, and an Agriculture Viability Grant from the Connecticut Department of Agriculture, and with support from Woodbridge First Selectman Ed Sheehy, other town officials, and many

community volunteers, the barn was restored in 2010 and the farm established. A professional manager trained as an organic farmer is assisted by CSA members.

**Architectural significance:**

The Massaro Farmstead, with its two barns, is significant as a substantially intact representative of the type of small family farm operated by Southern and Eastern European immigrant families in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Typically, the immigrant families took over properties that were previously subsistence farming operations of the earlier settlers. The wave of first- and second-generation farmers, in this case Italian American, participated in the shift of farming to a commercial economy providing dairy and poultry products to the nearby cities of Bridgeport and New Haven.

The farm structures at 41 Ford Road have been preserved and restored, with interior changes to adapt to re-use for organic farming. Although the silo and milk house are gone, other artifacts of the dairy farm period have been carefully preserved. The typical construction technology of the ground level stable barn is intact and can be observed at both the exterior and interior. An early 20<sup>th</sup>-century style of construction with cobblestone masonry is also represented in Barn II and the front porch of the farmhouse.

In addition to preserving the historic structures of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the continuation of working agriculture at the Massaro Farm perpetuates a form of living history in the Town of Woodbridge, where agricultural heritage has been largely replaced by residential development.

• Sources (*continuation*):

Photographs and field notes by Charlotte Hitchcock 2/28/2012.

Interviews with Jason Morrill via email, Steve Munno at the site 2/28/2012, both of Massaro Farm CSA, Inc. Title search and Massaro family history provided by Jason Morrill.

**Map resources:**

Town of Woodbridge Assessor's Records

<http://data.visionappraisal.com/WoodbridgeCT/findpid.asp?iTable=pid&pid=1374>

Parcel ID: Map 2401/ 660/ 41.

Aerial views from:

<http://maps.google.com/> and <http://www.bing.com/maps/> accessed 3/26/2012.

Beers, Ellis, & Soule, Map of New Haven County, 1868.

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

**Print and internet resources:**

Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, Historic Barns of Connecticut Resource Inventory, 2010, <http://www.connecticutbarns.org/6039> .

Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation HPTAG Application, 2007.

Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, Award Nomination, 2012.

James Manufacturing Co., The James Way, Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin, 1919 (accessed through Google Books, from the Cornell University Library).

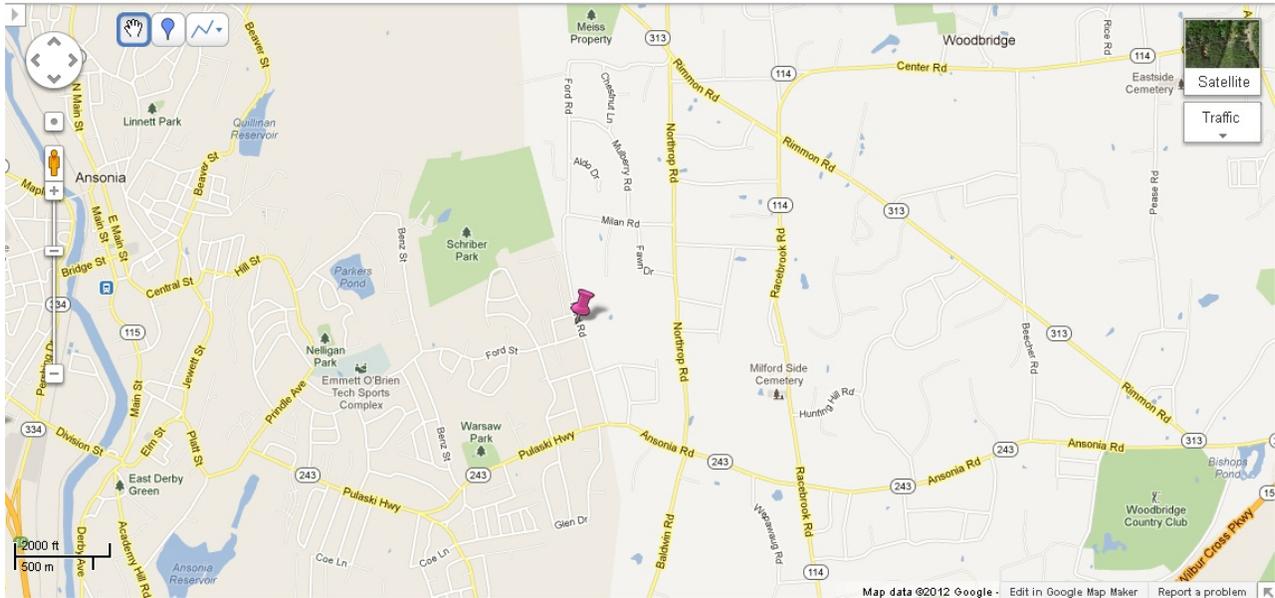
The Massaro Farm CSA, Inc., <http://www.massarofarmcsa.org/>

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 data, 1900-1920, 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.



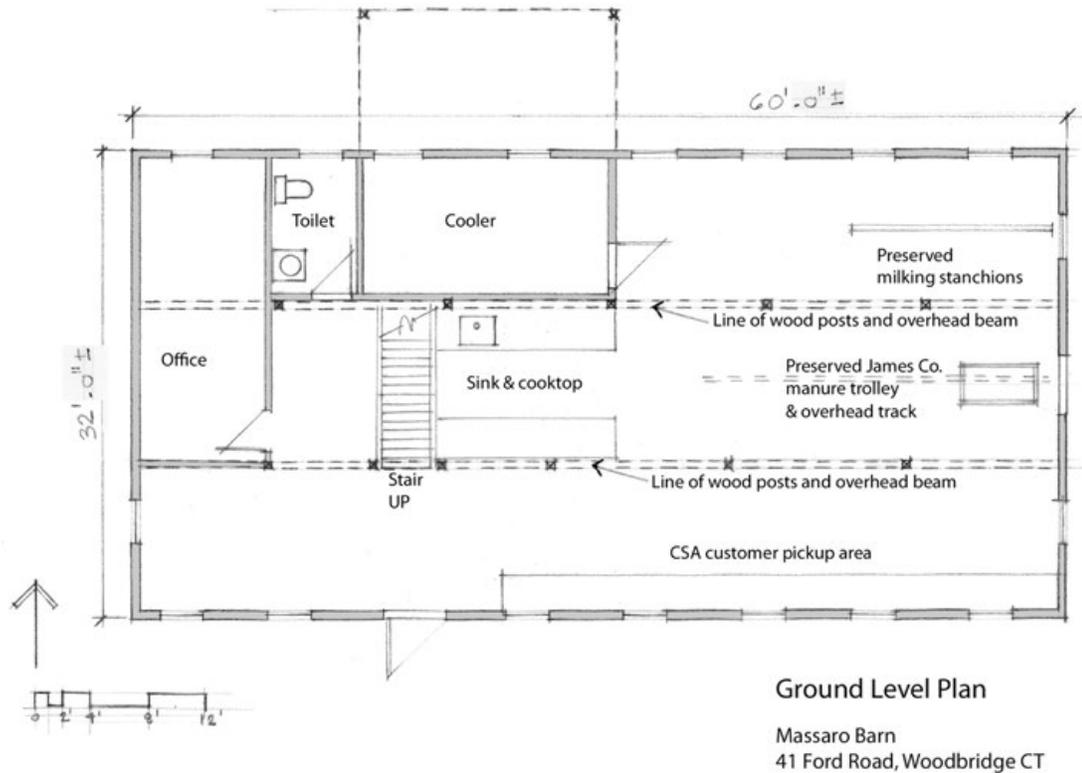
1. Location map 41 Ford Road, Woodbridge CT – from <http://maps.google.com/> accessed 3/27/2012.



2. South view – aerial “bird’s-eye” map 41 Ford Road, Woodbridge CT – <http://www.bing.com/maps> accessed 3/27/2012. Note: aerial photograph taken by about 2007, prior to demolition of sheds attached to Barn I (Gambrel barn) and Barn II (Stone barn). Farmland east of Ford Road is in Woodbridge; residential development west of Ford Road is located in Ansonia.



3. Proposed site plan from 2008 planning study report, funded by Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Grant (HPTAG), Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation.



4. Barn I Lower Level Plan Sketch showing reuse of the cow stable area.



5. Southwest view of farmhouse, camera facing northeast; Barn I at left rear.



6. Northwest view of farmhouse, camera facing southeast.



7. Southeast view of farmhouse, camera facing northwest; Barn I and Barn II at right rear.



8. Southeast view of farmhouse prior to restoration, camera facing northwest.

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9. South view Barn I in the 1980s, camera facing north. 10. Southeast view in 2008; camera facing northwest.



11. Northeast view of Barn I in 2008, camera facing southwest. Note patched area in upper gable-end, former location of a hay door.



12. Southeast view of Barn I, camera facing northwest. Note photo-voltaic panels at roof.



13. Northeast view of Barn I, camera facing southwest; Barn II is at left rear. Shed roof at right is an outside work area for CSA food distribution.



14. North view of Barn I, camera facing south.



15. Northwest view of Barn I with Barn II and farmhouse at right rear, camera facing southeast.



16. Interior view of loft level, Barn I, camera facing west. Note roof truss design incorporating 4' knee wall. Restoration work included cable ties at trusses, rebuilt dormer (left), patching of roof deck, west wall, floor. Half-height partition at center rear is new stair opening for access from lower level.



17. Interior view of loft level, Barn I, camera facing east. Large window at rear gable-end wall represents likely location of original hay door. Future plan is for this space to be finished as an event space, with addition of a second egress.



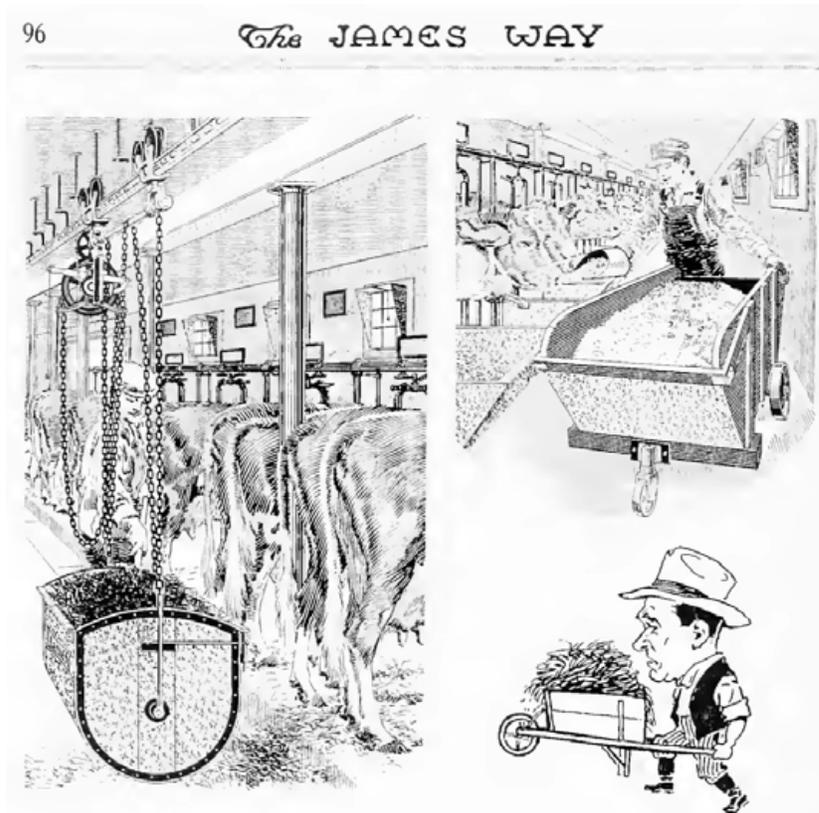
18. Interior view of roof ventilator, Barn I.



19. Interior lower level, new framing at stair opening.



20. Interior view of lower level during renovation, camera facing west. Note preserved metal cow stanchions at left rear, suspended manure trolley at center, manure gutters cast into floor for cleaning, concrete perimeter wall.



21. Illustration of manure trolley system, The James Way, p. 96.



22. South view of Barn II – Stone barn, camera facing north.



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



24. North detail view of Barn II, camera facing southwest.



25. Interior view of Barn II, camera facing northwest.



26. South view of Barn II (left) and Shed III (right), camera facing north.



27. Historic photograph of Barn I, camera facing north. Note the Silo and the absence of the shed corner.