

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY - 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) Larson Farm Record No. 52804
Building Name (Historic) Northrop, Isaac, Farmstead / Larson, Frank and Josephine, Farmstead
Street Address or Location 388 Danbury Road (US Route 7 & 202)
Town/City New Milford Village _____ County Litchfield
Owner(s) Town of New Milford, 10 Main Street, New Milford CT 06776 ☒ Public ☐ Private

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Education/school: secondary structures

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

Accessibility to public: Exterior visible from public road? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Interior accessible? ☐ Yes ☒ No If yes, explain _____

Style of building Extended English bank barn, Vernacular Victorian style Date of Construction c. 1901, later

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

☐ Clapboard ☐ Asbestos Siding ☐ Brick ☐ Wood Shingle ☐ Asphalt Siding
☒ Fieldstone ☐ Board & Batten ☐ Stucco ☐ Cobblestone ☐ Aluminum Siding
☐ Concrete (Type _____) ☐ Cut Stone (Type _____) ☒ Other Vertical wood siding

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 Barn I: 32' x 100'

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: Cupola removed during re-roofing, 2007

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: New Milford High School adjacent to the south, Farmhouse

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 Gregory Farmer, Charlotte Hitchcock Date 4/20/2007, 1/18/2013

View Multiple Views Negative on File CTHP

Name Charlotte Hitchcock Date 1/18/2013

Organization Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517

- Subsequent field evaluations:

Latitude, Longitude:
41.528343, -73.424163

Threats to the building or site:

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

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM – BUILDING AND STRUCTURES continuation sheet

388 Danbury Road, New Milford CT

Record No. 52804

3

- Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

The site of this barn and farmstead is on the west side of Danbury Road (US Route 7/202) in the southern part of New Milford. The 45-acre site of the Larson Farm, purchased by the Town of New Milford in 1997, has been used to construct a new high school facility, leaving the core group of the original farm buildings at the northeast corner of the property adjacent to Larson Road. The site is a flat river valley with the Still River meandering northward through a golf course on the east side of Danbury Road. The Housatonic River runs southward a short distance to the east and roughly parallel to Route 7. Once used for growing tobacco and dairy farming, the Route 7 corridor is now lined by commercial and institutional uses.

The town center of New Milford is to the north and across on the east side of the Housatonic River. To the west is a range of hills forming Candlewood Mountain, with man-made Candlewood Lake at a higher elevation beyond the hilltop. A number of other historic resources in New Milford are recognized by listing on the National Register of Historic Places, including the New Milford Center Historic District, the Town Hall, Housatonic Railroad Station, and several tobacco warehouses. The Hine-Buckingham Farms on Upland and Crossman Roads in the northeast corner of New Milford, is individually listed on the National Register. Other New Milford farmsteads and barns included in the current thematic nomination of Agricultural Heritage resources are the Smyrski Barns on Merryall Road, the Morehouse-Reynolds Farmstead at 4 Old Mill Road, and the Sullivan Farm at 140 Park Lane Road.

The group of farm buildings includes the main red barn (Barn I), a small red gable-roofed 1-story barn or shed (Barn II) to its southeast, a white barn or carriage house (Barn III), a 1-story hip-roofed shed (possibly formerly a milk room), and the Farmhouse.

The Farmhouse is a 2 ½-story gable-roofed frame structure with its ridge-line oriented north-south, and its east eave-side facing east, now located close to the roadway of Danbury Road which has been widened repeatedly. The four-bay main block of the house has vernacular classical cornice returns and frieze under the eaves, and a three-part attic window with a cornice suggesting Federal-period style. To the south is a two-bay 1 ½-story wing with a single dormer in the attic; there is an entry door in both the main block and the south wing. A small 1-story ell projects west off the south wing. A full-width 1-story porch with Victorian-style turned posts and simple brackets extends across the east front. Windows are a mix of six-over-six and two-over-two sash, siding is narrow clapboards with corner-board trim, the foundation is cut marble masonry, and the roof is asphalt shingles. The building has been renovated for use as offices by the town department of education.

To the west of the house is Barn III, a 1 ½-story gable-roofed structure with its ridge-line oriented north-south and a shed extension across the west side giving it a saltbox profile. It appears to be a three-bay structure, and has a sliding door in the right (north) bay of the east eave-side. The north and south gable-ends have stable windows with beveled head trim at the ground floor and a hay door (north) or window (south) in the attic. The west shed portion is accessed by a garage door opening in the north end. Siding is vertical flush boards painted white, and roofing is asphalt shingles.

In the 1934 Fairchild aerial photograph, the farm's cleared land can be seen, with two large barns at a distance to the south and west from the main farm complex. These appear to have been tobacco sheds.

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

Architectural description:

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

Farmhouse	c. 1820	C
Barn I	c. 1901	C
Barn II	20 th c.	C
Barn III	19 th c.	C
Shed or milk room	20 th c.	C

Barn I:

General description: This is a 1 ½-story plus Basement, gable-roofed extended English bank barn, 32' x 100'. The site is essentially flat, and the bank barn has been achieved by constructing a bermed ramp at the west side for drive-up access to the main hayloft level.

The bays are identified from south to north as Bays 1 – 6. It appears that Bays 2-4 were erected first as a standard three-bay English barn, although with a framing method typical of the late 19th century and suitable for either eave- or gable-entry. A hip-roofed cupola was located at the center of the Bay 2-4 block, above Bay 3 which has the main barn doors on the west side and a smaller hay door in the east side. Bay 1 was added at the south end, as were Bays 5-6 at the north end. Siding is vertical boards painted red; windows have beveled head trim and the trim and sash are white. Roofing is new asphalt shingles over plywood underlayment, installed in 2007.

Exterior:

The west eave-side has the main entry into the upper loft level through a pair of full-height sliding doors in Bay 3. An earthen ramp with fieldstone retaining walls to the north and south, leads up to the door sill. There is a hinged pass-through door to the right (south) of the sliding doors. To the south of the doors, adjacent to Bay 1, there is the concrete foundation of a silo. The left (north) part of the west wall, Bays 5-6 has the basement level fully exposed, with a row of five six-pane stable windows at grade (the rightmost pair larger) and one three-pane window in the upper part of each bay. The upper walls of Bays 5-6 show jointing in the vertical siding which suggests possibly a former row of tall narrow operable vents for tobacco curing, later secured back in place.

The north gable-end has one stable window centered at grade level, a six-pane sash with a beveled head trim. A course of concrete block masonry foundation is visible below the siding, which is vertical boards divided at the loft floor level and at an elevation roughly six feet below the eaves. There is a six-pane attic window very high in the peak. The east eave-side also has its basement grade level fully exposed has twelve six-pane hopper stable windows, two per bay, and a pass-through door in Bay 5. At the main level in Bay 3 there is a sliding hay door with a six-pane window above under the eaves. Barn II is attached to Barn I at the southeast corner, where the two structures overlap slightly; there is a cricket in the roof of Barn II at the connection.

The south gable-end has its basement level exposed to grade. In the basement is a centered pair of sliding doors with a six-pane glazed panel in each leaf. The doors are flanked by a four-pane window in each side aisle. Above at the main level, there is a siding divide at the eave line (unlike the north end) and a six-pane attic window at the peak.

Interior:

The interior of the main loft level is a series of seven bents forming six bays. The bents are all designed with a pair of full-height interior posts forming three aisles, and supporting canted purlin plates. The interior posts are braced to the outer wall posts with dropped tie-girts. The center aisle has a series of tie-girts in various configurations, some bents have one and others having two. In some places iron rods act as angle braces while in other locations wood angle braces are used. A hay track runs below the peak, with the horse fork still extant in the 2007 photographs. The rafters are of sawn lumber, as are the other structural timbers. The purlin plates can be seen to have joints at the bent between Bay 1 and 2, and between Bay 4 and 5. In addition, the rafter spacing around these bents is closer, additional clues indicating differences in construction.

The basement or ground level is configured as a ground level stable barn for two rows of cows (stanchions removed for use as storage) facing outward. Two lines of cast iron columns support longitudinal wood girders which carry the floor joists above. The spacing of the steel columns is laid out for the convenience of the dairy operation and does not correspond to the bays of the upper frame. A third girder along the center appears to carry the ends of the floor joists at the center line, but is apparently supported by a truss system from above. The ceiling is a finished board surface, painted or whitewashed. According to the conditions assessment by the Archidesign Group, Bays 1-4 have floor joists oriented laterally, east-west, while Bays 5 and 6 have joists running north-south; these may be supported on lateral floor girders in the bents. The floor is concrete slab stepped for mangers, access aisles, and manure cleanout gutters.

• Historical or Architectural importance:

Applicable Connecticut State Register Criteria:

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

This farm and its main barn are significant as a fragment of the historic landscape preserved through the concern and will of the Town Council and citizens of New Milford. The history of the site documents the role of European immigrant families in local agriculture in the early 20th century. The main barn is an excellent and intact example of the large-scale barns that were built at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. Although the landscape has been altered by development, this example of adaptive re-use sets an example for the preservation of historic structures.

Historical background:

The land at the site was purchased by Isaac Northrup in the early 1800s, with the farmhouse constructed in the early 1820s. Later, his son Isaac Northrup, Jr. lost the property through foreclosure.

Eventually in 1900, Frank (1872-1941) and Josephine (1871-1956) Larson purchased the farm. The Larsons were immigrants from Sweden, and appear in the 1910 census at age 38 and 39, with seven children, ages 15 down to 1. All the children were American-born, so they had been in the country for some years already. The farm at one time included 145 acres on both sides of today's Route 7. In 1901 Frank Larson began building his dairy barn with chestnut beams and it became one of the largest dairy farms in the Candlewood Valley. Tobacco was another crop in production; locally tobacco growing ceased to be feasible after the 1930s. By 1930, six of the grown children were still in the household, with Carl doing maintenance on summer homes, Olga a foreman in a factory, and Mildred working as a stenographer. In 1940, four were in the household – Olga, Nellie, Mildred, and Albert. The youngest son, Albert (1908-1994) farmed the land throughout his life, and his son Peter continued until selling the land to the Town of New Milford in 1997 for the site of a new high school. The Larsons' farmstead was a local institution from the 1950s on.

Strong community sentiment supported the preservation of the Larson Farm buildings through threats of road widening and concerns about the condition of the buildings which suffered from deferred maintenance. As a result, the house was refurbished for use as the offices for the Board of Education Facilities Department, and the barn for use as a bulk storage building.

Architectural significance:

This farm and its main barn are significant as a fragment of the historic landscape preserved through the concern and will of the Town Council and citizens of New Milford. The history of the site documents the role of European immigrant families in local agriculture in the early 20th century. Statewide, immigrant families operated productive dairy farms providing milk and other dairy products to the growing cities of Connecticut. The Housatonic River Valley had in addition a unique relationship with tobacco farming, on a smaller scale than in the Connecticut River Valley, but still a significant contributor to the local economy. This site has a history of growing and curing tobacco, (see also the Sullivan Farm at 140 Park Lane Road and Smyrski Farm, 228 Merryall Road). Several tobacco warehouses in New Milford have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This site preserves something of the area's agricultural heritage when much of the town has been developed with housing and commercial uses.

The main barn here is an excellent and intact example of the large-scale barns that were built at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. Along with the Smyrski Barn (228 Merryall Road) and the Sullivan Barn (140 Park Lane Road) also in New Milford (see nomination forms), this barn represents a type and size of barn that was prevalent at the turn of the 20th century, with a framing system that was adaptable to either eave-entry or gable-entry configurations and that was purpose-built with a ground-level dairy stable in the basement level.

• Sources (*continuation*):

Photographs and field notes by Greg Farmer 4/20/2007, 8/17/2007; Charlotte Hitchcock 1/18/2013.

Map resources:

Town of New Milford Assessor's Records and GIS Viewer: <http://hosting.tighebond.com/newmilfordct/main.htm>
Parcel ID: 10/10.

Aerial views from:

<http://maps.google.com/> and <http://www.bing.com/maps/> accessed 1/03/2013.

Historical aerial photography and maps accessed at UConn MAGIC:

Fairchild aerial photographs taken in 1934: http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/mash_up/1934.html
http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/historical_maps_connecticut_towns.html .

USGS Historical Maps accessed 12/22/2012 at <http://historical.mytopo.com/> .

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

Print and internet resources:

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/52804> .

Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, HPTAG application 2007.

Devlin, William E., E.A. Wildman Co. Tobacco Warehouse National Register Nomination No. 88000731, National Park Service, 1988.

Gilchrist, Alison, Carl F. Schoverling Tobacco Warehouse National Register Nomination No. 82004446, National Park Service, 1982.

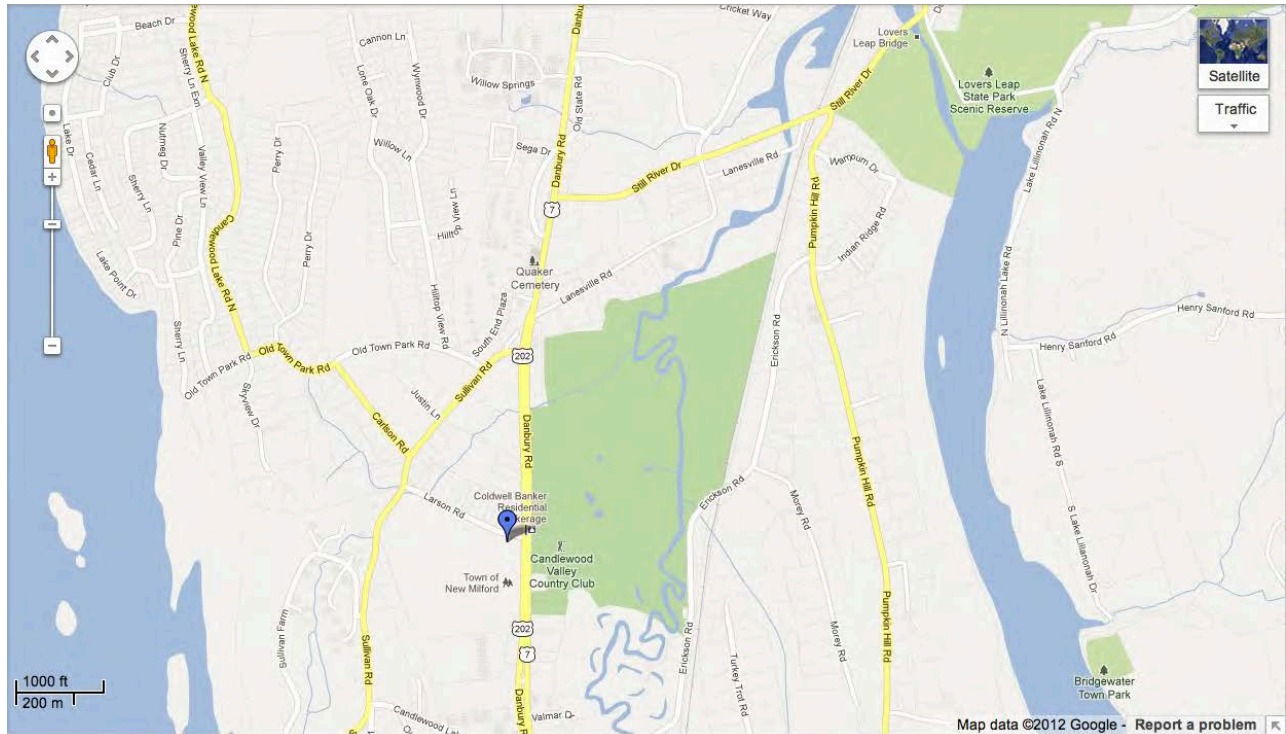
Larson's Farm Market web site: <http://www.larsonsfarmmarket.com/history.php> .

O'Gorman, James F., Connecticut Valley Vernacular: the Vanishing Landscape and Architecture of the New England Tobacco Fields, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002, 144 pages.

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>

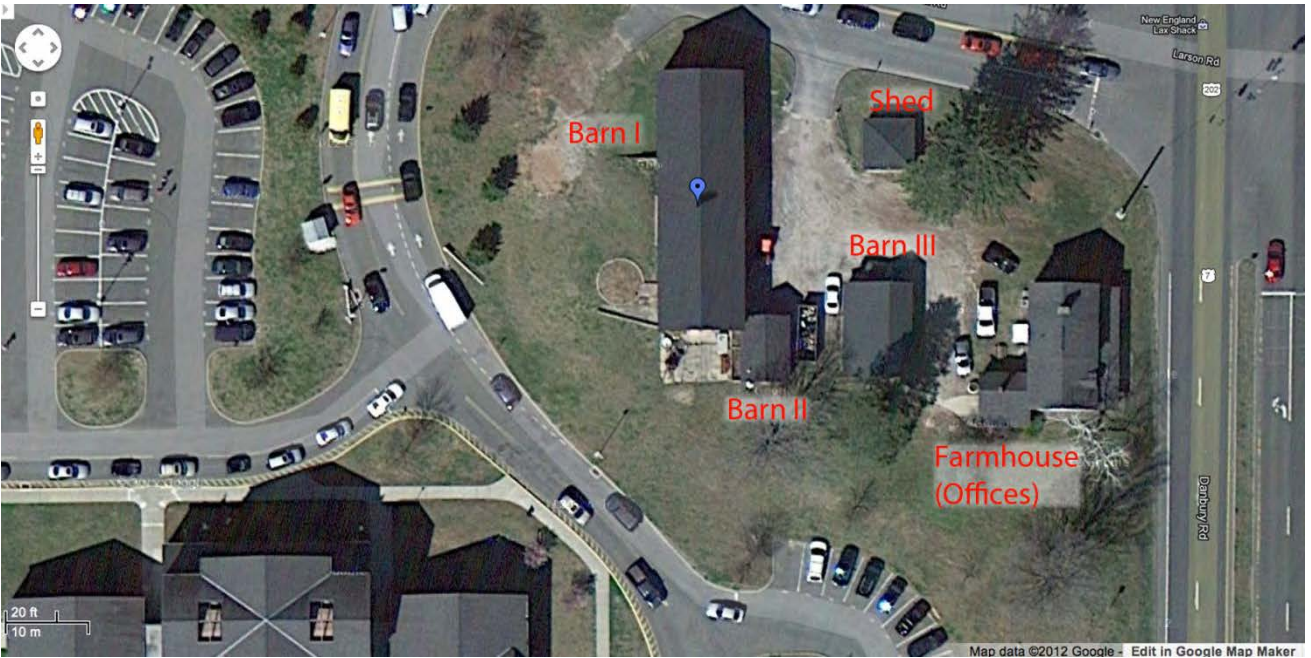
Visser, Thomas D., Field Guide to New England Barns and Farm Buildings, University Press of New England, 1997, 213 pages.



1. Location map of 388 Danbury Road (US Route 7), New Milford CT – from <http://maps.google.com/> accessed 1/03/2013.



2. West view – aerial “bird’s-eye” map of 388 Danbury Road (US Route 7), New Milford CT – <http://www.bing.com/maps> accessed 11/27/2012. Note the cupola, now gone, and the circular silo base.



3. Detail Site Plan Sketch showing contributing resources. New Milford High School buildings are at lower left.



4. Southeast context view of Barns and Farmhouse (Offices), camera facing northwest.

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM – BUILDING AND STRUCTURES continuation sheet

388 Danbury Road, New Milford CT

Record No. 52804

9



5. Northeast view of Farmhouse (Offices), camera facing southwest.



6. Northeast view of Barn III, camera facing southwest. New Milford High School is at left rear.



7. Northwest view of Shed/Milk room and Barn III, camera facing southeast. Farmhouse rear ell is at rear.



8. Fairchild aerial photograph, 1934, compared with 2012 Google Map aerial view – the farmhouse and barns are at the upper right. Note the tobacco sheds to the west (left) and across the road to the east (right); another larger tobacco shed is located to the south outside of this viewing area. Accessed 1/03/2012 at: <http://magic.lib.uconn.edu>.

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM – BUILDING AND STRUCTURES continuation sheet

388 Danbury Road, New Milford CT

Record No. 52804

11



9. Northwest view of Barn I, camera facing southeast, April 2007 photograph prior to repairs and painting. Note cupola, which was later removed.



10. Southwest view of Barn I, camera facing northeast, August 2007 photograph during repairs.



11. Northwest view of Barn I, camera facing southeast. Note the hip-roofed milk room or garage at far left.



12. West detail view of Barn I, camera facing northeast, showing the main entry doors and silo foundation.



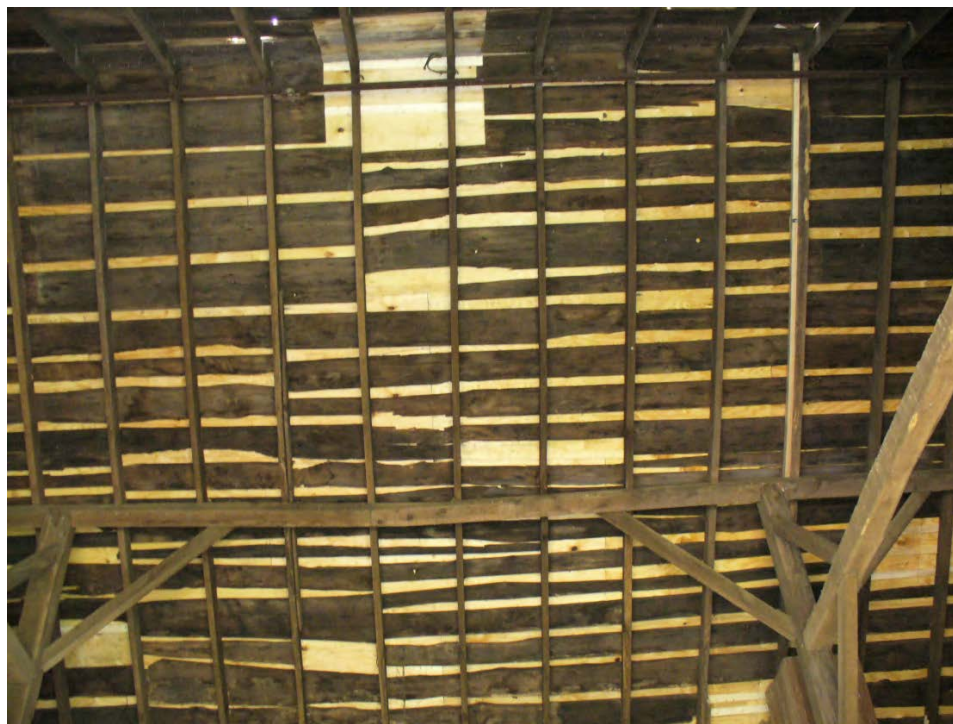
13. Northeast view of Barn I, camera facing southwest.



14. South view of Barn I, left, and Barn II, right, camera facing north.



15. Interior view of Barn I upper level framing, camera facing north from Bay 3. Note the hay track and horse fork.



16. Interior view of Barn I upper level framing, camera facing east in Bay 3. Note the new plywood decking infilling the cupola location.



17. Interior view of Barn I upper level framing, camera facing southeast from Bay 3. Note metal diagonal brace, removed upper tie-girt (indicated by the empty mortise near the top of the post), close rafter spacing at the post.



18. Interior view of Barn I, main level framing, camera facing south at the north bent of Bay 4. Note the triangular truss, which bolts through the center longitudinal girder below the floor, visible from basement. This truss occurs in the four bents of the original three-bay English barn.



19. Interior view of Barn I, main level framing, camera facing southeast at the north bent of Bay 4 where the added Bay 5 is spliced on with a corbel block.



20. Interior view of Barn I, main level framing, camera facing northeast at Bay 6, showing formerly top-hinged vent openings, now nailed shut, dating from the use for tobacco curing.



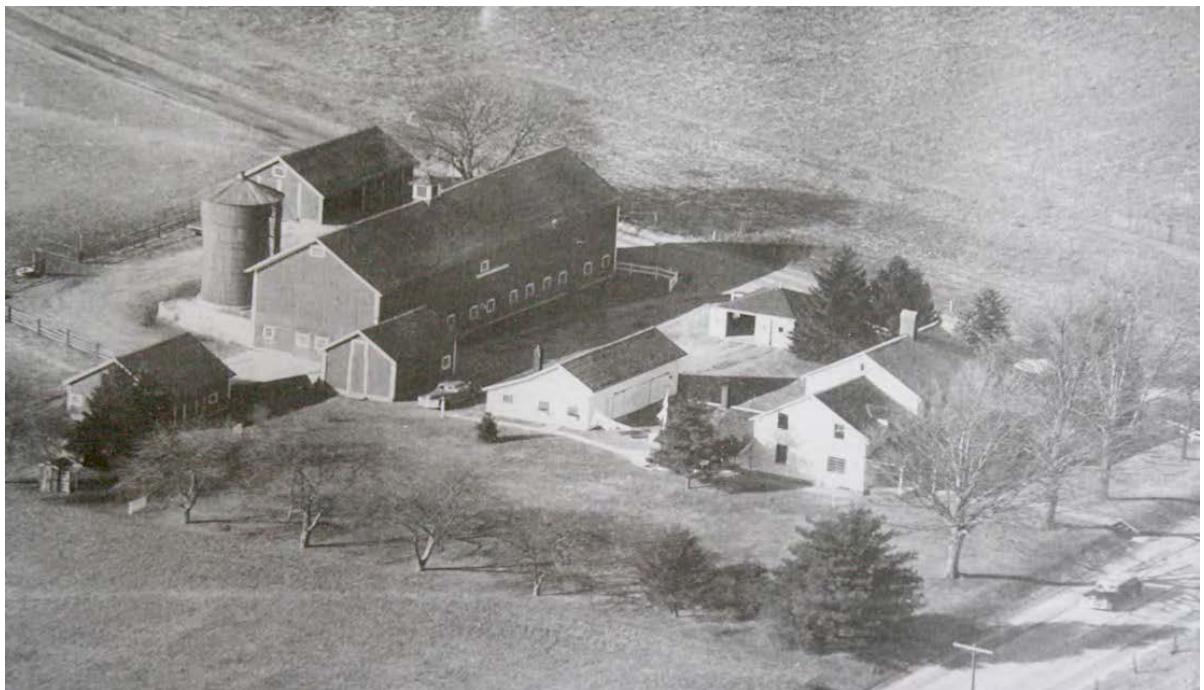
21. Interior view of Barn I, main level framing, camera facing south from Bay 5. Note the typical full-height posts carrying the purling plates, braced to the outer walls, and the wide center aisle.



22. Barn I basement level interior view, camera facing north. Note the two girders carried on metal posts and the third center girder suspended from above (through-bolts visible on lower face). Manure gutters in the center aisle formerly were cleaned by a mechanical gutter cleaner.



23. Barn I basement level interior view, camera facing south. Note the two girders carried on metal posts and the third center girder suspended from above (through-bolts visible on lower face). Dairy stanchions remain in the east aisle.



24. Southeast aerial view of Larson Farm, courtesy of New Milford Board of Education. The barn at the upper left was relocated to the Sullivan Farm, 140 Park Lane Road, and re-used as a maple sugar house.