

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Hosmer Homestead

other names/site number Hosmer/Baker Farm

2. Location

street & number 138 Baker Avenue N/A not for publication
city or town Concord N/A vicinity
state Massachusetts code MA county Middlesex code 017 zip code 01742

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination
☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of
Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property
☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant
☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Judith B. McDonough
Signature of certifying official/Title

4/27/99
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the
National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register
☐ removed from the
National Register
☐ other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Hosmer Homestead
Name of Property

Middlesex, MA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
1	3	objects
3	3	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

AGRICULTURE

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

COLONIAL: Postmedieval English

COLONIAL: Georgian

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: granite; BRICK, CONCRETE

walls WOOD: weatherboard

roof ASPHALT

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Hosmer Homestead

Name of Property

Middlesex, MA

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

☒ **XA** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒ **XC** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☒ **XD** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

☐ **A** owned by religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ **B** removed from its original location.

☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.

☐ **D** a cemetery.

☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ **F** a commemorative property.

☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ Previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ Designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance

ca. 1710-1949

Significant Dates

ca. 1710

1887

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☒ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

Concord Public Library

Middlesex, MA
County and State

Acreage of Property 1.59 acres

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1. 19 3 0 3 9 3 0 4 7 0 3 5 4 0
Zone Easting Northing

2. Zone Easting Northing

3. Easting Northing

4. Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne M. Forbes, Preservation Consultant, with Betsy Friedberg, National Register Director

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date April 1999

street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone 617-727-8470

city or town Boston state Massachusetts zip code 02125

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Thomas H. and Nancy A.Conway

street & number 138 Baker Avenue telephone 978-369-5624

city or town Concord state MA zip code 01742

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Concord (Middlesex Co.), Mass

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7. DESCRIPTION

The Hosmer Homestead, its property today reduced to less than two acres from the 165 it had when sold out of the Hosmer family in 1887, still retains the accumulated character of the many layers of its nearly three centuries-long history. The building faces southeast over the short northern section of Baker Avenue toward a small area of woods. Its main appearance today is that of a large mid-eighteenth-century center-chimney, 2 1/2-story, two-room-deep side-gabled house with additions of later periods. Both architectural evidence and local tradition, however, indicate that at its core is a First Period house, probably built about 1710. The exterior walls are clad in wood clapboard, the roof is asphalt shingle, and the foundation of the main house is fieldstone, which is topped with granite block on all but the rear of the building. A two-story nineteenth-century southwest wing has a brick foundation on three sides. A one-story, flat-roofed glassed-in early-twentieth-century sunporch abutting the rear north corner of the main house also rests on a brick base. A long two-story west wing, built in the 1960s, has a concrete foundation. A two-story hip-roofed section projecting forward from the front plane of the southwest wing fills most of the space from the wing to the house, save for a narrow gap at the wing's north end.

The house is situated at the edge of a small neighborhood of mid-twentieth-century single-family houses. Directly south of the house is the cul-de-sac dead end of the street at the right-of-way of a four-lane highway, Massachusetts Route 2, its boundary marked by a modern stockade fence. Behind the property a small wooded area screens from view the commercial development just east of the Assabet River. On the house parcel itself, a small gable-end barn of the 1890's stands just southwest of the house, and in an unusual survival, the front part of the house lot is still enclosed by a nineteenth-century split-rail fence with square granite posts and three narrow gateways. Two twentieth-century flagstone walks pass through the gateways--one from the road to the main, center entry of the house, the other to the front of the northwest sunporch. A mid-twentieth-century brick terrace abuts the north side of the rear wing. Although the regal elms shown near the house in historic photos are gone, mature maples and oaks still mark the perimeter of the property. Similarly, while Baker Avenue no longer forks north to Elm Street, the main approach to the house via the east part of the fork still remains, lined with a few tall trees descended from its late-nineteenth-century line of evergreens.

The main southeast facade of the house is five bays wide. As in most of the rest of the main block, its windows are 6-over-6-sash, set into slightly-projecting frames trimmed at the edge with a wide applied molding.

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The upper windows meet the roof cornice; those at the first story have high, molded, projecting crowns above a frieze-like board which is set above the window frames. The main entry, most of which dates to the early part of this century, replaces a former narrow Italianate entry of about 1880.

That entry had a deeply-projecting flat-roofed hood on a pair of ornate brackets, sheltering what appears to have been a four-panel door. The present entry surround is a well-proportioned Colonial Revival example, with a classical entablature consisting of a wide triangular pediment over a dentil course and a frieze of metopes and triglyphs, supported on a pair of Tuscan-like columns. The six-panel door replaces one of similar design that was destroyed in a 1979 storm. The door is flanked by four-pane Colonial Revival sidelights divided both horizontally and vertically, with wood panels, trimmed with applied moldings, below. Other architectural detailing includes a molded, boxed cornice with integral wood gutters and a large bed molding at the top of a wide frieze board on the front of the house, and cornice returns on the gable ends. Fairly wide cornerboards mark the house corners, and a wide water table trims the bottom of the front and end walls.

The northeast gable end of the house is two bays deep. Its front first-story window has the same projecting crown as those on the main facade; a single attic window under the gable peak has a 6-over-9-sash. The long Colonial Revival sunroom extending from the northwest portion of this elevation is enclosed with multi-light glass panels and French doors. Its detailing, including flat pilasters and Tuscan columns, indicates an early-twentieth-century date of about the same time as the front entry.

The arrangement of the southwest end wall of the main house mirrors that of the northeast gable end. Abutting it is the long two-story southwest wing. Photographs and physical evidence indicate that the wing, said to be a small cottage moved from elsewhere on the farm during the nineteenth century, has undergone several changes in form. It was originally apparently a one story ell, later raised by a half story, with an open front porch added sometime after 1890. (The present turned porch posts are modern replacements). A second-story hip-roofed section projecting forward near the ell's north end, not quite abutting the main house, may date to about the same time as the porch. In the early part of this century, a first story was inserted under and to the north of this section for a kitchen expansion, with a tiny balcony over the north part. The hip-roofed section is two bays wide. The facade of the outer, south part of the wing, under the porch, is three bays, with a mid-nineteenth-century four-panel door with applied moldings, and two 6-over-6-sash windows. Two windows at the second story are also 6-over-6-sash.

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The southwest elevation of the building displays the narrow, one-bay gable end of the south wing, and behind it, the long two-story west wing of the 1960's. The fenestration of the southwest wall of the wing is irregular, with six 6-over-6-sash windows at the second story, over a single 6-over-6 and a wide, five-part polygonal bay window to its west. The first story of the inner end of this wing, which stands on a brick foundation, predates the rest. The rear gable end of this modern wing reveals the shallow pitch of its roof. This wall has one polygonal bay window, a tall concrete exterior chimney, and a second-story doorway centered under the gable, from which a fire escape descends. The long northeast wall of the rear wing, again extremely irregular in fenestration, has a pair of large multi-light and panel doors which open onto the rear brick terrace.

At the southwest end of the rear elevation of the main house, abutting the joint between the two wings, is a small one-bay, 1 1/2-story leanto or "wart", on a brick foundation. It has a 6-over-6-sash window on the rear wall above a bulkhead basement entry, and a fixed-light 6-pane window on the northeast elevation. The rear wall of the main house is an asymmetrical arrangement of four windows at each story, with only the two westernmost bays aligned above one another. A pair of small rectangular skylights is situated near the southwest end of the rear roof slope.

The massive central chimney of the main house was removed at the turn of the century, and replaced by a pair of ridge chimneys. Those later chimneys were removed in the late 1970's, and a new brick center chimney built in the original position. A second interior chimney rises from the southwest wing, at the juncture of its main roof and the hip-roofed north section.

Interior structure

The interior of the Hosmer Homestead reveals a broad array of finely-crafted mid-eighteenth-century elements, overlaid with minor changes of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries, as well as several features that support the theory of an early-eighteenth-century origin. The post-and-beam frame of the main house is exposed in both the attic and basement, but in the living areas, ovolo-molded-edge casings conceal the summer beams, wall girts, and the flared two-story corner posts.

While the Hosmer Homestead was not listed on the First Period Buildings of Eastern Massachusetts Thematic Resources Area nomination of 1990, the rear, (west) section of the main block has some First Period elements which indicate that it may contain part of the earliest section of the house. The summer beams of the single large first-story room are crossed directly behind the chimney mass, and the rear post below the transverse beam, visible through a plumbing chase, shows a bevel-chamfered edge and traces of whitewash, both indicating that the post was exposed at an earlier date before the casing was applied.

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The first-floor framing under the center and southwest portion of the house, visible in the basement, is also characteristic of First Period building methods, some of them of an unusual type. While the heavy floor joists of the chimney bay are positioned depthwise (with the longer dimension in the vertical orientation), the joists under the south portion of the house are positioned flatwise, with the greater dimension oriented in the horizontal position. Abbott Lowell Cummings, in his definitive volume, The Framed Houses of Massachusetts Bay, 1625-1725, notes only two colonial houses in the region in which he found such a flatwise orientation of floor joists, both built early in the First Period: the ca. 1637 Fairbanks House in Dedham, and the Giddings-Burnham House in Ipswich, ca. 1680. Dr. Cummings cites the evolution from flatwise to the stronger depthwise positioning of floor joists in England as one aspect of the development of the house frame from the sixteenth to the early seventeenth century that was practiced by most young carpenters who emigrated to Massachusetts Bay.

Another unusual feature of the house frame is a scarf joint in the front sill southwest of the chimney bay. This is a two-foot-long horizontal half-lap joint with angled, half-dovetailed ends. The angling of the ends is usually found only in joints which might be subject to pulling apart in a vertical direction. Here, since the sill is both supported by the foundation wall and weighted down by the bearing wall above it, angled interlocking is unnecessary, and thus unusual for such a location.

The roof frame of the Hosmer House is of the principal-rafter type, with large 6-by-7" closely-spaced rafters, joined at the peak with a pinned bridled joint, and without ridge beam. This type of roof construction, which appeared late in the seventeenth century in Massachusetts Bay, is less common than other types, such as those with both rafters and purlins, or with principal and common rafters. According to Dr. Cummings, it is found mainly on the outer perimeter of Middlesex County, and seems to be without an exact English prototype.

Interior finish

While alterations in the early part of this century resulted in the removal of fireplaces, and in the covering of some original walls and the removal of others, the interior of the Hosmer Homestead includes a remarkable amount of stylish, well-preserved eighteenth-century finish. Typical of a two-room-deep house with a center-chimney plan, most of the high-style elements are found in the parlor and the two front chambers. While the fireplace wall of the **southwest chamber** appears to have been plastered over, and the room updated with a late Victorian picture rail and baseboards and a Federal Revival mantelpiece, the large **southeast chamber** retains considerable Georgian detailing. Its fireplace wall, covered with handsomely executed raised-field paneling, is nearly intact. A six-panel door at the front of the wall opens into the front stair hall, and the section of wall to the rear of the door is divided into four sections of three panels, the lower two matched in height to those of the door.

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Above the fireplace (recently restored) at the rear of the wall is a high overmantel of three horizontal panels that dates to the 1970's.

At the first story, the **southeast parlor** also has a paneled fireplace wall fitted with a six-panel door to the stair hall. Here the middle of the wall has three sections of triple panels instead of four, which allows space for the pair of fluted pilasters, with molded capitals extending into the crown molding at the top of the wall, that flank its restored fireplace. In the wall above the firebox is a single wide horizontal panel. The most formal of the rooms, on its other walls this parlor also has ca. 36"-high wainscoting, embellished with two rows of raised-field panels.

The fireplace wall of the **southwest first-story room** has been covered with plaster and fitted with a twentieth-century mantelpiece. The entire **rear first-story section** of the main house was opened up into one continuous space, probably in the early part of this century. In addition, the wall that divided it from the southeast parlor was completely removed and replaced with a flat arch, supported on each outer end by a Tuscan column and pilaster combination. Another flat arch, also probably replacing a former wall, runs from the front to the back wall of the rear room directly behind the northwest corner of the parlor. This broad space, which probably once had a kitchen in its center section, has a large restored fireplace with bake oven in its front wall at the back of the new central chimney stack. The walls of the section southwest of the fireplace are finished with vertical feather-edge sheathing characteristic of the first half of the eighteenth century, and a door in the west corner of the room is of the same six-panel design as those in the fireplace walls of the front of the house. The north end of this room, however, appears to have been updated in the Colonial Revival era with wainscoting that copies that in the front parlor, a large pair of French doors leading to the sunporch, and, flanking them, a pair of slender pilasters that copy those of the front parlor's fireplace wall.

The main **lobby entrance** of the house was altered and its stair position changed at least once in the past. In recent years the stair has been returned to its three-run configuration, and a closet has been removed, revealing the field paneling of the northeast wall. The present turned balusters of the stair have been re-positioned from the prior stair of ca. 1900. The early-twentieth-century maple floorboards of the entry and its two flanking rooms have recently been replaced with wide pine boards relocated from the attic floor.

In the rear part of the second story, a narrow **hallway**, with a stairway from the first floor and the enclosed stair to the attic at its southwest end, runs three-quarters of the length of the house directly behind the chimney stack. The front wall of both the upper and lower sections of the stairwell is lined with wide horizontal paneling with a beaded edge. The rest of this rear space is divided into a bedroom at each corner, with two bathrooms in between.

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(The **northwest bedroom** is undoubtedly the "northwest chamber" that was reserved for Esther Hosmer [1743-1825] when her brother, Jesse, conveyed the house to Abel Hosmer in 1818). The finish of this section of the house is much plainer than that in the front rooms. The rear door leading from each front chamber is a four-panel type, its panels raised on the front side, and recessed on this side, facing the rear of the house. Most other doors here are also four-paneled, although the door into the **northeast chamber** is of the same six-panel design as those between the front chambers and the entry hall, and the door to the small northeast bathroom is a two-panel design. The two **bathrooms** were probably added during George Baker's ownership at the turn of the century, as shown by their claw-footed iron bathtubs, high beaded wainscoting, and the door with recessed panels and applied moldings on the center bathroom.

A doorway leads west from the northwest chamber into a narrow **hallway** in the southwest wing, which connects to the large, four-bedroom 1960's rear west wing. The second story of the southwest nineteenth-century wing, possibly built as a service wing with quarters for farmhands, has two **bedrooms**, a **bathroom** (formerly a small bedroom), and a **stairway**. All these rooms are simply finished, with four-panel doors with applied moldings and plain surrounds. The first-story space in the nineteenth-century wing has been renovated for **utility rooms** and, in the north portion that may have been a porch, for a **kitchen** that opens out into the large family room, recently winterized, that fills the first floor of the 1960's rear wing.

Barn

The small gable-end barn standing close beside the house is the only building remaining from the cluster of outbuildings that at the turn of the century included four barns, a carriage house, and several sheds. This 1 1/2-story barn, with a wide through-passage along its southwest side and three box stalls and a utility space (possibly a tack room) in its northeast portion, with hayloft above, is apparently the "box-stall barn" that George Baker built between 1888 and 1900. In nearly intact condition, it has a fieldstone foundation, what appears to be its original clapboard siding, and 6-over-6-sash windows. The roof is the original slate. The large doors are of the sliding type, with a fixed multi-light window in the upper section. The door on the front is built of tongue-and-groove, beaded board; that on the rear is wide vertical board. Between the sliding door and a window on the front, southeast end is a later walk-in door, with four glass panes at the top, and three horizontal panels below.

Archaeological Description

While no prehistoric sites are recorded on the Hosmer Homestead property, it is possible that sites are present. Fourteen prehistoric sites are located in the general area (within one mile) of the property. Environmental characteristics of the property are generally favorable for many types of prehistoric sites. The property is located on a well drained level to moderately sloping terrace above the Assabet River floodplain to the north and west. However, wetlands are not located within 1000 feet of the

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property, a less favorable locational characteristic. The Assabet River currently averages from approximately 2000 to 3000 feet from the property from the southwest to the north. The river may have meandered closer to the house at some point in the past. Unnamed ponds are also located between the river and the house to the southwest. Given the above information, the size of the property (1.59 acres), historic period development, and high site densities in the area, a moderate potential exists that prehistoric sites are present.

A high potential exists for locating historic archaeological resources on the Hosmer Homestead property. Additional documentary research combined with archaeological survey and testing can establish the potential for locating archaeological resources associated with James Hosmer, the original grantee for the property in 1655. Similar research can also be used to document structural changes to the house and layout of the farm from its construction reportedly by Stephen Jr. in 1710 to the present. Structural evidence of alterations to the house may survive as well as artifacts that can document certain architectural features of the house and its construction methods. Structural evidence may also survive from barns and other outbuildings which have been replaced on the property. For example, a cluster of outbuildings identified at the turn of the century includes 4 barns, a carriage house and several sheds. Only a ca. 1890's barn survives today. A large horse barn and possibly other outbuildings were destroyed by the 1938 hurricane. Remnants of the horse barn foundation and the garage/carriage house were also reportedly lost to Route 2 widening in 1973. Occupational related features (trash pits, privies, wells) should represent another important archaeological resource type on the property especially when viewed against nearly 300 years of occupation. Structural evidence representing several phases of chimney demolition and rebuilding may also survive on the property. Evidence may survive from a massive central chimney that was removed at the turn of the 20th century and replaced by a pair of ridge chimneys. Evidence may also survive from the latter chimneys that were also removed in the 1970's when a new central chimney was built in the position of the original chimney.

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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Hosmer Homestead is historically significant under Criterion A for its long association with members of the prominent Hosmer family, who from the time of the town's founding played both a formative and a representational role in the agricultural development of Concord for 250 years. It also qualifies under Criterion C as a well-preserved vernacular Georgian farmhouse and as the most intact of the few surviving farmstead remnants of the colonial period in the west part of Concord. While other early farmhouses in the vicinity have lost all outbuildings and ancillary structures, the Hosmer farmstead retains the small barn that was associated with its transition to the twentieth century as a boarding stable under George Minot Baker, as well as an unusually intact nineteenth-century granite-post fence. In addition, the Hosmer Homestead meets Criterion D for the rarity, in both details and completeness, of its structural frame, particularly the flatwise joists from the south portion of the house, which contributes and has the potential to yield information about some unusual First Period construction methods. Although this property, like all the other early farms in the west part of Concord, has been progressively eroded by road construction and single-family development, it nevertheless retains integrity of location, immediate setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The town of Concord, incorporated in 1635, was the first settlement in the Massachusetts Bay Colony west of the tidewater. While all the earliest houselots were located over a mile to the east in the center of town, several original settlers were allotted large land grants beyond the Sudbury River in the southwest quadrant of the town, known from 1655 as the "South Quarter". Among them was James Hosmer (1607-1685), whose sons and grandsons were farming parts of his land by the end of the seventeenth century. The farm of which this property is the surviving remnant was the major part of the land originally granted to James Hosmer, and thus dates back to the earliest years of the community. Over two and a half centuries, shrinking as pieces were sold or portioned out, and growing again as other sections were acquired, it descended through six more generations of the Hosmer family as one of the three major farms of the west section of town. Well before his death, James Hosmer conveyed most of the land he owned between the Assabet and Sudbury Rivers to his son, James, Jr., who built a house (said to have been demolished) just east of the Assabet. That house was situated off the north side of the earliest major route west, the old road to Lancaster (later reconfigured to become the Stow Road, now Main Street/Route 62). James, Jr. was killed in 1676 in the "Sudbury Fight" during King Philip's War, and his large farm passed to his sons James and Thomas. In about 1710, however, James III moved to Connecticut, and sold his share of the property to his cousin, **Stephen Hosmer, Jr.** (1680-1754). According to family tradition, the earliest section of this house was built by Stephen, Jr. at about that time.

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Like virtually all of Concord's rural landowners in the eighteenth century, **Stephen Hosmer, Jr.** was principally a subsistence farmer. In addition, however, he had a cider house on the property, where he processed the products of his orchards, and from which he probably sold jugs of this most popular of colonial drinks to his neighbors. He is known to have held a town office at least once, when he was elected Selectman in 1729. He married Prudence Billings of Acton in 1707, and they raised six children here in the First Period farmhouse with the exposed, whitewashed frame. Their oldest daughter, Prudence, known for her love of reading and learning, married her second cousin and became the mother of Maj. Joseph Hosmer, one of Concord's best-known Revolutionary patriots, whom she largely educated herself. Stephen and Prudence's eldest son, Capt. Stephen Hosmer III, was a prominent surveyor, Selectman, officer in the French and Indian War, and another influential local leader both prior to and during the Revolution.

It was the third son, however, **Josiah Hosmer**, (1714-1788) who remained on the farm to manage it for his parents, and took title to it in 1738 and 1739, when he was in his mid-twenties and his father was in his late fifties. This arrangement between Stephen and Josiah, in which an aging father deeded his property to a son who agreed to care for both the farm and his parents, is a vivid illustration of the way Concord's early farmers typically allocated their property and provided for themselves and their wives in their old age. It echoed what the two preceding generations of the family had done, and also set a precedent that was followed by all the later Hosmers who owned this property.

Josiah married Hannah Wesson in 1738, the same year his father conveyed the first half of the farm to him "for goodwill and affection." The young couple were given the east half of the dwelling house to live in, and the next year received all the rest of the property--the remainder of the house, the home farm of 65 acres, and "outlands" in the southwest part of Concord totaling 66 acres more. It was apparently they who updated the house, boxed its exposed timbers, and added the fine field paneling, pilasters, and other Georgian details seen throughout most of the main part of the building. Like his father, Josiah was primarily a farmer, but obviously a very prosperous one, and he took part in other aspects of Concord affairs as well. Along with his brother, Stephen, he was a founder of a small congregation which split off from the Concord church at a time of protest against the "new-lightism" of its minister in the 1740's and early 1750's. He was one of the two choristers of the group, who called themselves the West Congregation, although they were dubbed the "Black Horse Church" because they held their services in the Black Horse Tavern on Main Street. In 1775, Josiah Hosmer successfully petitioned for the town to lay out a two-rod way from the Stow Road to a lane which already led to his dwelling house from the north. The new road eventually became part of today's Baker Avenue, connecting the two earliest highways that entered the town from the west.

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Josiah and Hannah had five daughters and four sons, all of whom came of age at a time of acute land shortage in Concord, even for the wealthiest of the farming families. In a pattern that helped settle many central Massachusetts communities, the two youngest sons moved west, to Templeton (incorporated 1762), and established new farms there. Upon their parents' deaths in 1788 and 1789, at least ten acres of the southeast section of the farm near the Sudbury River went to the second son, John.

It was the eldest son, however, **Jesse Hosmer**, (1745-1829), a Minuteman during the Revolution, who was the next owner of both the old homestead and the major portion of the farm, which in 1798 totaled ninety acres. Again, though Jesse paid his father 100 pounds for half the farm in 1779, the conveyance from Josiah to Jesse appears to have been made in connection with the son's marriage (to Ann Prescott in about 1778), and in consideration of the father's advancing years. Jesse certainly lost no money on the transaction, as his father immediately bought back the west half of the house for 300 pounds, along with the right to keep his cattle, swine, and poultry near the house and barn. During his lifetime Jesse added considerably to the property's acreage. He purchased the adjoining Piper Farm to the east, and eventually rented out some of the outlying portions to other farmers. In the tradition of his forebears, Jesse, too, conveyed most of the farm to a chosen son well before his death. In 1818 he sold half his property and all the farmstead, which included the house, barn and outbuildings, well, and "pond holes," to his youngest son, Abel, (born 1796) for \$1500. In the transaction, however, he was careful to reserve the right of his 75-year-old sister, Esther, to remain in the house.

Ann Hosmer died in 1810, and Jesse, who lived to be 83, continued to live in the house with Abel and his wife Olive (Davis), who were married in 1821. Abel was clearly the principal farmer here during the last ten years of his father's life, even owning some of the land in his own name from the time he was in his early twenties. Concord, which actively participated in the founding of the forerunner to the county-wide Middlesex County Agricultural Society in 1820, was an early center for experimental farming in the nineteenth century, and a partial record of Abel Hosmer's land management illustrates some of the agricultural practices followed by Concord farmers of his day. Contracts of 1819, for instance, spell out how the land leased out by him and his father, and in some cases by Abel alone, was to be cultivated. They required that several parcels under a five-year lease be burned over, plowed, and planted with rye the first year, then sown with corn or potatoes the second year, followed by a specific mixture of hay grasses for mowing during the rest of the term. To preserve the production of the meadows where cranberries grew, Abel Hosmer's leases limited the number of crops that could be picked. In a typical business arrangement, the lessee was to pay the owner(s) a third of the hay or vegetable crop and half the profits from the sale of the cranberries.

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When Jesse died in 1829, **Abel Hosmer** (1796-1887) became the full owner of a large farm that extended from the Stow Road north and west to the Assabet for over a hundred acres, including some land north of the 1808 Union Turnpike (today's Elm Street). Part of Abel's land was actually *in* the river, in the form of an intervale in the bend near the crossing of the turnpike, on which he grew millet. In 1859 the reason for the intervale's changing shape was the subject of much discussion with his good friend, Henry David Thoreau, who valued Abel Hosmer's down-to-earth company and practical, empirical knowledge as he did that of several other Concord farmers. Like his forebears Abel was also a religious man, but at times his practicality won out, especially during the long Sabbath that began Saturday at sunset. One Saturday evening a farmer came to the house to see about buying a cow. Abel's son came to the door and said "My father is at his devotions; he cannot see you now." The farmer offered to wait. The son came out again and said "My father is still at his devotions, but he says you can have the cow for forty dollars" (Wheeler House File B2).

The record of what Abel owned in his long life of ninety years hints at the transition he made from the old subsistence type of farming to the more intensive, specialized, and productive agriculture that took hold in Concord during the middle third of the nineteenth century. In 1829 his livestock consisted of one horse, one pig, two cows, and a pair of oxen. His farm had been reduced to seventy-two acres (it reached a low of about 45 acres in 1835). By 1850, however, he owned 129 acres, two pairs of oxen, six cows, and a carriage. In 1858 he built a large new barn, much higher than the old "low-posted" type, from whose cupola he could see as far west as Mt. Wachusett, and look down on the tracks of the Fitchburg Railroad, which had come through his property as it was extended west through Concord in 1844.

Although during most of Abel Hosmer's ownership the farmstead was no longer shared by two families the way it had been in earlier generations, in the middle of the nineteenth century his was still a typically crowded household of a large working farm. Living here in 1855 were Abel and Olive; two grown daughters, Maria and Caroline, both teachers; two sons, James and Prescott, farmers; and one young farmhand, George Cooper. Twenty-five years later in 1880, Olive had died (in 1879), and the occupants of the farm were the eighty-four-year-old Abel, daughter Caroline, youngest son Prescott and his first wife Mary, and no less than six farmhands.

In the tradition of the generations before them, one of the sons, Prescott, became the principal farm manager as his father got older, and grew to be as concerned with the latest farming methods as Abel had been. While Abel was one of the earliest members of the Middlesex Agricultural Society, Prescott became an active participant in the Concord Farmer's Club, a progressive agricultural organization founded in part by the editor of The New England Farmer, Simon Brown. Members presented papers at the club's meetings, and Prescott Hosmer gave at least three during the 1870's. His papers on the new "green soiling" method of feeding livestock, and on the care of milch cows indicate that his specialty was dairy

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farming, and that he probably kept both Jerseys and Ayrshires. Most instructive is his lecture on "Changes in Farming in the Last Twenty Years", written in 1870, in which he compared the methods, equipment, and barn design of that time with those of his father's generation. The newer seed sowers, corn planters, root diggers, mowing machines, etc., were clearly important contributors to the increased productivity and efficiency of the Hosmer Farm after the Civil War. The changes in planting and cultivation Prescott describes since the era when Abel and Jesse had required a "seeding down" of potatoes, corn, and mixed grasses were especially striking. To Prescott, that old crop rotation had been "just enough . . . to keep the neighborly bees from starvation."

Like all the owners before him, Abel Hosmer conveyed the ownership of the farm to his son long before he died. In 1867, at the age of seventy-one, he sold all his real and personal estate to **Prescott**. The terms of the sale reveal, however, that in the late nineteenth century the strings attached to such family transactions could still bind the new owner as tightly as they had in the colonial era. Abel Hosmer required that his son not only pay his parents \$300 a year and provide for all their basic needs for the rest of their lives, but he also placed stringent restrictions on the use of the property. In contrast to what Abel had been able to do while his own father was alive, Prescott could neither lease nor sell any of the land, and he could cut no wood from it except for "home fires". Furthermore, the terms of Abel's transaction cast light on the life of another occupant of the house, his youngest and only unmarried daughter, Caroline, who was thirty-one at the time of the sale. Although her father required that Prescott provide for her, as well, it is clear that Caroline was expected to act as a nurse to her parents in their old age unless she were to marry. If she did marry, Prescott was to hire and board a nurse for Abel and Olive, if necessary. And when his parents died, Prescott would owe their executor \$6500.

Ironically, Abel's intentions for the future of the farm and his own final years were not fulfilled, and it is more likely that he, and possibly Caroline, ended up caring for Prescott, who died of pneumonia two years before his father. Prescott (1827-1885) married relatively late in life, at the age of 47, and apparently had no children who lived to adulthood. His first wife, Mary E. (Forster), died in 1881, and two years later he married a 31-year-old teacher from Ashland, Julia Whitney. Consequently, upon Prescott's death in 1885 at the age of 57, although his father was still living, the property passed, not to another generation of Hosmers, but to his childless widow.

For a brief time **Julia Hosmer** (1852-1929) hired a young Lincoln farmer, George Minot Baker, II, to manage the farm. Upon her father-in-law's death in 1887, however, she moved to Concord center, and sold the main property, then 165 acres, to her manager. The farm that **George Baker** (1855-1924) purchased included the house, three barns, and assorted small outbuildings, as well as Abel and Prescott's remaining livestock--fourteen cows, five horses, and twenty-three pigs.

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Young, ambitious, and with late-nineteenth-century entrepreneurial ideas that differed sharply from the mixed-husbandry approach of his Hosmer predecessors, George Baker continued some dairy operations, but turned most of the property into a horse farm. Within a year he had purchased a bull, sold most of the pigs, and built a large new barn, which he opened as a boarding stable. In 1891 he increased his capacity to over a hundred horses, making it the largest boarding stable in Concord and the surrounding region. For several years he operated under the long-recognized name "Hosmer Farm", but by 1909 he was calling his stable "Pinehurst Farm." In 1899 Mr. Baker sold off 30 3/4 acres along the Assabet to the American Woolen Company, which had plans (later abandoned) to build a textile mill on the bank of the river that would be an adjunct to its large mill in neighboring Maynard.

In 1908, at the age of 53, George Baker married Ida M. (Chase) Thorndike, a 45-year-old widow. By that time he had built a carriage house and a silo, and, like most Concord farmers of the early twentieth century, had added a sizable poultry flock to the farm's livestock. Mr. Baker served several terms on the Concord Board of Assessors, one on the town Liquor Board, and was a director of the Middlesex Mutual Fire Insurance Company and the Sons of the American Revolution. Mrs. Baker was a prominent officer of both local and regional organizations, serving as President of the Concord Woman's Club and of the state Federation of Woman's Clubs, and in 1923 as State Regent of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Mr. and Mrs. Baker retired from the farm in 1917, moved to a new house on part of the property that faced Elm Street, and sold the remaining 134 acres of the farm to **Abbot Allen** (1867-1932) of Arlington. Under his ownership the emphasis of the farm changed again, to a market-gardening operation. The farm management was shared by all his immediate family members, including Mrs. Allen (Winnie E. [Gifford]), and all four of their grown children--three sons, H. Vaughan, A. Gifford, and Abbot, Jr., and daughter Laura, who married engineer Ralph Adams in 1928. Winnie Allen died in 1925, and Abbot Allen, Sr. in 1932. The children inherited the farm through a family trust, and carried it on through the years of the Great Depression, calling it the Allen Farm. For many years they had a farmstand at the foot of the avenue, facing Elm Street.

The 1930's also brought two other major changes to the old farm. In 1935, in response to years of increasingly heavy auto traffic through the centers of Arlington, Lincoln, and Concord, the commonwealth opened a new "bypass" highway between Cambridge and the beginning of Route 2 at the west edge of Concord. The new road, which was later incorporated into Route 2, passed within 200 feet of the house. It not only sliced the farm in two, but set the stage for both residential and commercial development of the woods and fields it traversed. Then, three years later, George Baker's huge horse barn, and possibly other outbuildings, were destroyed in the 1938 hurricane.

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By the late 1930's only the Adamses and Gifford Allen and his wife, Dorothy, were still living on the farm. The latter subsequently built their own house on Elm Street on a large parcel east of Baker Avenue. **Ralph** and **Laura Adams**, with Mr. Adams' mother, Bessie, remained in the old farmhouse, and in 1944 took title to the thirty-five acres remaining in the triangle enclosed by Baker Avenue, Elm Street, and the state highway. Over the next few years they subdivided the land in the triangle, and sold off several pieces for houselots.

Eventually the Adamses moved to Vermont, and in 1949 they sold the farmstead parcel, which had been reduced to 5.4 acres, to **Louis A. McMillen** of Lexington. Mr. McMillen (1917-1998) was an architect, and a founding member of the Architects' Collaborative in Cambridge. He participated in the design of the Graduate Center at Harvard University, designed several housing developments, and managed several major projects in the Middle East. He and his wife, Persis, (who had formerly been married to his colleague, Carl Koch,) added the west wing to the house in the early 1960's, and may have done a minor amount of updating to the rest of the building. They further subdivided both the farmstead and some adjoining parcels into seventeen lots, most of which they sold to a Concord real estate company, **J & E Company, Inc.**, in 1971. By then the farmhouse parcel measured 2.69 acres. It was sold by J. & E. Co., with the house, the one remaining barn, and a garage (apparently the former carriage house) to **Doris Gordon** and **John White**.

Under their ownership the property was occupied briefly by a religious sect, the Divine Light Mission. In 1973 the Commonwealth took a strip of approximately 48,000 square feet of the farmstead parcel for the widening of Route 2, demolishing the garage/carriagehouse in the process, and obliterating the last remnants of the horse barn foundation. Later that year, Doris Gordon sold the remaining portion of the farmstead, (the present 1.59 acres), to a local resident, **Shepard Ginandes**, who donated it to a group affiliated with Concord's Trinity Episcopal Church, **Identity, Inc.** For a few brief years, Identity operated an alternative school for teenagers here, called "The School We Have", and boarded some of the staff in the house. The present residential owners, **Thomas** and **Nancy Conway**, bought the property in 1977.

Although the Fitchburg Railroad was cut through Abel Hosmer's property over a hundred and fifty years ago, the railroad's presence had brought the promise of expanded markets for Concord's agricultural goods, actually increasing the viability of the local farms. Developments of the middle and late twentieth century have been less kind to local agriculture, however, especially in the west half of the town, which has seen most of its former privately-owned farmland developed for single-family homes. With the exception of the Hosmer Homestead, which retains both its early farmhouse and a late-nineteenth-century barn, all the historic farmsteads in the western part of Concord have also disappeared--in some cases reduced to the house alone, in others completely demolished.

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In contrast to the railroad, the building of the state bypass highway in the 1930s truly severed the Hosmer Farm in two. By the early 1970s Baker Avenue no longer crossed the state road, and its north and south sections had become two separate streets. Further changes to the area in recent years have been almost inevitable, driven by compelling economic and demographic forces. The division of much of the old farm into houselots in the 1940s through 1970s was partly the result of selling off land for cash in the post-Depression years; it was also a response to the intense demand for housing after World War II. Subsequent changes in town zoning laws prepared the way for office park development on the former Hosmer land south of Route 2, where a communications tower is now being planned.

The salvation of the remaining farmstead from further development and from the harsh treatment associated with its brief use under two alternative religious and educational institutions, however, has been the result of determined efforts by its present owners. Recognition of the significance and integrity of the Hosmer Homestead through listing on the National Register will help to re-establish awareness of the farm's pivotal and representative role in the history of Concord, as well as provide a catalyst for the preservation of other fragile representatives of Concord's agricultural past.

Archaeological Significance

Although numerous prehistoric sites have been recorded in the Concord, Sudbury and Assabet River drainages (which converge approximately one mile to the east), few sites have been systematically excavated in the area limiting their interpretable value and making surviving sites in the area potentially significant. Prehistoric sites in this area may contain information that clarifies the role they played in local and regional subsistence and settlement systems between sites along tributaries of the Merrimack River and along the primary Merrimack drainage corridor. Prehistoric sites in this area may be part of an interior socio/political network focused on the area around the convergence of the Concord, Sudbury and Assabet Rivers. The sites can also be part of a larger regional pattern with a primary focus on the Merrimack River, possibly at its convergence with the Concord River. Such locales have been recognized as regionally important settlement locations or cores, especially during later Woodland Periods. Prehistoric sites in this area may also contain information that can contribute to a greater understanding of regional trade patterns, particularly between interior and coastal locales. The Merrimack River and its tributaries represent a regionally important transportation corridor for both the prehistoric and historic periods.

Historic archaeological resources described above have the potential to provide detailed information on the social, cultural and economic patterns that characterized a family and farmstead which played a formative and representational role in the founding of Concord and its agricultural development for 250 years. Additional documentary research combined with archaeological survey

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and testing can test the accuracy of family tradition that dates the core of the house to ca. 1710 and the occupancy of Stephen Hosmer Jr. Architectural details for that portion of the house identify it as a First Period structure with some unusual construction methods for that period. Archaeological research may contribute information that documents and provides additional information on those early construction techniques and the additions/alterations that occurred over the next 250 years. Archaeological survey and testing can also help identify the full range of outbuildings and occupational related features through time as the homestead evolved through six generations of the Hosmer Family into one of the three major farms in the western portion of town. Accurate mapping of the farm's layout and analysis of occupational related features may produce evidence which documents functional changes at the farmstead from early subsistence agriculture to cash crops and husbandry (horses). Detailed analysis of occupational related features may also contribute information relating to specific occupants of six generations of Hosmer's, possibly within stratified contexts. Information may also be present indicating the role and importance of the extended family in the evolution of the farmstead, especially during the occupancy of Josiah Hosmer (1714-1788) who managed the farm while residing there with his parents.

(End)

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES, continued

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property consists of the entire 1.59-acre parcel #3797-2-1, "Lot 13" as shown on Town of Concord Assessor's maps E8 and E9.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries encompass all the surviving undivided portion of the Hosmer family homestead, with its two remaining buildings.

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RESOURCE COUNT

C = contributing; NC = non-contributing
B = building; O = object; Si = site;
St = structure

MAP#	NAME OR DESCRIPTION	DATE	STATUS	TYPE
1	Hosmer House ca. 1710	C	B	
2	Barn	1890's	C	B
3	Fence: granite posts; wood rails	mid-late 19th C.	C	O
4	Fence: stockade	ca. 1980's	NC	O
5	Lamp post	ca. 1980's	NC	O
6	Lamp post	ca. 1980's	NC	O

<u>TOTAL RESOURCE COUNT:</u>	<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Non-contributing</u>
BUILDINGS	2	0
STRUCTURES:	0	0
OBJECTS:	1	3
SITES:	0	0
TOTAL:	3	TOTAL: 3

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PHOTOGRAPHS (8 x 10")

-- all photographs and negatives: Anne Forbes, 1997

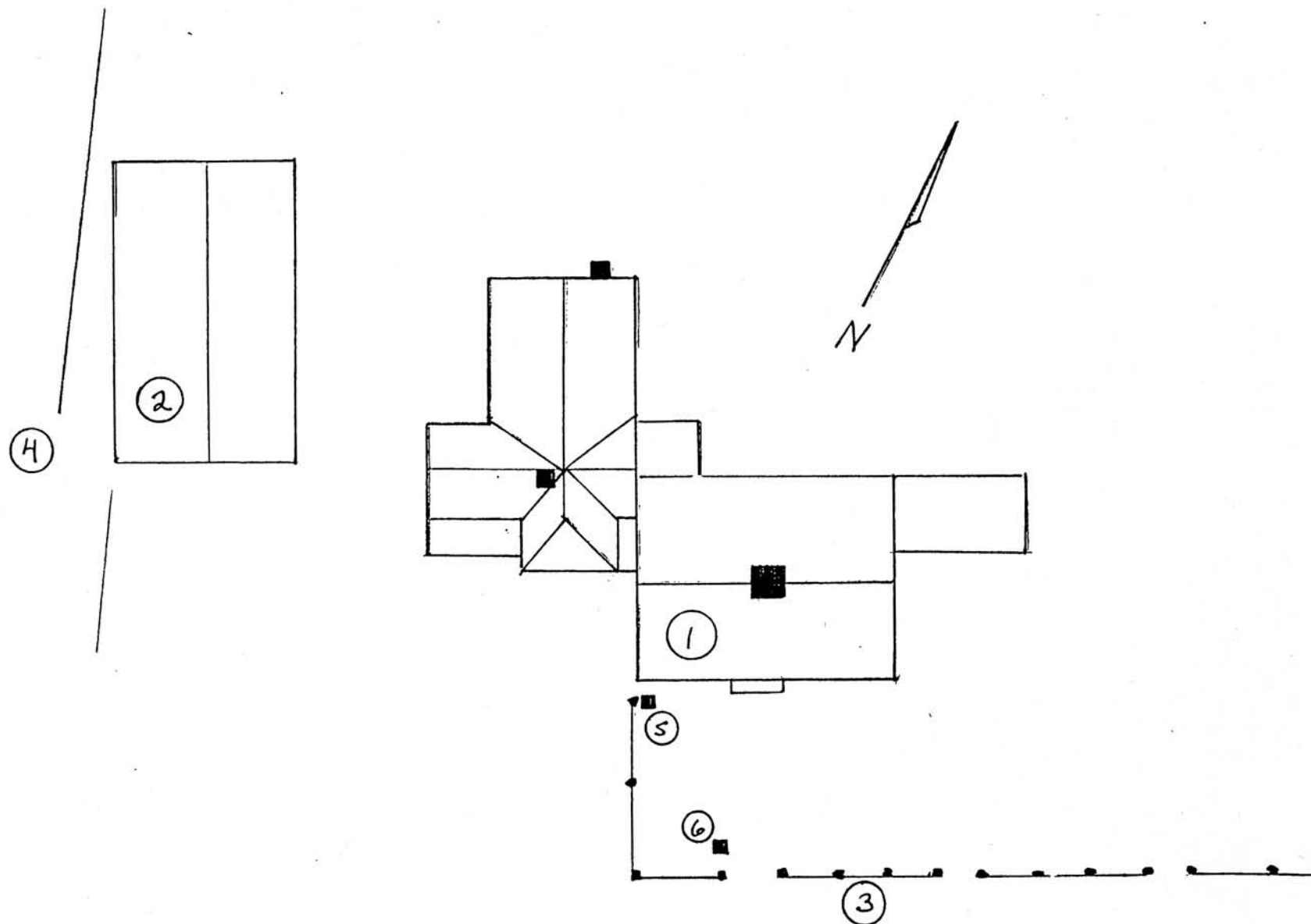
1. View looking west
2. Main (southeast) facade
3. Main (southeast) facade
4. View looking north
5. View of rear, looking south
6. Southeast chamber: fireplace wall
7. Southeast parlor: fireplace wall

SUPPLEMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHS (3 1/2 x 5")

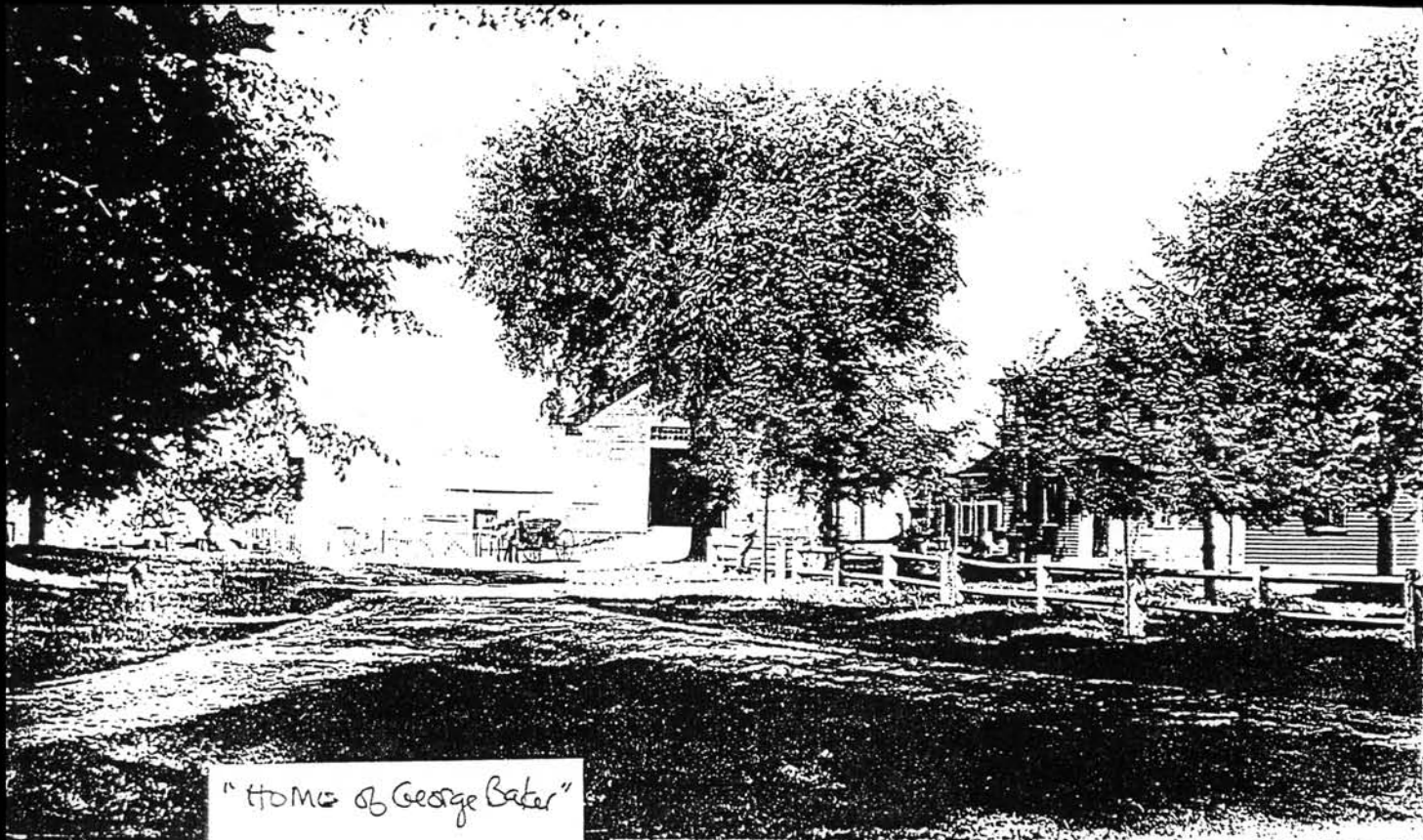
-- all photographs and negatives: Anne Forbes, 1997

8. Rear first story room, looking southwest
9. Attic: roof structure
10. Southwest chamber, looking west
11. Second story, looking north to bathroom door
12. Barn: looking west

(end)

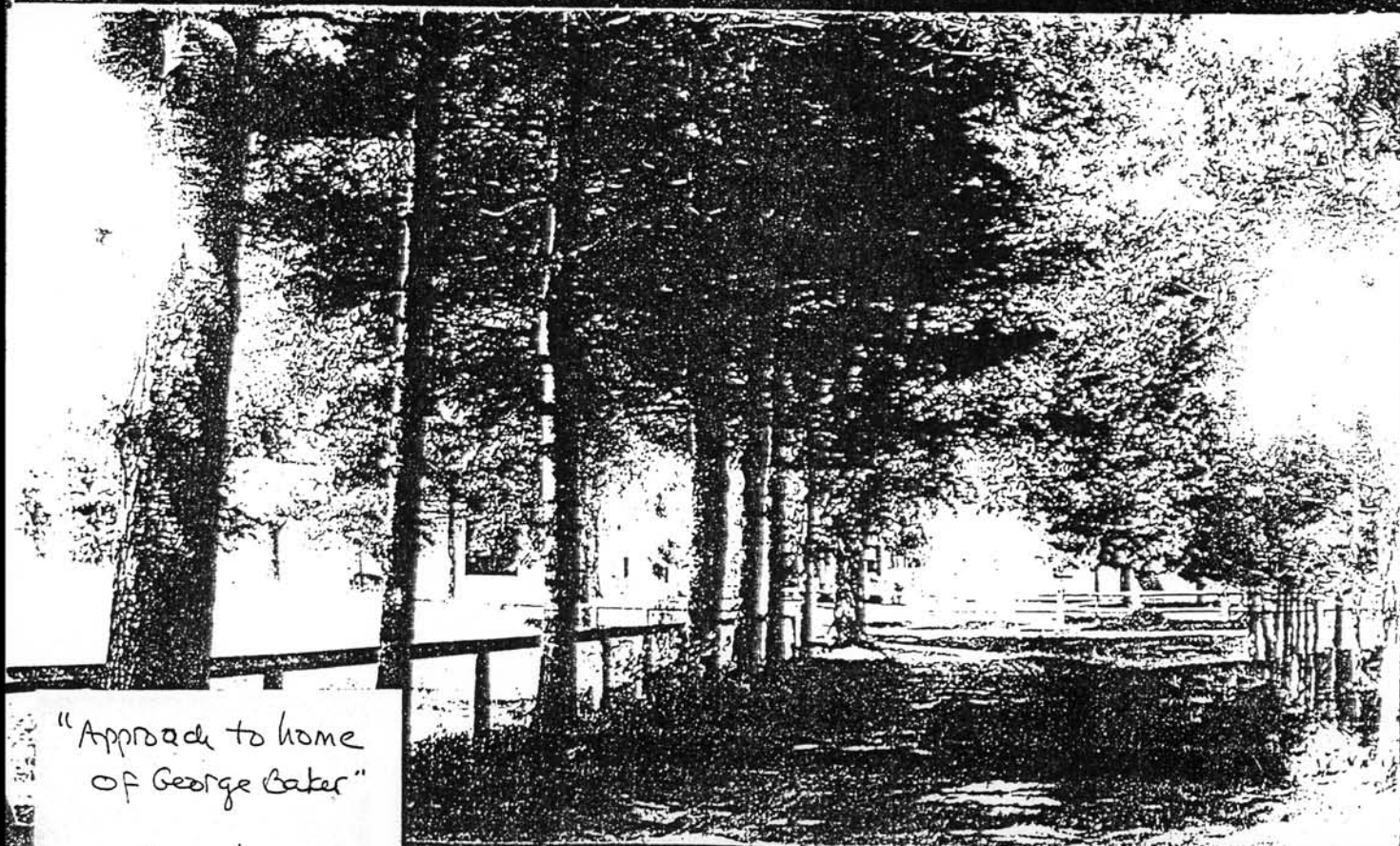


HOSMER HOMESTEAD
138 BAKER AVE.
CONCORD, MA



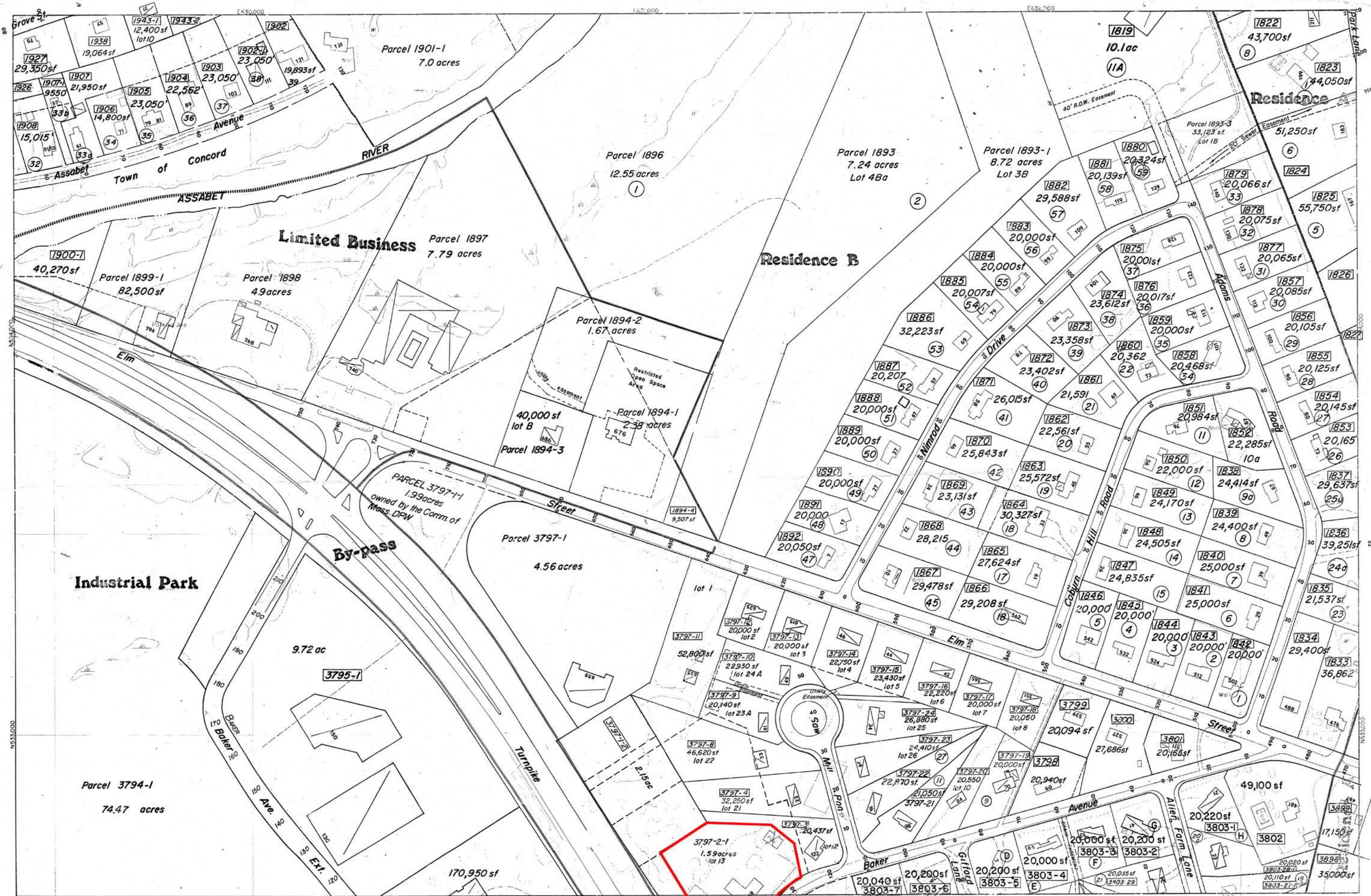
"Home of George Baker"

Alfred Hosmer
ca. 1895



"Approach to home
of George Baker"

Alfred Hosmer
ca. 1895



PREPARED BY PHOTOGRAMMETRIC METHODS
FROM AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY OF 1960 BY

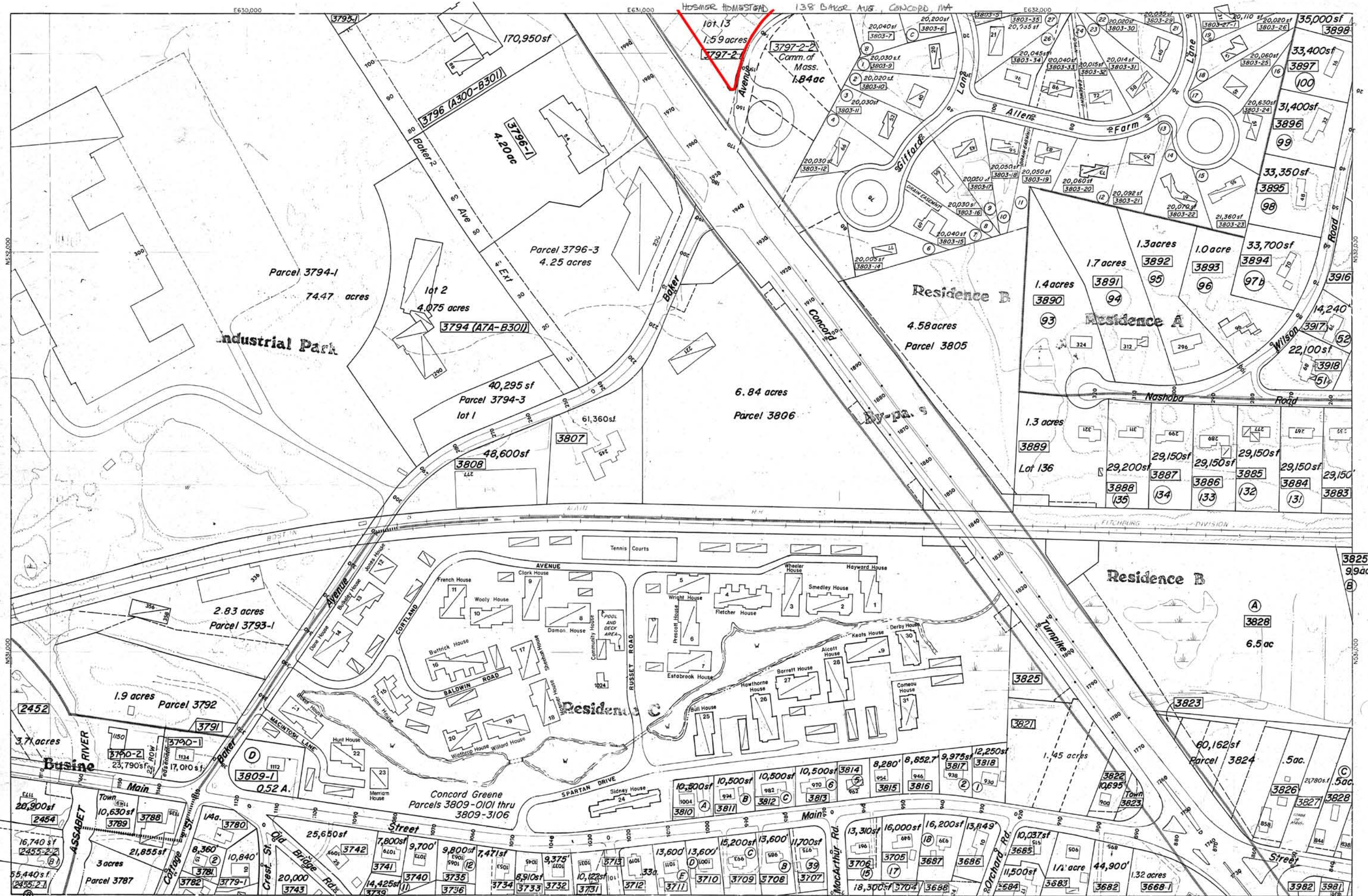
AIR SURVEY CORPORATION
ARLINGTON 9, VIRGINIA

HDSMGR HDSMST
138 BAKER AVE.
30X CONCORD, MA

INDEX TO ADJOINING SHEETS

D7	E7	F7
D8	E8	F8

TOWN OF CONCORD



PREPARED BY PHOTOGRAMMETRIC METHODS
FROM AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY OF 1960 BY

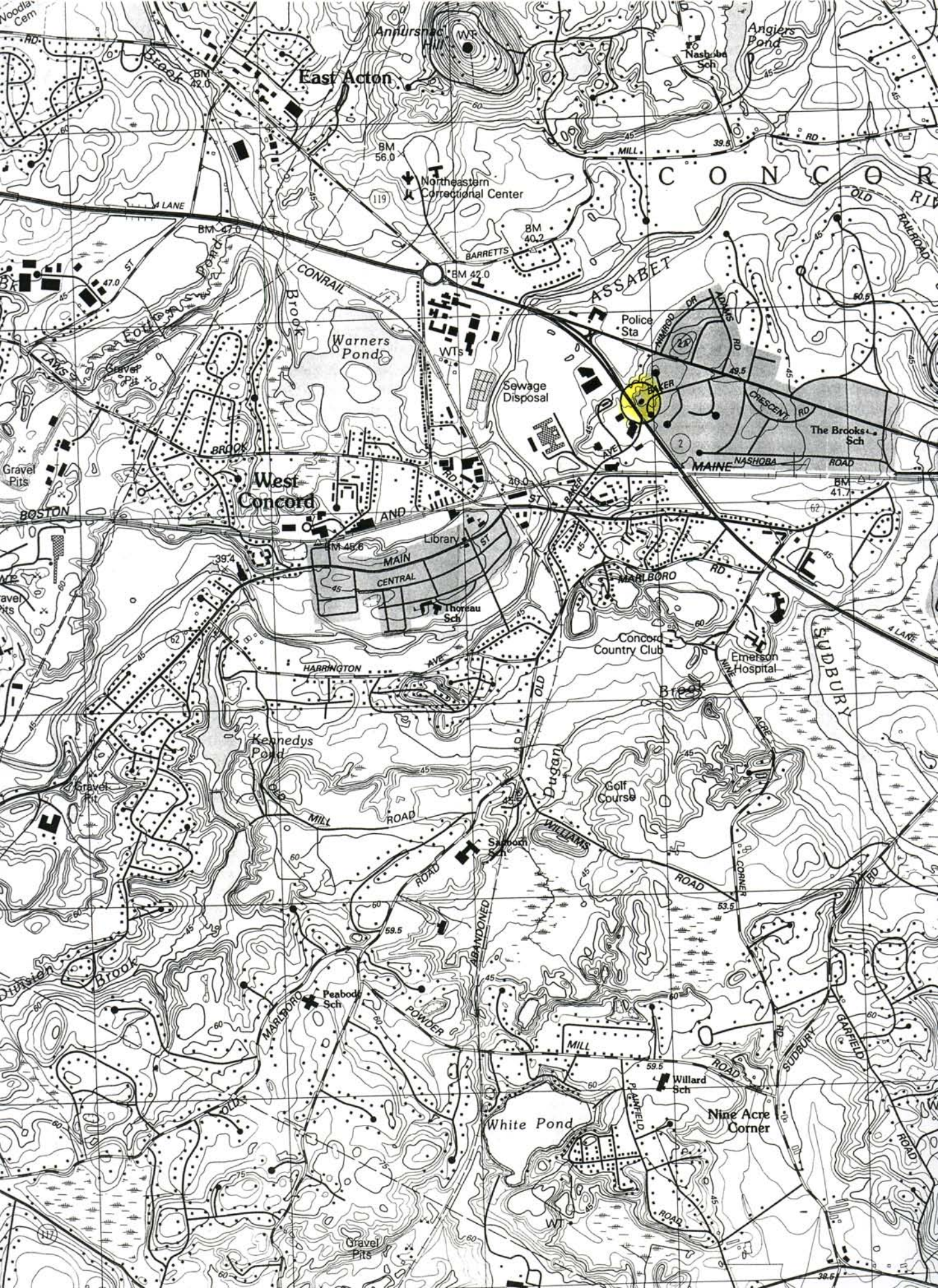
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ARLINGTON 9, VIRGINIA

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DB	EB	FB
DA	EA	FA

TOWN OF CONCORD





1. View looking west (Photographer: Anne Forbes, 1997)



2. Main (southeast) facade (Photographer: Anne Forbes, 1997)



3. Main (southeast) facade (Photographer: Anne Forbes, 1997)



4. View looking north (Photographer: Anne Forbes, 1997)



5. View of rear, looking south (Photographer: Anne Forbes, 1997)

[6. Excluded]

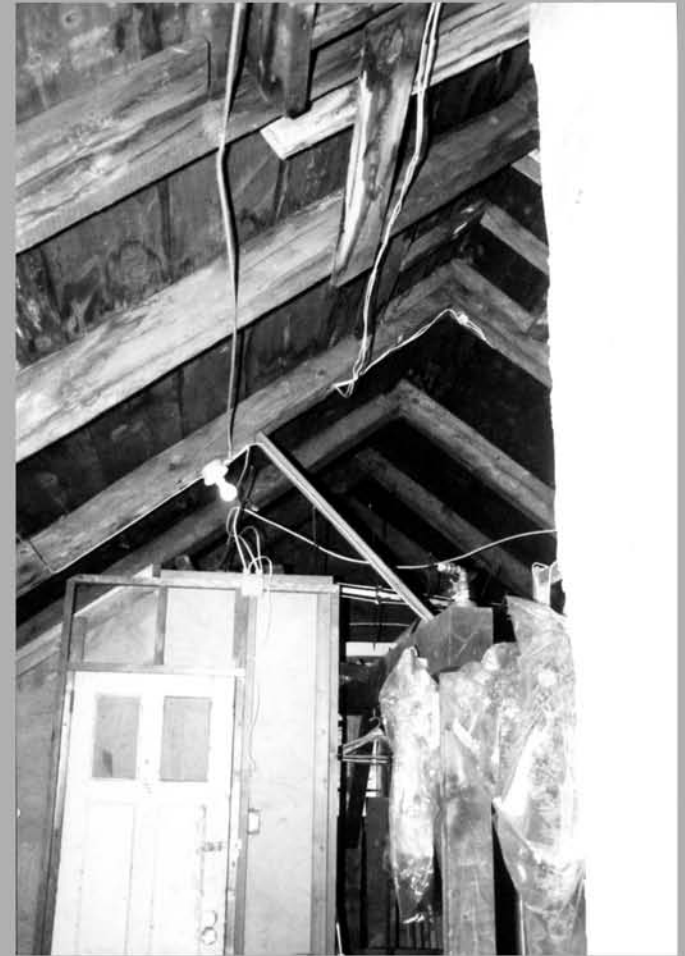


7. Southeast parlor: fireplace wall (Photographer: Anne Forbes, 1997)

Hosmer Homestead, Concord (Middlesex Co.)



8. Rear first story room, looking southwest



9. Attic: roof structure

[10. Excluded]

Hosmer Homestead, Concord (Middlesex Co.)



11. Second story, looking north to bathroom door



12. Barn: looking west