

Scott Farm Historic Farmstead Self-Guided Walking Tour

Welcome to the historic Scott Farm! The farm is a Certified B Corp and a for profit working farm of The Landmark Trust USA, a nonprofit historic preservation organization providing historic overnight vacation rentals. *Our mission is to preserve and restore historic properties through creative and sustainable uses for public enjoyment, education, and inspiration.*

BACKGROUND: Scott Farm has been in active cultivation since 1791 and holds an incredible history. Its size and function have changed over the years, but it has remained dedicated to agriculture. The farm is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the official list of U.S. sites worthy of preservation as maintained by the National Park Service. It is an incredibly intact example of a working agricultural landscape that tells the story of agriculture in Vermont over time from subsistence farming to sheep, dairy, meat, commodity apples, and finally its current focus on historic heirloom apples. Its 571 acres and 23 buildings include apple orchards, meadows, woods, houses, barns, bridges, and a pond.

Following years of occupation by native peoples, Benjamin Jones and Nathan Adams were the first European settlers to own the land. Little is known about their time, which was likely spent subsistence farming. In 1830 the property transferred to Daniel Bemis. During this time, the land was likely cleared and used for sheep farming, as was the case in much of Vermont at the time. Little historical documentation remains from this period, however. In 1845, ownership transferred to Rufus Scott, who shifted production away from wool to a focus on dairy. It is Scott who lent his name to the farm.

1. FARMHOUSE

The 1850 Greek Revival farmhouse is the oldest existing building on the property. Additions to the south and west were added c.1911 as garages. The southern addition served for years as the Landmark office, and is now worker housing. The western addition houses the Scott Farm office on the 2nd floor.

2. COW BARN (“1862 BARN”)

By 1860, Scott had 50 cows producing 800 lbs of butter and 300 lbs of cheese annually. This barn was built in 1862 to assist with milk production. Dairy began to wane in the 1870s as the farm diversified to include cattle, potatoes, maple, hay, grain, vegetables, hops, and tobacco. 1870 is also when apple trees were added to the farm, and by 1880 there were 40 producing trees. Maple production led to the construction of a sugarhouse in 1915 north of the main complex. When maple production ceased in the 1970s, the sugarhouse became worker housing until it was converted into an overnight rental by Landmark in 2004.

The barn is currently used for storage as well as the training facility of The Stone Trust, a nonprofit devoted to the art and craft of dry stone walling, a common historic trade in early New England. It is the only indoor dry stone walling education and training center in the world. The Stone Trust also maintains the beautiful Stone Park to the south of the Pig Barn.

3. HORSE BARN

The Horse Barn and many other buildings at the farm were added around 1911 following the 1903 transfer of the farm’s 42 acres to Frederick Holbrook II. Holbrook was part of a prominent Boston area railroad and construction family and descended from a Civil War era Vermont governor. The family had earlier purchased the neighboring Naulakha property from author Rudyard Kipling as well. The Holbrooks’ wealth allowed the farm to be operated as a “gentleman’s farm” well beyond the means of the typical Vermont farmer.

An additional 134 acres were added to the farm in 1908, and around 1911 production shifted to focus on apples. Scott Farm became a leader in the growth of the orchard industry in Vermont through the 1970s, producing 40,000 bushels annually at its peak. The 40 apple trees in 1880 had grown to 3,240 by 1915. Scott Farm was also an innovator, pioneering mail order delivery shipped even internationally in patented crates made from lumber on the property. This success allowed Holbrook to purchase an additional 238 acres at neighboring Dutton Farm in 1913. The farmhouse was used for worker housing for many years before being restored as an overnight rental by Landmark in 2001. At its height, Scott Farm employed 29 people: 2 orchardists, poultry, gardener, painter, bookkeeper, 4 carpenters, 8 Italian stonemasons, 10 farmhands, and a manager.

4. EQUIPMENT BARN (“U BARN”)

Upon Frederick Holbrook II’s passing in the late 1910s, management of the farm passed to his son, F. Cabot Holbrook, who continued the focus on apples and added an additional 194 acres to the property. This barn was constructed in 1915 and has always been used for equipment storage. The c.1911 pump to the south of the barn was used to get water from the dammed pond at Scott Farm to Naulakha’s swimming pool.

5. PIG BARN

F. Cabot Holbrook’s son Frederick III began working at the farm in 1957 and helped officially incorporate it as Scott Farm in 1958. The c.1911 Pig Barn was originally used for pigs and is now storage space. The Oscar winning film *The Cider House Rules* was partially filmed in the courtyard in 1998. Some of the sets for the film were built according to photographs of the farm found in one of the farm’s mail order brochures from the 1930s. This bridge and dammed pond to the south of the barn date to c.1911, when they were added for aesthetic beauty and to provide ice. Both were restored in the 1970s.

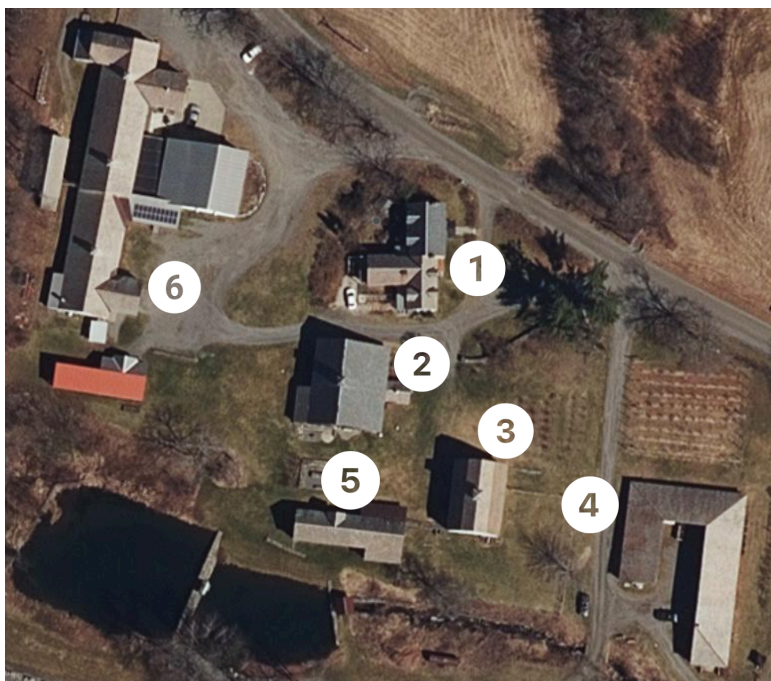
6. APPLE PACKING BARN

The oldest portion of the farm’s largest building was built in 1916 as a cow barn and is now used as our event space. The onset of WWI, resignation of the farm manager, and death of Frederick Holbrook II meant it was never used for cows, however. As the farm transitioned to apples, this became a pioneer in modern cooling facilities. The northern extension was added in 1937, and is now a packing room with the Landmark offices above. The 1963 eastern extension has always been used as a large cooler. The building to the south of this barn, now housing the Market, is a 2010s reconstructed homage to the original c.1911 Poultry Barn on the site.

CONCLUSION: In 1995, Fred Holbrook III donated Scott Farm to The Landmark Trust USA. Dutton Farmhouse and The Sugarhouse were converted to overnight accommodations by The Landmark Trust. Large single variety apple orchards in Vermont had ceased to be viable following the growth of mega orchards in the Pacific Northwest, and in 2001 the farm began converting away from a sole focus on McIntosh apples to a smaller heirloom orchard, beginning with 76 varieties plus other fruit, all ecologically grown. Grafting of additional heirloom varieties has led to 130 apple varieties grown at the farm today.

80% of today’s harvest from our 3,000 trees stays within 100 miles of our farm sold at our farmstand, wholesale, to local food producers, and used to produce our own cider and baked goods. Additional land is used for vegetable production, maple sugaring, forestry, and long term rental housing, powered in part by 165 solar panels.

Please feel free to explore the grounds, but do not enter any closed buildings. Thank you!



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