

SABBATHDAY LAKE SHAKER VILLAGE
State Route 26, two miles south of the junction with State Route 122
New Gloucester vicinity
Cumberland County
Maine

HABS ME-227
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

SABBATHDAY LAKE SHAKER VILLAGE

HABS No. ME-227

Location: State Route 26, two miles south of the junction with State Route 122
New Gloucester vicinity, Cumberland County, Maine

The village is located on the east and west sides of State Route 26

Note: For shelving purposes at the Library of Congress, Cumberland County was selected as the main location for Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village. A portion of the village is also located in Androscoggin County.

USGS Gray, Mechanic Falls, Minot, Raymond, Maine Quadrangles
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates (NAD83):

NW 38711.37 4874057.31

NE 393479.37 487057.18

SE 393477.82 4868742.10

SW 387411.86 486742.35

Present Owner: The Shaker Society (The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing)

Present Occupant: Members of the Shaker Society

Present Use: Communal Shaker working village and museum

Significance: This is the world's only remaining active Shaker village community that reflects the evolution of Shaker religion and architecture from the late eighteenth century to the present.

PART I: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

1. Historical Development:

The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing at Sabbathday Lake, Maine is the world's only remaining active Shaker community. Four Shaker members, two Brothers and two Sisters, maintain the farming complex, museum and archives through light industries, a gift shop, and extensive land leases.

The Society owns approximately 1,900 acres of land consisting of forest, lakeshore frontage, pasture areas, and agricultural fields. The rural nature of the village has remained intact since its inception in 1794. The extant seventeen buildings and structures, nine predating 1850, comprising the village are in a good state of preservation.

In 1747, a small group of people attended meetings led by tailors James Wardley and his wife Jane, former Quakers in Bolton on the Moors, near Manchester, England. This society was called in derision the Shaking Quakers due to their physical exertions brought on by religious fervor. It was to this group that Ann Lee, the daughter of a blacksmith was drawn. While under the auspices of the Wardleys, Ann Lee entered a divinely inspired state characterized by revelations and prophecies. In 1770, she was imprisoned for her separatist religious views at which time she experienced a series of prophetic visions. The small religious group now acknowledged Ann Lee as leader of the fledgling Shaker group.

Fleeing religious persecution in England stemming from Anne Lee's assertion that Christ was manifested in the Shaker Church, this small band of eight Shakers, who later named themselves the "United Society of Believers," followed Ann Lee to America in 1774. By 1779, the group had established the Shaker movement in what is now Watervliet, New York, seven miles northwest of Albany, and started a religious commune removed from worldliness based on religious devotion, celibacy, and communal labor. Shaker preachers, led by Ann Lee, subsequently embarked on a two year missionary trip across eastern New York and New England capitalizing on the wave of religious revivalism sweeping the county at that time. New England's rural areas produced the most converts as the population readily joined this new sect in hopes of greater religious satisfaction. By the time of Ann Lee's death in 1784, ten societies had been formed. In 1787 the first communal Shaker Society was covenanted at New Lebanon, New York, and thereafter Father Joseph Meachum and Mother Lucy Wright gathered the disparate believers into "Gospel Order," the Shaker System of church rules

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governing worship, social behavior, architecture, leadership, social structure, and industry that established uniformity and permanency among all Shaker villages.¹ These rules governing organization would have a direct impact on all Shaker communities including Sabbathday Lake. Men, women and children would live as Brothers and Sisters serving God in separate but equal facilities. Joseph Meachum conceived a three court "Family" system in which Believers would be grouped according to their "condition of travel in the Gospel."² This system called for an inner Church Family of fully committed Believers. A Second Family, or junior order, was reserved for those with ties to the outside world, while the gathering or Novitiate Family would receive inquirers and aid in Shaker religious acceptance. Each family was to be autonomous with separate economic affairs and consist of from very few to hundreds of members. Presiding over each Family would be Elders: two Brothers and two Sisters. These four Elders would be responsible to the Ministry of the bishopric, which consisted of all the Shaker societies in a state. In Maine, this bishopric consisted of the two communities of Alfred and Sabbathday Lake. Leading the state bishopric were also four Elders who in turn were responsible to the central or parent Ministry at New Lebanon, New York.

Utilizing this template for the establishment of Shaker religious and industrial communes, nineteen societies in nine states were founded: New Lebanon, New York, 1794, (which would become the seat of the Central Ministry of the Church); Watervliet, New York, 1787, (the site of the original Shaker settlement); Hancock and Tyringham, Massachusetts, 1790; Harvard and Shirley Massachusetts, 1791; Enfield, Connecticut, 1790; Enfield and Canterbury, New Hampshire, 1792; and Alfred and Sabbathday Lake (Thompson's Pond Plantation, New Gloucester), Maine, 1793 and 1794, respectively. The establishment of other societies followed in Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, and Pennsylvania. Later, short lived communities were established in Georgia and Florida.³

As the eastern Shaker communities grew in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the villages began to exhibit architectural uniformity as circulation of the Millennial Laws of 1821, based on Ann Lee and Joseph Meachum's rules governing all aspects of Shaker life, shaped common architectural forms and building types. The arrangement of buildings, and their colors in the disparate villages began to exhibit continuity as did specific building function. Accordingly, each village had the prerequisite core structures: meetinghouse, dwelling house, and trustees' office. Ancillary buildings such as barns, workshops, and mills eventually led to the formation of agricultural and industrially based rural religious communes separate from the outside world.

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While rules governing specific building function and appearance were understood by early Believers, specific rules governing a community's actual layout were carried out with varying degrees of conformity. As most converts were from rural areas, the earliest communities developed from farms donated to the society by Believers. Often these donated farms had existing buildings and were located in close proximity to a road. Early Shaker villages were formed with the most important buildings, meetinghouse and dwelling house, located along these main thoroughfares, secondary buildings being placed behind them in linear fashion. The elements of Shaker life were all manifested in both the exterior and interior architecture of buildings.

The Shaker population reached its greatest numerical strength in the 1850s, numbering roughly five thousand. However, a gradual decline that began after the Civil War accelerated at the turn of the century. Reasons for the decline in the Shaker movement are numerous and include the leaving of the younger population that sought greater opportunity in the outside world, an aging membership, and the changing role of religion as the focus of an American way of life. Its largest intakes had followed religious revivals such as those of the New Light Baptists in New Lebanon, New York, in 1779; the Kentucky Revival in the early 1800s; and the Millerite excitement of the 1840s.⁴ In the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth there was little if any missionary outreach, the United Society being more concerned with the care of an aged population, maintenance and disposition of properties and investment of funds.⁵ During this period, Shaker communities including Sabbathday Lake came to rely on the expected intake of children raised in Shaker orphanages. However, this increase did not occur as most children left the Society when they reached maturity. By the 1900s, most Shaker membership was composed of Sisters, many of whom were aged. At this time, eight Shaker villages closed due to lack of membership, followed in the 1920s with the close of eight more communes. Sabbathday Lake became one of five remaining communities out of the more than nineteen that once existed. With the closing of the Gorham Community in 1819 and the Alfred Shaker Community in 1931, only Sabbathday Lake remained of the three Shaker communities founded in Maine. It is the only remaining active Shaker village left in the world today.

The Central Ministry at New Lebanon dictated the design and construction of building types as well as community planning of formative Shaker communities. These building guidelines were in place by the late eighteenth century when most communities were being "called to order" and fully embraced by 1820. Shaker buildings built in this time frame, ca. 1794-1829, are pared down versions of the Federal style. In 1821, New Lebanon Central Ministry issued the Millennial Laws, expanded in 1845 and revised continuously into the late 1800s. These rules sought to control all aspects of Shaker life by bringing a consistency to

the scattered communities. Prohibited in building design were “beadings, moldings, cornices, which are merely for fancy” and “odd or fanciful styles of buildings.”⁶

Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village was planned according to these general guidelines issued by the Central Ministry with the three core buildings of a Shaker village, the meetinghouse, dwelling house, and trustees’ office being the earliest constructed.

This template was established by Joseph Meachum, Lucy Wright and master builder Moses Johnson in order to insure that core buildings and layout of the early Shaker communities was uniform. The exact architectural origins of specific Shaker building types are somewhat of a mystery. It has been postulated that the Meetinghouse design is based on the earliest structure built by Shaker converts in 1780 at Ashfield, Massachusetts, a crudely constructed log structure with gambrel roof.⁷ Whether the subsequently constructed meeting houses were based on this prototype is highly debatable. In any event, the use of a gambrel roof served a practical purpose; namely providing room for the Shakers’ worship space. Structures and their attendant use and design were based on the doctrine of serving God through hard work. A particular style was not suggested by the Central Ministry. In fact, any pretensions of a stylistic nature were forbidden. Buildings were designed to reinforce Shaker tenants of separation of sexes, cleansing of worldly sin through work for God, and separation from the world. This was achieved through spartan functional building types. The Central Ministry at New Lebanon established the core Church Family buildings that would serve as the template for establishment and later expansion of villages. These structures were the meetinghouse, first, second, and third dwelling house, trustees’ office, ministry and support buildings. Individual communities carried out this plan, however, there was a degree of interpretation concerning site plans and building orientation to each other and the main thoroughfare. The Central Maine Ministry received its instructions for the establishment of its two communities, Alfred and Sabbathday Lake, from New Lebanon. The original linear plan of the two communities was identical. As originally constructed, other Shaker communities, including Canturbury and Enfield, New Hampshire were also identical.⁸

1. SPECIFIC HISTORY OF SITE:

1. Initial Planning and Development:

The history of Shakerism in Maine is associated with John Cotton, of Alfred, Maine, who first encountered the group on a trip to New Hampshire in 1783. Returning to Maine a true convert, he set about organizing Maine’s first Shaker Community in Alfred, Maine. Here

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the group of Believers gathered at the farm of Benjamin Barnes, whose land would eventually become the site of the Alfred Shaker Society. In the summer of 1788, the Shakers at Alfred built their first meetinghouse, albeit a crude structure. The church leadership at New Lebanon, New Hampshire sent Brother Moses Johnson of Enfield, New Hampshire to undertake the construction of a permanent meetinghouse. The first meetinghouse constructed by Brother Moses Johnson was at New Lebanon in 1785. It served as a template for all such structures to follow, including those erected at Alfred (1793) and Sabbathday Lake (1794).

Interest soon spread to the towns of New Gloucester and Poland. In November of 1782, Nathan Pote, Nathan Freeman and Joseph Stone, three Shaker Missionaries from Gorham, Maine came to Thompson's Pond Plantation (New Gloucester) and Bakerstown to preach to settlers under the fervor of Northern New England frontier religious revival. The first meetings were held in the autumn of 1782 in the house of Gowen Wilson, Senior, which was situated on the southwest side of present day Route 26, the present day garden field of Sabbathday Lake Village. Soon large families had joined from nearby Bakerstown, later called Poland. By 1783, one hundred seventy three men, women and children from twenty six different families had been gathered.⁹

In 1808, under the leadership of the Shakers at Alfred, a community was established on the farms of Barnabus Bangs and Joseph Brackett in Gorham, Maine. A dwelling house and other structures were constructed to house roughly sixty followers. This community proved short lived, the Central Shaker ministry dissolving the commune in 1819. This Second Family was relocated to Poland Hill, about one mile north of Sabbathday Lake where they began the community's Novitiate Order.

The Shakers established a Third Family in 1820, located in the town of Poland midway between the upper and lower communities on the Chipman Road. The family purchased the structure known locally as the Square House, a local tavern. However, this third family settlement was soon dissolved and absorbed into Sabbathday Lake with some of its structures being relocated to the village in 1844.

The Shaker Brethren constructed a road between Poland Hill and the Square House settlements in 1816. By constructing this highway (present day Route 26), the Sabbathday Lake Village was bisected. Originally, the old county road ran below the village to the east.

The earliest effort at building construction at Sabbathday Lake was the erection of a grist mill in 1786 followed by the construction of a sawmill in 1796 which would become two components of a large industrial enterprise for the community for the next 150 years.

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Following the formal organization of the Shaker Society at Sabbathday Lake on April 19, 1794, principles of the Gospel Order mandated the construction of a meetinghouse. Moses Johnson arrived in June after completing the Alfred Meetinghouse to assist the eighty Brethren with its construction. The Meetinghouse was ready for use by Christmas Day, 1794.

The year following the completion of the Meetinghouse, the Believers at Sabbathday Lake erected a large dwelling house in 1795. These two primary structures along with the previously constructed gristmill and the saw mill erected in 1796 provided the beginnings of the community's economic industrial base and served as the nucleus of the village. By 1814, the Believers had constructed twelve buildings, in addition to the structures that remained from the pre-Shaker period that were converted to Shaker use. However, these exact buildings and placement cannot be determined through Shaker records.

The year 1800 marked a formative period for the Sabbathday Lake village. The society at that time consisted of 143 adults, sixty-one Brethren and eighty-two Sisters and children.¹⁰ The previous structures comprising the original five farmsteads from which the village grew were remodeled, expanded, and moved into rows according to the rectilinear plan as set by Father Joseph Meachum.¹¹ The Meetinghouse, Dwelling House, plus the mills expanded the village to more than a dozen buildings. With the construction of the Meetinghouse, the progression of building construction followed with a Dwelling House, located across from the Meetinghouse; a Sawmill, a Girls' Shop, ca. 1796, (rebuilt 1901 by Otis Campbell); a Spinhouse, ca. 1816; first Trustees' Office, ca. 1796; Second Dwelling House of ca. 1816; a Nurse Shop, moved to the village in 1816; and an Herb House, possibly a pre-Shaker building converted to Shaker use prior to 1824. By the 1820s, an Ox Barn and Horse Barn, ca. 1829-1830; Sisters' Shop, ca. 1821; Ministry's Shop, ca. 1839; Boys' Shop, ca. 1850; Brethren's Shop, moved to the village in 1844; Blacksmith Shop, also moved to the village in 1844; and the Great Mill, ca. 1853 had been constructed to further accommodate the village's needs.

This earliest group of buildings at Sabbathday Lake, built ca. 1794-1814, was the result of both influences from the Central Ministry at New Lebanon and the village's own needs as an industrial religious commune. Buildings were constructed as needed. The rapidity at which these first structures were built - twelve from 1794 to 1814 - is an achievement considering the fairly extensive industries located on the complex and their attendant man power. The names of the exact builders of some of the early buildings, with the exception of Moses Johnson building the Meetinghouse, are unknown. It is not known if architectural knowledge was imparted by Johnson to the Shaker Brethren at the fledgling community, but it is likely as he was known to instruct other Shaker community's Brethren in building practices. It is

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also highly probable that outside, or “world’s persons,” were hired to supplement the labor force of Brethren. This is documented in the construction of the Laundry which was framed by an unknown world’s person in 1821.

In 1800, formative Shaker industries at Sabbathday Lake included coopering, wheel-making, shoemaking, blacksmithing, tailoring, printing, gardening, farming, and tanning. These industries were housed in structures set apart from the main village. These industries were run by deacons and trustees appointed in the 1820s, as well as by outside hired men. The Shakers derived not only their own village needs from the industries but also income from neighboring towns, the grist mill being a particularly lucrative early Shaker industry to the area. The Shakers’ first saw mill provided the village with lumber, hogshead staves and shingles. This enterprise was also frequented by outsiders from surrounding towns. Also produced by Shakers for commercial markets were wooden ware, tubs, pails, churns, and dry measures, oval boxes in nests, hair sieves and spinning wheels.¹² In 1800, the Sabbathday Lake Shakers established a very lucrative seed and herb business. Varieties of medicinal herbs, roots and bark as well as vegetable seeds were produced. Shaker Sisters also established a successful weaving industry.

At the peak of the Shaker movement in America in the decade before the Civil War, the Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village consisted of roughly forty-nine documented structures. Records housed in the Shaker Library at Sabbathday Lake indicate an impressive collection of buildings. Determining the exact placement of original village structures is problematic as original structures have been demolished, moved, remodeled, and building parts recycled as function arose or waned. It is helpful to refer to the earliest known view of the Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village and its Novitiate Order, Poland Hill, drawn by Brother Joseph Bussell, ca. 1850, the peak of the two communities’ membership and prosperity. The Meetinghouse was the focus of the village as was the large Dwelling House. Next to the Meetinghouse is the Ministry’s Shop, where the Ministry Elders and Eldresses moved after outgrowing their quarters in the Meetinghouse’s second story. Also occupying sites on the west side of Route 26 were the Garden Seed House, (demolished 1936), and Ministry’s Carriage House, (also no longer extant). Across the road, the eastern portion of the village on both sides of the first Dwelling House contained the following buildings: to the north, the Girls’ Shop; to the south, the Trustees’ Office or Second Dwelling; the Hired Men’s House (disassembled 1957, and relocated to Chatham, New York); and the Brethren’s Shop (moved to the village in 1844, demolished in 1907). In a row behind these structures stood farm related buildings including a ca. 1786 Carriage Shed that was here previous to the Shaker village’s formation, although its exact location on the site is unknown, Horse, Ox and Cow barns; Spinhouse, possibly another pre Shaker structure; Boys’ Shop; Herb House, (possibly pre Shaker, established by

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1824); Nurse Shop, moved to the site from the present day Shaker Cemetery in 1816; Sisters' Shop; and an assortment of chicken houses, ash houses and the various industrial structures previously built at the northwest edge of the village. The linear plan of the village as well as its architecture was at the time of Bussell's depiction expressive of continuity in architecture favored by the Central Ministry. It can be inferred that the Millennial Laws were at first closely adhered to judging from this graphica. However, it is difficult to assess the early community's appearance as this earliest view was somewhat fantastically drawn. The Federal style was the favored style albeit expressed with a great deal of restraint, ornament being considered superfluous by Shaker Believers.

The Agricultural and Industrial Schedule of the 1850 Census provides a detailed inventory of both industrial and agricultural activity at Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village. The village at that time consisted of 1,600 acres, 800 improved, and 800 unimproved with a valuation of \$20,000. Livestock consisted of horses, cows, oxen, cattle, and sheep with a total value of \$1,651. Products included fifty bushels of wheat, ten bushels of rye, 100 bushels of Indian corn, 100 bushels of oats, 225 lbs. of wool, ten bushels of peas and beans, and 600 bushels of Irish potatoes. The apple orchard was valued at \$1,000; the value of produce of market gardens was \$1,000 as well. In addition, 1,000 lbs. of butter, 1,500 lbs. of cheese, 125 tons of hay, and 200 lbs. of beeswax and honey were also produced. The valuation of homemade manufactures was \$1,000. Valuation of animals slaughtered was \$3,500. Industrially, articles produced at an annual value of \$500 included brooms and potash, two and a half tons of potash valued at \$500.

The 1860 census data reflects nominal changes in certain categories as well as decreases in others, for example the total acreage, increased slightly to 500 improved with 1,200 unimproved for a total acreage of 1,700. The valuation of produce of market gardens fell to \$500. Other agricultural products that reflected an increase were pounds of wool and beans. The apple orchard product value was less than the 1850 census value. The total dollar amount of homemade manufactures was \$1,500. The 1860 Industrial Census describes a profitable grist and saw mill operation, with \$10,000 in capital invested and twelve male employees and two female employees. Products included 2,000 lbs. of flour, 1,500 lbs. of dry measures, a large quantity of brooms, 9,000 bushels of wheat, and 16,000 feet of oak and pine.

The 1870 census reflects the highest valuation of \$38,000, and a land area of 1,400 acres; 600 improved and 800 unimproved. The amounts of individual products again fluctuated, with a reduction in pounds of wool, bushels of corn, oats, barley, and buckwheat offset by increases in bushels of Irish potatoes, pounds of butter and cheese with an estimated

value of \$4,139 for all farm production. The grist mill continued to provide a lucrative income for the Shakers. Products from the mill included corn meal, wheat flour, rye and oat meal. Additionally a stave mill employed ten men and had \$1,500 in capital invested. It produced oak staves valued at \$6,000; dry measures worth \$1,000; and 200 spinning wheels valued at \$300. The census reports show that 1870 proved to be the most profitable for Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village industries.

By 1880, agricultural components of the village consisted of 200 tilled acres, 200 acres of permanent pasture, meadow and orchard, 150 acres of woodland, and 300 acres of old fields for a total valuation of \$20,000. Of interest is the entry concerning cost of building/repair which was \$100. The value of farm products sold, consumed or on hand was \$2,900. There were 176 mown acres yielding ninety tons of hay, one and a half acres of Indian corn yielding seventy-five bushels, three acres of oats yielding ninety bushels, two acres of wheat yielding thirty bushels, eighteen bushels of beans, six acres of potatoes, and a fifteen acre orchard of 400 trees yielding 1,000 bushels of apples for products valued at \$300. There was also a one and a half acre vineyard yielding 500 pounds of grapes. Fifty cords of wood were cut, the value of forest products being \$935.

Lumber and saw mill activity in 1880 reflects an increase in this industry. The lumber mill employed fifteen men for three months of the year to produce 10,000 feet of lumber. The saw mill produced 150,000 oak staves valued at \$3,000.

By the 1850s, a noticeable change was occurring at the Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village. Farming and agrarian pursuits in rural New England began to wane with the development of factories and mills in Maine's river towns. Travel to and from rural areas was accelerated by the arrival of the railroad. Industrialization from the outside world soon began to compete against the Shakers, with the seed industry losing out to Western markets. The Sisters' once thriving weaving industry was abandoned in favor of outright purchase of bulk materials from Lewiston markets as it was cheaper than producing it within the community. By the late nineteenth century, the population of the society also shifted, Sisters now outnumbering Brethren. The Sisters adopted their light industries to suit those of the tourist: poplar ware, rugs, fir balsam pillows, fans, dusters, pincushions and sewn goods were all marketed at such summer resorts as nearby Poland Spring Hotel, one mile north of the village. This fancy goods industry became a leading source of income for the village. By 1900, the market was flourishing. The Brethrens' industries were somewhat curtailed due to lack of labor force and dwindling markets. The Great Mill was concerned with producing dry measures fashioned from steamed bent oak in a variety of sizes. Construction materials were in high demand at this time. Thus, the mills supplied large quantities of shingles and lumber.

The Brethren also maintained the farm, garden and orchards with the assistance of hired men. The Poland Spring Hotel provided a ready market for produce. The apple orchard business was quite lucrative as well by 1900 as orchard products were exported to the English market.

A second period of building activity at Sabbathday Lake Village began in the late nineteenth century and stretched into the twentieth century. Selective rebuilding and reorganization of the village began with the construction of the second Dwelling House in 1883. Portland, Maine architect Francis H. Fassett was hired to design the brick forty-eight room structure with modern conveniences. A Schoolhouse was designed and built in 1880 by the Society's resident amateur architect Brother Hewitt Chandler. The original 1796 Girls' Shop was rebuilt in 1901. The water system for the village, originated in the 1870s, was completed in 1903 with the construction of a Water Tower on the hill west of the village set in the orchard. Other improvements or modernizations were the introduction of telephone service in 1901, gas lighting in 1903, automobiles in 1908, and electricity in 1926 all paid for with the Sisters' fancy goods trade. The Shaker community was the first in the area to afford these modern amenities. The Shaker Village at Sabbathday Lake in 1900 contained over two dozen specialized buildings, a continuance of Father Joseph Meachum's century old plan.¹³ These structures included the Dwelling House, Meetinghouse, Ministry's Shop, Schoolhouse, Girls' Shop, Sisters' Shop, Herb House, Brethren's Shop, Spinhouse, Trustees' Office, Hired Men's House, Great Mill, several chicken houses, barns for horses, oxen, and cows, Garden Seed House, and a greenhouse for raising seedlings and flowers. Other buildings had become outdated for Shaker use, including the Grist Mill which became a Saw Mill, and the Boys' Shop which became the Brethren's Shop. The Nurse Shop was also razed. The Meetinghouse had ceased to function as a place of worship by 1887.

The gradual decrease in members at Sabbathday Lake was acutely felt by 1887 at which time the North Family closed. The Novitiate Order at Poland Hill was for sixty-eight years the place where prospective members tried Shaker communal life. Earlier the Square House Family, between the Church Family and the North Family had been closed. This left the single Church Family at Sabbathday Lake. The Church Family relied now on prospective members coming from adopted children taken in by the society and adult converts. However, once the children reached maturity most chose to leave.

By 1960, there were thirteen Sisters and two Brothers at Sabbathday Lake. The orphanage was closed that year as well further reducing its members. The once thriving lumber mill industry had closed in 1942. The community now supplemented its income with a waning fancy goods trade and land leases, while the extensive apple orchard operation was now leased to outside interest. The Sabbathday Lake community experienced somewhat of a

renaissance in the 1960s. Though small in number, the last remaining Shakers sought to revitalize the Shaker movement through public awareness and redirected industries. Capitalizing on the growing academic interest in Shaker history, including heightened interest in Shaker architecture, furniture, and music, the village promoted itself through the establishment of a museum and archive. The present population of the Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village consists of four members.

The Shaker Village as it appears today reflects the accretionary nature of Shaker building practices. Of the original approximately forty-eight structures that once comprised the Shaker Village at its height of prosperity and membership in the mid-nineteenth century, seventeen structures remain, each slightly altered from its original appearance. As was the Shaker practice concerning architecture, buildings were constantly being remodeled, added or demolished as the need arose or waned. As the Sabbathday Lake Shaker population began to decrease in the latter part of the nineteenth century mirroring other Shaker communities, large village complexes were not needed; buildings that had previously served agrarian and housing needs were superfluous. This reduction in prosperity was reflected at Sabbathday Lake. Although buildings retain historic names, present day use of each building is quite different. The Dwelling House is still the home of the Shakers providing living space, offices, a library, gathering rooms, and worship space in the fall and winter months. The Meetinghouse is used only in the summer months for Public Meeting as well as museum exhibits. The Ministry's Shop now houses the museum, which was founded in 1931. The Schoolhouse is now the Shaker Library and research facility. The Sister's Shop - now used by both men and women - contains work rooms, offices and the headquarters of the herb department. The Spinhouse now houses Shaker museum exhibits and a curator's office. The Boys' Shop is now used for the Shaker Museum reception Center. The Trustees' Office contains the Shaker Store and guest rooms. The Ox Barn serves for hay storage, while the Horse Barn houses a flock of sheep and other animals.

Part II: DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

A. PHYSICAL CHARACTER OF THE VILLAGE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT

1. Physical Description of the Site:

The rural nature of Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village's setting is little changed from its founding on five donated farms. The present amount of acreage is virtually the same as during

the Society's most expansive period just before the Civil War. Areas of pastures, woodland, orchards, garden plots, and lake shore frontage still provide income for the Society albeit with largely non-agrarian means, whereas the quarry to the northwest of the village and former mill pond to the north are inactive. Shaker Bog, also located to the north of the village and to the west of Route 26, is a large wetland that feeds the pond. The scale of agricultural enterprise at the village is significantly reduced when compared to produce yields from the late nineteenth century. The scenic qualities of the current acreage are significant in the present as intact farmsteads on original acreage are seldom seen in the surrounding area. This scenic attraction serves in fact as a tourist draw for the village.

The site of the village is notable as the topography of the region is characterized by gently rolling hills. The Sabbathday Lake property fronts Sabbathday Lake at its western edge and rises gently from about 320 feet above sea level at Sabbathday Lake to about 560 feet at the crest of the hill behind the village. The village itself is at about 500 feet elevation. The topography in the community's westerly lands is more irregular, and after dipping to the north in the vicinity of the Shaker Bog, the land again rises to the northern property boundary. The Shaker property is bounded on both the north and south by built-up areas of single family housing.

A map (not formally titled but referred to as an Historical Land Use Map, Sabbathday Lake Shaker Archives) developed by the Shakers about 1998 provides information on historic land use patterns. Beginning on the northeast side of Route 26 is the site of the 300 acre sheep pasture used by the Shakers from 1799 to the 1870s. Also located in the area were the three mills. These areas are now wooded. Located along present day Outlet Road was acreage devoted to a small orchard and seed gardens from 1800 to 1860. This area is now comprised of woodland, gravel pits, and at the end of the road are cottages and lots for rental. Historically, the shore acreage fronting on Sabbathday Lake served as a watering hole for cattle, a work area for the ice industry, and in the late 1880s a picnic area.

The pasture area that runs from the rear of the Shaker Village to Sabbathday Lake was historically used as an orchard and is now used for hay. The land use of the village on the west side of Route 26 consists of a thirty-nine acre apple orchard that was initially planted in 1845. Historic use of the land was devoted to the raising of vegetables in the 1840s and 1850s, wheat and rye, family gardens, hay fields and vines.

To the south of the village and easterly of Route 26 is a large hay field that extends to the community's southern boundary. On the opposite side of the road is a plowed field that

adjoins the orchard. The westerly lands of the Shaker property are currently in woodland.

Landscape features of the Shaker Village such as fences, gates and pathways, are first mentioned in Shaker records dating to 1849-1851. Instilling a certain sense of enclosure and separation from the outside world, the early fences and gates were of granite posts supporting wooden rails. Pathways were laid out in rigid patterns so as not to encourage meandering travel between structures. The specific function of each building within the village as well as that building's occupants was highly regulated. Pathways reinforced the hierarchy of a building's use and instilled order throughout the village. These features are still present today.

The fencing running in front of the village was removed in 1902 and replaced with a sidewalk. Fencing fronting the opposite side of the village enclosed the Meetinghouse, Ministry's Shop and Schoolhouse. This was intentional as the Church Family Elders who lived in the Meetinghouse and later the Ministry's Shop lived completely separate from the rest of the community. This fencing is in place currently and consists of granite posts connected by wooden picket fencing with two gates opposite the two Meetinghouse openings and a gate between the Meetinghouse and Ministry's Shop.

Mature trees front Route 26 dividing the busy road from the front facades of many of the village's most prominent buildings. The extensive apple orchard and garden areas, in use since the formation of the village, continue to yield produce.

B. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS

The buildings that comprise the village are arranged in three ranks: the Meetinghouse, Ministry's Shop and Schoolhouse on the west side of Route 26; the Cinder Block Garage, the Trustees' Office, the Dwelling House, and the Girls' Shop fronting on the east side of Route 26; and the Carriage House, Horse Barn, Ox Barn, Yellow Garage, Spinhouse, Boys' Shop, Herb House, and Sisters' Shop located behind the buildings on the east side of Route 26. Three ancillary structures are located to the rear of these buildings.

Beginning with the Meetinghouse, the Shaker Village is comprised of the following buildings that are keyed to the sketch map on page 25:

The 1794 Meetinghouse (5) was designed by Brother Moses Johnson. Erected nineteen years after the founding of the Shaker Community at Sabbathday Lake, it is identical to the ten others constructed for other Shaker communities. The structure is a two-and-a-half story wood frame structure with feathered clapboards with a 4" exposure, 10½" baseboard;

6½" corner boards with ¾" bead. The main facade is of seven symmetrical bays, two entries, and six-over-six windows that replaced the original twelve-over-twelve sash. Window openings are accented with a simple wood cornice and heavy sill. Louvered wood shutters frame the openings. Window openings of the second story appear to be original six over six sash also framed with small louvered shutters. There are two entries into the structure and one in the ell. The south entry was used by the Brethren, the north by the Sisters. The Ministry used the entry in the ell. The structure rests on a dressed granite foundation. The gambrel roof of wood shingles is ornamented with boxed eaves and a simple wood cornice. Shed dormers are symmetrically placed in the roof. The Meetinghouse received the addition of an ell to house a stairway in 1839. At about the same time a fence of granite post with wood pickets and gates was placed between the structure and Route 26.

The ca. 1839 Ministry's Shop (6), currently a museum, was originally constructed to provide work space for the Elders, who lived apart from the rest of the community. The structure's original hipped roof was replaced in 1875 with the current side gable roof giving the building its Greek Revival appearance. A rear ell was added at this time as well. The two-and-a-half story structure has a three bay symmetrical facade, two-over-two double-hung sash flanking a centered single entry with simple multi-light transom above. The original sash windows of this structure were removed in 1910 and placed in the Yellow Garage being built at that time. The clapboarded structure rest on a granite foundation and has a cedar shake roof.

The Schoolhouse (7) was designed and built in 1880 by Brother Hewitt Chandler, an amateur architect of the Sabbathday Lake Shakers responsible for much of the building activity at the village in the late nineteenth century. With financing provided by the Town of New Gloucester as well as the Shakers, the one and a half story front gabled wood frame structure with rear ell was begun on May 15, 1880 and completed on November of that year. A belfry was added in 1912. The Schoolhouse served Shaker children as well as the world's children until 1950 when it was closed by the town. The structure was sold and moved in 1955 only to be moved back to its original site in 1986 and restored by the Sabbathday Lake Shakers for a research facility.

The Cemetery (8) was laid out by Elder Thomas Cushman in 1816 and replaced three other sites. The rectangular burial ground is ringed by maple trees and a fence of wrought iron and wood. A single stone with the inscription "Shakers" placed in 1917 is centered in the plot. Brother Hewitt Chandler built the granite walls and iron fence and gates in 1877.

The ca. 1796 Girls' Shop (17) was completely rebuilt in 1901 by Otis Campbell, a world's person. The original configuration of the structure was of three symmetrical bays,

with a centered single entry balanced by two six-over-six sash windows. The second story was of three symmetrically placed six-over-six sash. The structure was originally used as the Sisters' Spin Shop and may very well be a remnant of the Gowen Wilson farm. The original facade of the structure is depicted by Brother Joseph Bussell's ca. 1850 view which shows a side gable two and a half story structure with a symmetrical three bay facade, clapboarded exterior and cedar shake roof with two interior end chimneys. However, in Bussell's view of Sabbathday Lake ca. 1880, the facade is now five symmetrical bays. More revealing as to the current configuration of the building are Shaker Journal entries dated 1901 that describe the "old shop" as being raised. The present structure is the ca. 1901 effort and carries a facade of five asymmetrical bays, two-over-two double-hung sash windows, and a centered entry housed beneath an attached porch. The side gable structure carries a wood shingle roof with two interior end chimneys. The south facade contains a two story bay window and boxed cornice with modillion moldings. To the rear is an attached ell with engaged porch.

The brick Dwelling House (16) was designed by Portland, Maine architect Francis Fassett. The five and a half story structure dominates the village. Plans for construction of this building originate in 1876 with plans for a new dwelling house being drawn up by Brother Hewitt Chandler, who was responsible for the remodeling and construction of several Shaker buildings at Sabbathday Lake. These plans which are housed in the Shaker Library at Sabbathday Lake were never instituted as it was decided to proceed with architect Francis Fassett's design.

Construction of the brick Dwelling House began on April 24, 1883, the ground having been broken for the foundation by Brothers Otis Sawyer and William Dumont. Timber for the structure was cut on Shaker property supplemented with timber purchased in northern Maine. By July 26, 1883, the foundation and first story were completed. By September 12, 1883, the outside of the building was completed except for the ninety-eight windows installed in December. The dwelling was completed by the end of the month.

As constructed to Fassett's plans, the five-and-a-half story side gabled structure rests on a rusticated granite block foundation and rises five and a half stories. The first story facade is of nine symmetrical bays, paired two over two double hung sash windows with segmental arches, and granite lintels. A centered entry is housed beneath an attached entrance porch. The second and third stories are also of nine bays, window openings identical to those of the first story. The side gable roof is surfaced with slate shingles. Piercing the roof are four interior chimneys and a cupola. A rear ell houses a kitchen and chapel. Alterations to the structure have been limited to the interior. Exterior changes include the addition and subsequent removal of the louvered shutters.

Placed south of the brick Dwelling House is the ca. 1816 Trustees' Office (13), historically referred to as Second Dwelling House and Green House. Originally ordered built by Mother Lucy Wright as a home for the aged, the building's current facade is representative of the Sabbathday Lake Shakers desire to remodel structures as the need arose. As originally constructed, the facade was of five symmetrical bays. A photograph, ca. 1881-1884 (Sabbathday Lake Shaker Archives), shows a five bay symmetrical facade with a single entry framed on each side by a pair of two-over-two windows. The second story was of five symmetrically placed two-over-two sash. The side gabled structure had at the time two interior end chimneys placed in its roof.

Additions and alterations to the structure began in 1880 when the former Elder's Shop was moved to become the ell. A windmill was attached to the roof of the ell in 1881, and then removed in 1885. The original building's appearance was radically altered in 1889 as the roof on the main structure and rear ell was raised and dormers added. Further alteration occurred in 1904 with the installation of 36 new windows, sidelight windows added to the front door, a porch added to the rear ell in 1910, and a porch added to front facade in 1919. The entire structure is sided with clapboards with an asphalt shingle roof.

The next southerly building in the front row of structures is a single bay, rectangular Cinder Block Garage (12) built in the 1950s.

The Carriage Shed (20), ca. 1786, was historically used to house carriages and sleighs, and is believed to have been a pre-existing structure on the farm of Gowen Wilson on which the community now sits. The structure is of scribe rule wooden frame construction with a side gable roof with slight overhang covered with asphalt shingles. Vertical pine boards side the structure. The structure was restored in 2000-2001. It is now used for farm equipment storage.

The Horse Barn (21), 1829-1830, is a vernacular Greek Revival front gable structure of modified Queen Post construction. The three story structure was framed by Abiazar S. Freeman and is clapboarded on its front facade of three symmetrical bays, centered by its sliding doors. Pine wood shingles side its remaining faces. The structure rests on a granite foundation with stone retaining walls. Additions to the barn began in 1851 with the west end being extended by 13½ feet, the roof pitch being raised 11 feet. The barn received extensive renovations from 1994 to 1999.

Joined to the Horse Barn is the Ox Barn (22), built simultaneously with the Horse Barn but as a separate structure. Also built by Abiazar S. Freeman in 1829-1830, its facade and

appearance is identical to the Horse Barn: three stories, with a front gable roof with clapboarded facade and wood shingles covering the building's other sides. The structure rests on a granite foundation with cement retaining walls. Additions to this structure began in 1891 as 18 feet was added to the Ox Barn to join it to the Horse Barn, the roof being raised even to the height of Horse Barn. It also received extensive renovation in the period 1994-1999.

The one-and-a-half story, two bay Yellow Garage (23), ca. 1910, was built by Brothers Eden Coolbroth and Delmer Wilson, to house the Sabbathday Lake Shaker's car. The wood frame structure is sided with clapboards. The front gable roof shingled with asphalt. A twenty-two foot extension was added to the east end in 1923-24. The sash windows were recycled from the Ministry's Shop when the garage was built.

Erected ca. 1816, the Spinhouse (24) currently houses Shaker museum exhibits and a curator's office. The two-and-a-half story wood frame side gable structure has a five bay asymmetrical facade, two six-over-six sash windows, a single entry, and two openings of sliding doors. Placed in the second story are six symmetrical bays of six-over-six sash windows. Clapboards side the front facade and the two sides of the building, whereas the rear facade is sided with wood shingles. A granite foundation with cement cinder and brick piers supports the building. The structure's roof is of cedar shingles. Alterations to this structure first occurred in 1852 with major interior renovations including the roof being raised in 1888.

The adjacent north structure is the Boys' Shop (25), ca. 1850, that was ordered built by Elder Otis Sawyer. The structure is currently the Shaker Museum Reception Center. The two-and-a-half story side gable wood frame structure with clapboard siding rests on a granite and brick foundation. Referring to Sabbathday Lake records dating to 1850, the structure which housed 11 to 13 boys was the first built with pediment ends within the village. Additions to the building include a 1905 a rear ell built to house the Brethren's Shop, original six-over-nine windows were replaced in 1911. A fire in 1967 destroyed the rear ell, second floor and attica. The current three bay symmetrical facade is the result of a restoration completed that same year.

The Herb House (26) is the next northerly structure, possibly a pre-Shaker structure of the Allen family. The building was first used as a wash house and is currently used for herb drying, a woodshed, museum storage, and carpenter's shop. The main facade consists of five asymmetrically arranged bays, two six-over-six sash windows and three door openings. The second story is of six symmetrically arranged six-over-six double-hung sash windows. The two-and-a-half story wood frame structure is clapboarded on three sides, shingled with wood shakes on its rear facade, has a cedar shake roof, and rests on a granite block foundation. The

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structure was extant by 1824 as Shaker records indicate it was used in the herb industry. In the late 1870s, the structure was renovated by Brother Hewitt Chandler for production of Tamar Laxative, a profitable industry.

Situated at a distance to the north is the ca. 1821 Sisters' Shop (29). The structure was built by an unknown world's person. The current use of the building focuses on workrooms, an herb department, exhibit space, and laundry room. The two-and-a-half story structure has three later additions. It rests on a granite foundation and has a cedar shake roof. In 1878, the wood house (Deacon James Holmes' workshop) was moved from south of the present building to become the northern ell. Also an extensive renovation occurred in 1879, undertaken by Brother Hewitt Chandler. Two other additions followed in 1905, at which time the front facade received an attached porch, and in 1908 an addition to the north facade was made. The current facade is of five symmetrical bays, a single entry housed beneath the attached porch.

Situated behind the Sister's Shop is the ash house (36), ca. 1880, built by Charles Shackford and Elder William Dumont in 1880. The brick structure is eight feet high with a cedar shingled front gable roof.

Placed on a slight rise behind the Meetinghouse, Ministry's Shop and Schoolhouse is a ca. 1903 Water Tower (1) built by Otis Campbell, a world's person, with assistance from Elder William Dumont. The structure and its 30,000 gallon tank was originally built as part of the village's fire suppression system, but now serves as a water source for the extensive orchards and gardens. The octagonally shaped two story wooden tower with hipped roof and ornamental weather vane is sided with wood shakes. The windmill was removed in 1927.

The ca. 1878 Springhouse (4), built by Brother Hewitt Chandler is sited behind the Schoolhouse. It provides water to the Sisters' Shop. The octagonal brick structure is covered by a tall polygonal wood shingled roof and surmounted by a vented cap.

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1. Michael Graham, *They Do Not From the Truth Depart, In Word or Work, In Hand or Heart: Sabbathday Lake in 1800, 1900 and 2000* (New Gloucester, Maine: The United Society of Shakers, 2000), 2.
2. Gerald C. Wertkin, *The Four Seasons of Shaker Life: An Intimate Portrait of the Community at Sabbathday Lake, Maine* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986), 38.
3. Scott T. Swank, *Shaker Life, Art and Architecture: Hands to Work, Hearts to God* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1999), 24.
4. Wertkin, p. 47.
5. Wertkin, p. 47.
6. Swank, p. 23. At least one contemporary Shaker historian has stated that although the 1845 laws were promulgated, they were almost universally disregarded. See e-mail from L. Brooks, United Society of Shakers, to Kirk Mohny, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, dated May 13, 2003.
7. Swank, p. 38.
8. Swank, p. 39.
9. Graham, p. 2.
10. Graham, p. 2.
11. Graham, p. 2.
12. Graham, p. 2.
13. Graham, p. 2.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. ORIGINAL ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS:

Original plans of the Second Dwelling House as drawn by Brother Hewitt Chandler, 1876, are housed in the Sabbathday Lake Shaker Archives, Sabbathday Lake, Maine. Measured drawings of the Meetinghouse completed for the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1962, are also housed in the Shaker Archives.

B. GENERAL DEPOSITORIES:

Sabbathday Lake Shaker Archives, Sabbathday Lake, Maine.

C. EARLY VIEWS:

Historic views of the Sabbathday Lake Village include the drawings of Brother Joseph Bussell dated ca. 1850, after 1850, and ca. 1880. All three views are reproduced in Emlen, *Shaker Village Views* (1987). The archives also include an extensive historic photography collection and detailed information concerning individual village buildings.

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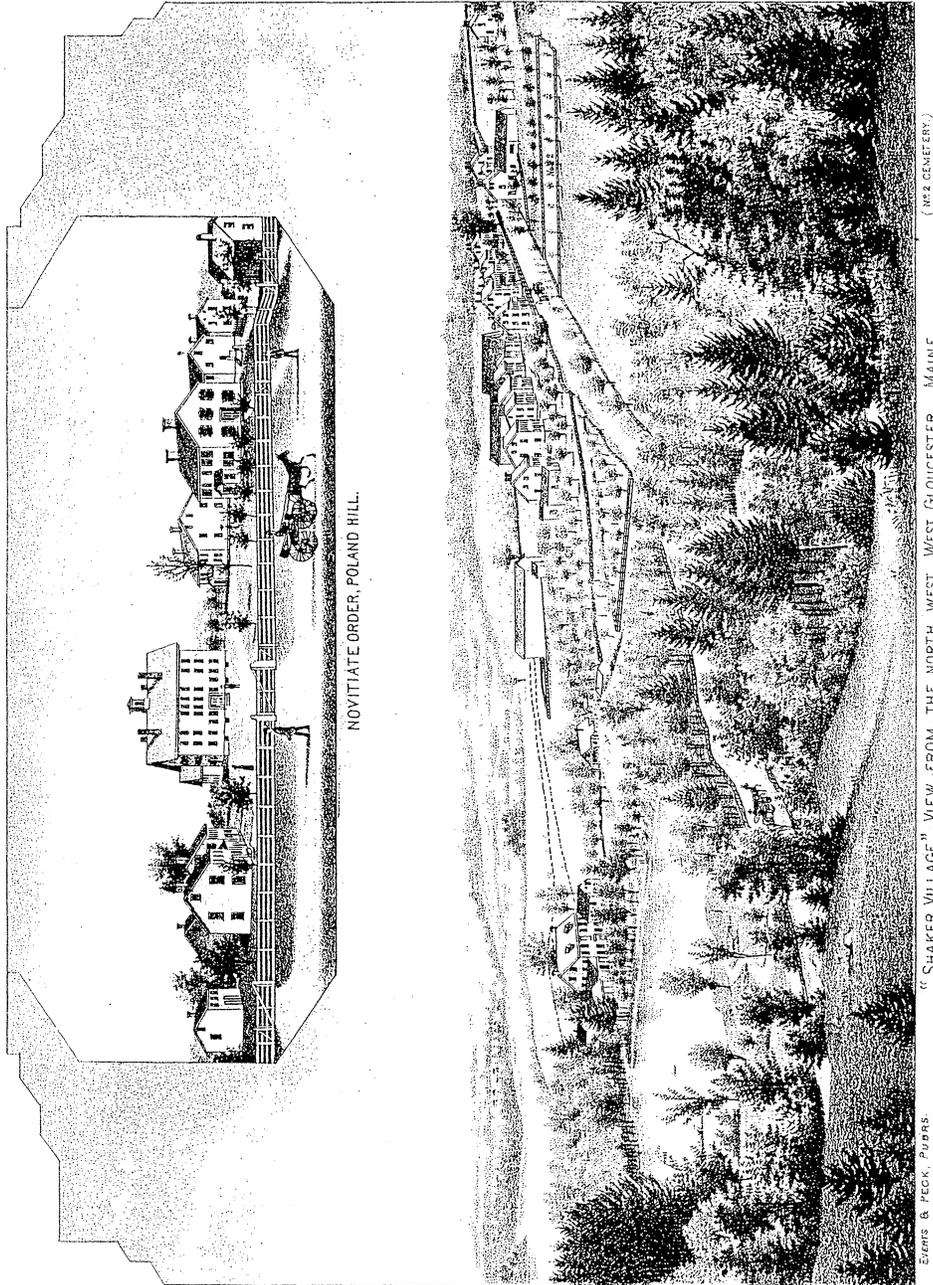
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PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The Federal Highway Administration plans to undertake a major reconstruction project of Route 26 commencing in 2003 that includes a by-pass to the west of the Shaker Village. The new alignment will extend through the open field behind the cemetery, a portion of the orchard, and the plowed field to the southwest of the village.

Prepared By: Charlton Hudson, Architectural Historian

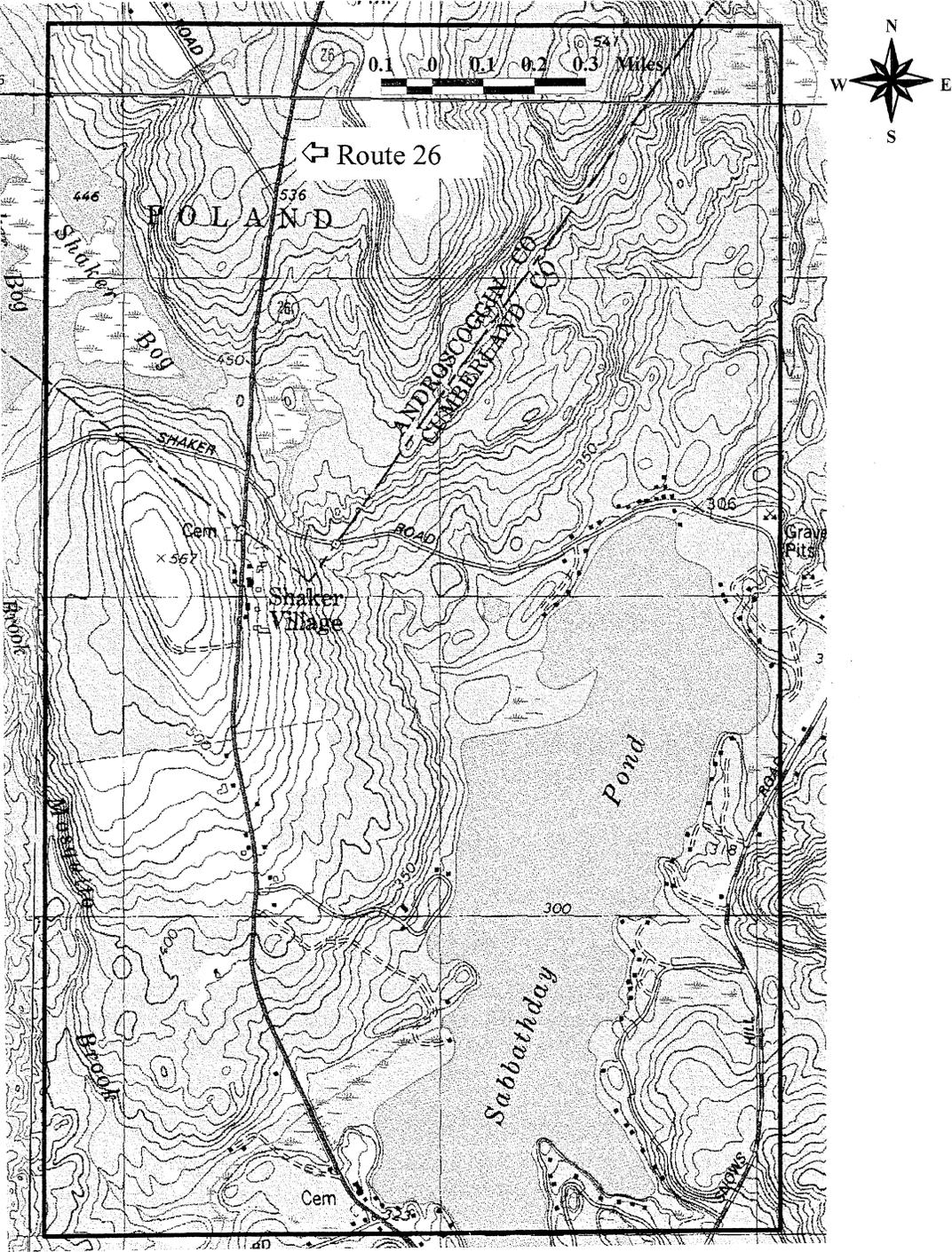
Date: April, 2003



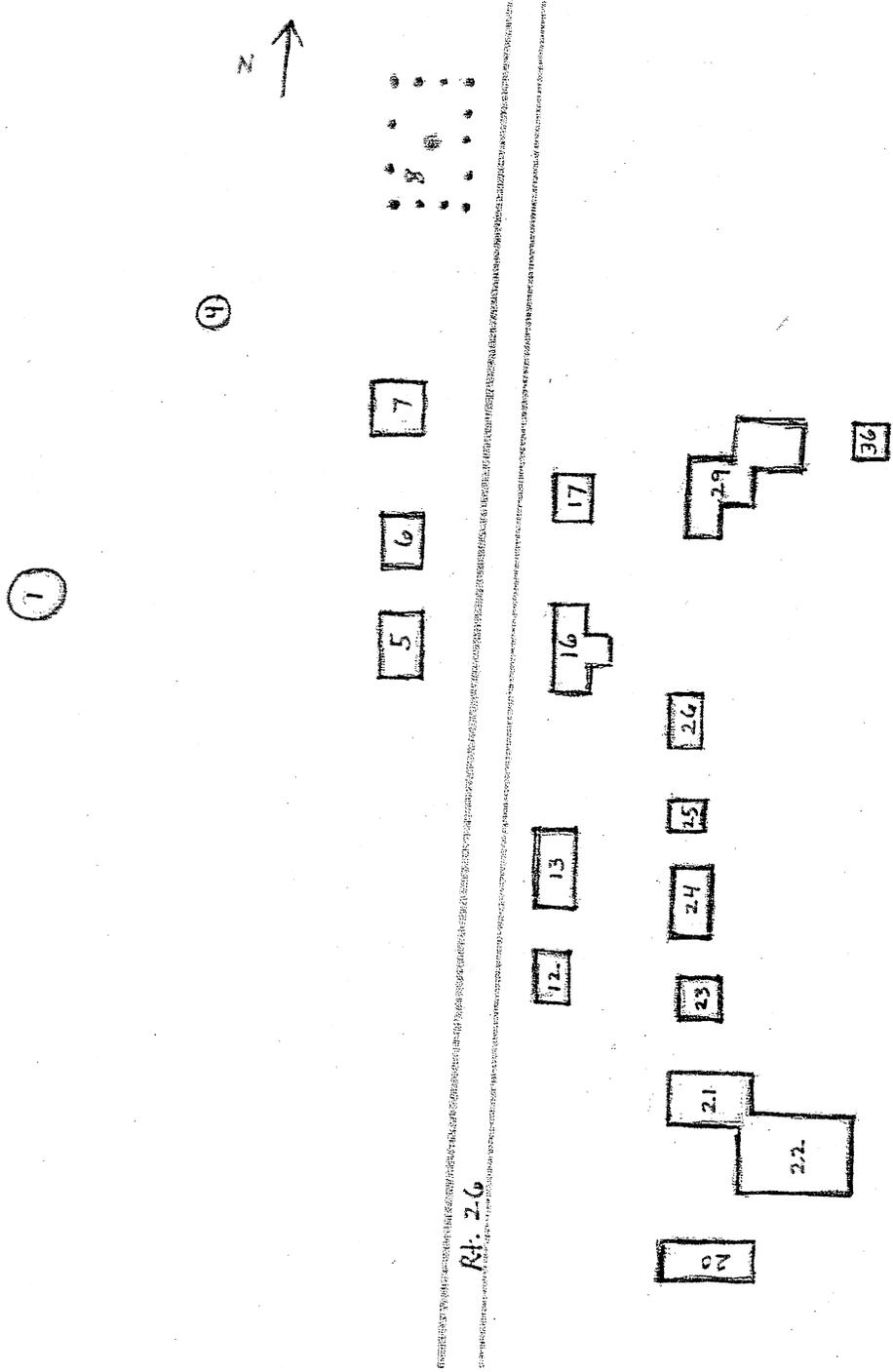
“Shaker Village, View from the North West,
West Gloucester, Maine”

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Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village
Composite map from Gray (1980) and Minot (1981) USGS quadrangles



Sketch map of Sabbathday Lake Shaker Village by Kirk F. Mohney, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, 2003. Numbers correspond to those in the text.