United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic  N/A

and/or common  LOCHMERE ARCHEOLOGICAL DISTRICT

2. Location

street & number  (First)

city, town  N.H.

state  New Hampshire  code 33  county Belknap  code 001

3. Classification

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<td>occupied</td>
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<td>site</td>
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<td>being considered</td>
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4. Owner of Property

name  Multiple (see Continuation Sheet #1)

street & number  ----

city, town  ----

vicinity of  state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.  Belknap County Courthouse/Registry of Deeds

street & number  64 Court Street

city, town  Laconia  state  New Hampshire

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title  Archeological Survey

depository for survey records  Department of Sociology & Anthropology

state  New Hampshire  county  Durham  local

date 1978  federal  X state  county  local

has this property been determined eligible?  X yes  no

Referenced as NH 31-20-5 (Site 12 below)
7. Description

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<td><strong>fair</strong></td>
<td><strong>unexposed</strong></td>
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Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance.

Context & Content:

The Lochmere Archeological District.

The history of Lochmere, in the broadest sense, is the history of human use of the River, for it was the river that "was the ultimate attraction which funneled generations of people into this narrow tract" (Sargent 1976:6-7). Navigable by canoe, the river undoubtedly served as a major transportation and communications route between points north and south, and, with falls and rapids, it has served as a source of food and water power.

These attributes of the river account for the juxtaposition of prehistoric and historic archeological sites at various points along the river. But, as Warren King Moorehead reported from his early survey, the overlay of occupations has not always had desirable results:

Between [natural power sites have been made use of by mill owner, and dams are erected. The shore line on either side is exceedingly attractive, there are numerous bungalows and cottages, and such towns] Field operations are rendered almost futile (Moorehead 1931:45).

Mills, dams, bungalows, and cottages all exist but prehistoric sites are remarkably intact in spite of these. It is the variety and integrity of sites which serves to differentiate Lochmere from other areas.

The Lochmere Archeological District preserves along one small segment River 13 sites of prehistoric Native American occupation and 18 sites of Euro-American settlement and industry. Although other prehistoric sites occur on lake shores to either side these sites are either too far removed, poorly documented, or in a lacustrine environment, as opposed to the riverine environment, to be included with the dense, and nearly continuous, sites along the river in Lochmere. Likewise, cellarholes outside the District are either too poorly documented, or are not known to be related to early fishing or mill industry in Lochmere.

No standing structures within the District boundaries are considered contributing properties. Three houses at, or just beyond, the western boundary are documented as associated with mill owners, and within the District a couple dwellings are thought to be former mill owner dwellings. To include these, however, would require altering the nature and purpose of the nomination, which is now strictly archeological, and would require considerably greater architectural and historical evaluations.

(see Continuation Sheet #2)
8. Significance

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Specific dates

- Beginning with Early Archaic (ca. 8,000 B.C.)

- Builder/Architect: N/A

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Lochmere Archeological District is eligible for listing in the National Register under criteria A and D. The district is significant for its historical association with the early settlement and for its association with the early industrial use of New Hampshire's major rivers. It has the potential to yield information important in prehistory and history. Identified as a key area in the understanding of Lakes Region prehistory, the 13 sites also possess extractable data for broader state and regional comparisons. The 18 historical sites relate directly to the domestic and industrial life of early mill owners, and the range of mill sites and dams, when excavated and/or recorded, will augment the deed records industrial census, and local histories to provide a comprehensive study of an early 19th century industrial community.

Prehistoric sites in the District are important first for the information they can furnish on Native American settlement and subsistence systems from the Early Archaic period through the Late Woodland. Sargent states it thusly:

"The prehistoric resources encompassed by the Lochmere Archeological District constitute one of those complexes which characterize the aboriginal settlement pattern in the Merrimack watershed. Prehistoric economics required seasonal movements along the streams and within particular territories, and attracted repeated settlement in certain localities. Further, significant political systems were gradually emerging in the greater Northeast as new subsistence strategies encouraged population growth. At least 12 "districts" are known within the Merrimack River system which attracted oboriginal activity over a span of 6 - 8,000 years, and for some even longer. Much of the record in each of these has been obliterated (in some, nothing remains), but most of them have something to contribute to this elusive account. The Lochmere Archeological District is situated about midway between two other districts - and has the potential of complementing studies based on these other districts, thus leading to broader regional research (Sargent 1976:3-4).

Within each of the two adjacent archeological "districts" noted by Sargent, site density is unknown. Controlled testing and excavation has been limited to two sites. Only a portion of one of these (Aquadoctan) is currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Virtually no professional quality archeological fieldwork has been performed. All that is known of this area is based on a surface collection at Dartmouth College Museum made by three generations of the Proctor family from Franklin. The Lochmere Archeological District, however, has the highest density of known prehistoric sites.

(See continuation sheet #15)
9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property

Quadrangle name

UMT References

Quadrangle scale

Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

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<tr>
<th>state</th>
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<th>county</th>
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title

Gary W. Hume

Staff Archeologist

With original contributions by W. Dennis Chesley and Justine Gengras

organization

N.H. Dept. of Resources & Economic Development

State Historic Preservation Office

date

August 1982

street & number

Box 856

telephone

603-271-3483

city or town

Concord

state

New Hampshire

03301

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

[ ] national  [X] state  [ ] local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 69-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

[Signature]

title

NH State Historic Preservation Officer

date

September 23, 1982

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Keeper of the National Register

[Signature]

date

Chief of Registration
New Hampshire

State of New Hampshire
Water Resources Board
37 Pleasant Street
Concord, NH 03301

Norman and Helen Camire
RFD 2 - Box 450
Laconia, NH 03246

Public Service of New Hampshire
PO Box 430
Laconia, NH 03246

Clair Nickerson
PO Box 12
Lochmere, NH 03252

Frederick & Marcella Carter
30 Hamilton St.
Framingham, MA 01701

John & Eileen Rosand
PO Box 235
Lochmere, NH 03252

Robert & Paul Brack
9 Myrtle St.
Milford, NH03055

Peter Fleishhacker
PO Box 82
Lochmere, NH 03252

Walter & Mary Berry
61 Huntington Ave.
Marlboro, Mass.

The Twenty Five Associates
126 Central Street
Hudson, NH 03051

Douglas Owen
573 Central Ave.
Needham, MA 02194

Robert & Beatrice Roers
PO Box 34
Lochmere NH 03252

Vernon Fahey
PO Box 22
Lochmere, NH 03252

Russell & Ann O'Leary
RFD 2
Tilton, NH 03276

Albert & Marian Moulton
RFD 2
Tilton, NH 03276

Norman & Florence Wiggin
PO Box 3
Lochmere, NH 03252

Donald & Arlene Shaw
RFD 2
Tilton, NH 03276

Richard & Rita Rowe
RFD 2
Tilton, NH 03276

Robert & Jean Better
PO Box 211
Lochmere, NH 03252

Richard Montambeault
PO Box 27
Lochmere, NH 03252

Raymond & June Chamberlain
PO Box 73
Lochmere, NH 03252

Ernest & Phyllis Smith
PO Box 56
Lochmere, NH 03252

John J. Jr, and Constance Collins
RFD 2
Tilton, NH 03246

Maurice & Barbara Bowler
PO Box 85
Lochmere, NH 03252

Estate of Viola Whiteman
59 Harvard Street
Laconia, NH 03246

Edryck O. Midford
PO Box 14
Lochmere, NH 03252

Clayton & Barbara H. Baldwin
PO Box 66
Lochmere, NH 03252

Verna E. Midford
PO Box 14
Lochmere, NH 03252
Environment:

Lochmere

The river has cut a 200-250 foot wide floodplain below an earlier, higher, and more dissected terrace; the latter merges with ground moraine away from the river. Near a marshy "ox bow" separates the two terrace levels. The river has incised a much narrower floodplain into the western slope of a drumlin. The drumlin, an elongated hill of glacial till, grades to lake shore levels at both ends, but on the east side there is an abrupt break in slope at the edge of a former outflow channel from Lake Winnisquam, now with marshy bottom and wooded slopes.

Cold winters, moderately-warm summers, and fairly evenly distributed precipitation (with minor seasonal peaks in late spring and early fall) characterize the region. Vegetation is mixed deciduous-evergreen forest with maple, oak and abundant eastern white pine on soils formed predominately on till. Paxton and Hinckly soils are well-drained and moderately coarse, and they occur commonly on low hills and terraces, as in Lochmere.

Fish and game have been abundant probably since essentially modern environmental conditions were established about 6,000 B.C. White-tailed deer, fox, squirrel, porcupine, raccoon, beaver, and hare abound along the river, on wooded slopes, and around marsh lands. Otter occur on the river, and once the tributaries were spawning grounds for anadromous eel, Atlantic Salmon, and American Shad. Marsh lands of the ground moraine and abandoned stream channels are rich in other plant and animal foods, including snapping turtle and painted turtle.

Archeological & Historical Investigations:

The Lakes Region has long been recognized by amateur archeologists as a desirable location for surface collecting. Warren King Moorehead (1931) recovered abundant data and concluded that the "region holds the key to several of our New England problems." Other well known collectors familier with Lochmere at an early date were Abram Drake and Clyde F. Berry. Much of Berry's material from Lochmere is housed at the Manchester Historic Association in Manchester, New Hampshire.

Professional-quality work in the area encompassed by the District began in the late 1940s and 1950s with the work of the New Hampshire Archeological Society under the direction of Percy Brown and Howard R. Sargent. As noted by Sargent (1976:2), by current standards these small projects would "be regarded as little more than testing operations."

(see Continuation Sheet #3)
A "non-exclusive comprehensive deployed survey with background research and subsurface testing", as defined by King (1978:37), was conducted during the years 1977 and 1978 by the University of New Hampshire (Hoornbeek 1978), supported in part by an Historic Preservation Fund grant-in-aid through the New Hampshire State Historic Preservation Office. Prior to subsurface testing, much of the area within Lochmere was walked over to locate surface material and identify areas which appeared to have high prehistoric site potential. Subsurface sampling strategies were planned after the walkover. Most sites were examined with shovel test pits at 10 to 15 meter intervals in transects spaced at varying distances, usually 10 to 25 meters. Though this was the basic sampling strategy, actual shovel test pit locations were often placed intuitively, resulting in more of a zig-zag pattern. Test units averaged 40 cm. in diameter and were excavated to subsoil.

Supplementing these regional surveys, more intensive field investigations of limited areas have been performed as part of environmental impact studies by two state agencies -- Water Supply and Pollution Control Commission, and Department of Public Works and Highways -- beginning in the mid-1970s (Bolian and Wagner 1979; Ewing and Bolian 1981; Ewing 1982; McAllister et al 1980; Sargent 1975; Sargent 1976; and Starbuck 1982). The integrity and limits of several sites were defined, and part of one site was salvaged.

While these studies adequately defined the temporal range, integrity, and physical limits of sites, additional work was required to justify boundaries for the District. For this purpose, limited testing was performed in 1982 by Justine Gengras and other state certified avocational archeologists, supervised by Gary W. Hume of the New Hampshire State Historic Preservation Office.

Few historic archeological sites were documented by these surveys. Once an active mill district, all but a few of Lochmere's mills had been reduced to archeological sites when Runnels (1882:212) wrote: "The noble river, now at last made tranquil by the new dam below, flows over all these sites as if nothing ... had ever happened." In recent years historical interest has been high, stimulated by a bicentennial celebration and concern over the effects of federally supported development projects. This prompted Justine Gengras' deed research and field reconnaissance which identified the presence, integrity, and research potential of most of the dams, many mill sites, and some related cellar holes within the District.

Prehistoric Archeological Resources:

Description and significance of the Lochmere sites must be set against the archeological record for the state as a whole. The prehistoric sequence begins near the temporal interface of the Paleo-Indian (10,000 - 8,000 B.C.) and Early Archaic (8,000 - 6,000 B.C.) periods, continues through the Middle Archaic (6,000 - 4,000) and Late Archaic (4,000 - 1,000 B.C.) periods, and concludes with the Woodland periods -- Early (1,000 B.C. - A.D. 100), Middle (A.D. 100 - 1,000), and Late (A.D. 1,000 - 1,600).
The oldest dated site in the state with excavated features radiocarbon dated to 9,615 B.P. ± 225 (GX-4569), although the Whipple site in West Swanzey in the southwestern region is undoubtedly older. These two sites, a few other poorly documented traces of occupation, and excavated sites from other states suggest that the postglacial population was of low density and that small familial-social units migrated seasonally with large herd animals -- principally caribou -- upon which they were partially dependent.

Population density increased and settlement/subsistence systems became more varied throughout the Middle and Late Archaic periods, as evidenced by larger numbers of sites in virtually all environments throughout the state. The best documented and positioned Middle Archaic site (Dincauze 1976), there are another half-dozen sites of this period scattered around the state, including the Weirs. To these same sites for the Late Archaic, another half-dozen may be added in the coastal zone and drainages of the - to provide a corpus of comparative material, including data on domestic architecture, "ceremonial" caches of artifacts, forest resources processing sites with roasting pits, and fishing stations at falls for seasonal catches of salmon and shad.

The Woodland periods are marked by the addition of pottery to the cultural inventory, and by the introduction and increasing dependence on domesticated foods for subsistence in some areas. Early Woodland sites are inexplicably rare, and the more numerous Middle and Late Woodland sites are generally shallow and badly disturbed from historical land alterations. There is considerable continuity with Late Archaic settlement locations, but during the Late Woodland villages are shifted to more defensible hill top positions.

As noted by Sargent (1976:2) and Hoornbeek (1978:78), it has been the practice to individually number each area tested, using the numerical system of the New Hampshire Archeological Society (NHAS); however, individually numbered areas in Lochmere should be regarded as portions of two large multi-component sites. Variable artifact density (often low to moderate) and an extensive temporal range) possibly from Early Archaic to Late Woodland) suggests that occupation was intermittent by small groups, and because of the size of the area midden deposits were not created. The thinness and diffuse nature of these multi-component sites at Lochmere is paralleled at such notable sites.

Summaries of significant areas within the District follow, numbered sequentially as sites but with NHAS designations noted:

(see Continuation Sheet #5)
Over 4,700 lithic artifacts have been recovered from the site, as well as a few ceramic sherds. Formal tools are rare (only 15); but of five points, two are Middle Archaic (Neville and Stark types), one is Late Archaic (a Vosberg type), another is Late Archaic/Early Woodland (Wayland), and one is Late Woodland (Levanna type). No features were noted, but it is reported that a skeleton was unearthed in 1975 during excavation for a septic tank.

2. This area is composed of NH 31-6-2 and NH 31-6-4 as defined by surface collections and test pits in, and around, private gardens (Hoornbeek 1978:94 and 97-98), as well as surface collections by Gengras in other garden plots to the west. This is the highest and most-nearly level portion of the lower terrace. In spite of two houses on the site, fill areas, and cultivation to a 20 cm. depth in the garden plots, much of the area retains integrity, as 40% of the thin and diffuse scatter was recovered from below the plow zone. Points and other tools in private collections have not been typed, but the apparent absence of pottery suggests either occupation during the Archaic periods or special-activity use during the Woodland period.

3. Another occupation area was delimited by the 1982 boundary study on that portion of the gently sloping upper terrace nearest the river. The area was once a cleared pasture but now is heavily wooded. Although thin (only a dozen flakes and no diagnostic artifacts), half of the artifacts were recovered below the brown humus at depths of 12 to 22 cm, in undisturbed subsoil. More importantly, of five half-meter test squares, two uncovered small cobble-line hearths, one with an associated chunk of red ochre. The sample is too small to be meaningful, but the data are not inconsistent with Middle and Late Archaic sites.

4. This site is thought to be the one included in the symbol Moorehead placed in 1931: Fig. 19; Sargent 1976:8). As defined here, the area encompasses NH 31-7 (Sargent 1976:8-10), redesignated NH 31-6-6 (Hoornbeek 1978:103-108); NH 31-8 (Sargent 1976:10-11), redesignated NH 31-6-5 (Hoornbeek 1978:98-102); and NH 31-24 (Sargent 1976:11), redesignated NH 31-6-7 (Hoornbeek 1978:108). Where Sargent noted a surface scatter once cultivated, the sloping surface is now lightly wooded between landscaped house sites. House construction and landscaping since 1952, when Sargent and members of the New Hampshire Archeological Society first tested the area, have destroyed the integrity of much of the site.

5. This site is part of NH 31-2 (Sargent 1976:8), renumbered as NH 31-6-7 (Hoornbeek 1978:78). In 1976, the New Hampshire Water Resources Board destroyed most of the site by widening the river channel. Only a small area below the bridge known to retain integrity. Artifacts are eroding from deep sediments along the bank in impressive numbers, and after every rain artifacts are readily visible on the surface.
Middle and Late Archaic manifestations have been noted for the site based on the artifacts collected by Solon B. Colby. The collection includes a ground slate ulu, an adze, a notched axe, and a few fragments of stemmed points. Colby collected also small amounts of Middle Woodland pottery, and a variety of later ceramic styles suggestive of heavier use of the site during Late Woodland times.

Two small undisturbed strata were discovered by intensive testing parallel to the "ox bow", now filled. Two quartz scrapers, several small flakes (including a couple at the topsoil/subsoil interface), and fire-reddened gravels on undisturbed lake/channel sediments testify to the potential of this site. The site continues to the west as evidenced by residents' collections, but the integrity of these locations has not been determined.

7. NH 31-20-1 is the northern segment of the multi-component site NH 31-20 area is a low terrace with irregular surface, glacial erratics, and bedrock outcroppings. There is now evidence of cultivation and the land is now heavily wooded.

Thirty-one shovel test pits and one square-meter excavation confirmed the area of heaviest use (Hoornbeek 1978:116-117). No diagnostic artifacts or features were found, but the test yielded 316 artifacts (including three formal tools and 292 flakes). The excavation within the area of highest artifact density yielded 240 artifacts, all flakes.

8. Fifty-seven shovel test pits were distributed Only the top of the drumlin produced evidence of prehistoric occupation, referenced as NH 31-20-2 (Hoornbeek 1978:121-122). The surface of the drumlin is rough, has scattered glacial erratics, and is covered by a heavy forest of deciduous trees. Although never cultivated because of stoney soil, the area has been logged.

Ninty-seven artifacts were recovered from the tests, including a hammerstone and fire-cracked rock. The flake counts are highest as is also true for NH 31-20-3. These data, and an informant's report of a human burial discovered when as made, supports the conclusion that prehistoric occupation continued uninterrupted along the ridge. Although no diagnostic artifacts were found, the absence of pottery implies that occupations in this area were during the Archaic periods.

(see Continuation #7)
9. Surface collection and shovel test pits have confirmed the nearly continuous occupation debris of NH 31-20-3 is the northernmost part of this distribution, from the embankment to an area disturbed by house lots. (Hoornbeek 1978:123-128). Most of the area is wooded and has been previously logged, but there is no evidence for cultivation.

Surface collection produced 403 artifacts, including three points, a perforator, four polyhedrons, two hammerstones, and a net sinker. The site is distinctive for the high percentage of quartz, nearly 75 percent. A Stark point and Squibnocket Triangle attest to Middle and Late Archaic occupations, but 100 pottery sherds located just off the ridge top on the west side indicates an uneven overlay of Woodland localities.

10. Below NH 31-20-3 and the house lots, a few randomly placed test pits yielded fire-cracked rock and 163 artifacts, including two bifaces (Hoornbeek 1978:126). NH 31-20-4 was defined as ending on the south at a powerline (Hoornbeek 1978:123), but extensive testing within a proposed highway corridor has demonstrated cultural material to be present.

Initial testing was at 20 meter intervals (Ewing and Bolian 1981). In 27 shovel test pits, 61 lithic artifacts were recovered, including a biface, point fragment, two scrapers, four hammerstones, and four cores. Eleven sherds of undifferentiated Woodland pottery were also found.

Subsequent testing was at 10 meter intervals (Ewing et al 1982). One hundred forty test pits were excavated within an 8000 square meter area. Where artifact density was highest, an additional 16 square-meter units were excavated. Over 5800 lithic artifacts, 110 sherds, 143 fragments of calcined bone, and 11 fire-cracked rocks were recovered from this phase of testing. Formal implements are present in low density, the principal ones of which are four points, four scrapers, and 15 bifaces.

Quartz is a predominant raw material although 50% is well below the figure for NH 31-20-2. Aragonite constitutes 72% of the assemblage. Within the same area, however, raw materials are very unevenly distributed; one square yielded 72% rhyolite. The predominance of rhyolite in association with a Neville point implies the presence of a Middle Archaic workshop comparable to those excavated at NH 31-20-5 (see site 12 below). One large feature (1x1.2x0.6 m) with over 1400 argillite flakes is believed to be a refuse pit.

Three temporal occupations are suggested by the data -- Middle Archaic, Late Archaic, and Woodland. Boundaries of these occupations have not yet been defined. Although a plow zone is present, features are known to extend well below. Only 12 historic sherds have been recovered from the area, indicating little possibility of disturbance other than by cultivation.

11. Digging by a local resident and shovel test pits to determine District limits have demonstrated the continuation of NH 31-20-4 to the edge of the ancient outflow. Hearths have been reported, and fire-cracked rock was recovered from the tests. Artifact density is very uneven.

(see Continuation Sheet #8)
12. An unusually rich and well-preserved Middle Archaic site lies on the southern slope of NH 31-20-5 within a highway right-of-way was salvaged in accordance with the provisions of 36 CFR 800. The data recovery project (Starbuck 1982) resulted in the excavation of 111 3/4 square meters (ca. 30% of the area determined to be eligible), the recovery of 29,530 pieces of debitage from two well-defined Middle Archaic workshops, 120 identifiable fragments of turtle shell, forty-four points (all Middle and Late Archaic), a variety of scrapers (18), perforators (20), and other flake tools. Attribute analysis was undertaken on a sample of 5,988 flakes and chips from within and without the workshops.

The excavated area has been deleted from the boundary of the District, as that part of the site has been removed and highway construction is under way. However, the site continues upslope for an undetermined distance.

13. Five shovel test pits have demonstrated an apparent continuation of NH 31-20-5. Sixty-one flakes (30% from undisturbed subsoil), a core and associated hammerstone in undisturbed subsoil, a biface fragment, and two fragments of calcined bone were recovered. The biface fragment is the base of a large lanceolate form; bifacial and lamellar basal thinning suggests an early date, probably from the Early Archaic.

Historic Archeological Resources:

Because of its rich fishing grounds, the Lochmere area was one of the first locations to receive attention from colonists living in communities to the south. During the French and Indian Wars, when Canterbury was the last frontier outpost, colonial scouting parties became familiar with Lochmere as they searched for bands of maurading Indians. As soon as the problems with the Indians ceased, settlers from Canterbury started coming to Lochmere seasonally to take advantage of the fishing. Temporary summer lodges were used for this purpose; the most notable located in the Lochmere area, the first settlement in Tilton (Runnels 1882:276).

When permanent settlement was encouraged in the Sanbornton grant by its proprietors, those same colonists, in the 1760s, moved with their families from Canterbury to the area near the river. The early settlers depended greatly on the plentiful supply of fish as a source of food while they struggled to clear land and establish themselves.

Originally weirs were built so as to use the whole river, perhaps based upon Native American designs that may have been present in Lochmere, but these severely penalized those individuals whose weirs were downstream. Therefore, two years after incorporation, the town voted a law prohibiting construction of weirs beyond halfstream to give all a fair chance to share the migration of eels and sherd. Runnels (1882:277) notes that "several of these were constructed ..."

As the community became more self-sufficient, with fields cleared for crops and pasture, development of mill industry began to take precedence over fishing interests. The discontinuance in 1823 of the office of "fish warden" (Runnel 1882:418) signaled the end of fish migration on the river and of increasing use of river to supply power for mills.

(see Continuation Sheet #9)
Both Gibson and Bamford families had mills in position between the late 1770s and 1790 (Runnels 1882:212), (Deed Book 6:174). By 1831, at least, seven mill operations appear to have been operating at Gibson's Falls: a sawmill and grist mill first owned by the Gibson brothers, then rebuilt by Willoughby Durgin and sold first to Simon Sanborn and Joseph Dow, then to Major Edward Pearsons (Runnels 1882:212); Pearsons' two new sawmills, (Runnels 1882:212); the Josiah C. Philbrick shingle and clapboard mill (Runnels 1882:212); the carding and clothing mill of Capt. Jesse Sanborn (Runnels 1882:219); and the Stephen D. Shirley tannery (Deed Book 13:377; Runnels 1882:467). By 1837, had four operating mills: the grist mill first built and operated by Jacob Bamford (Deed Book 6:174); a fulling mill first owned by Issac and Somersby Pearson (Deed Book 6:174), and later by Stephen Chase, Joseph Burleigh, and John W. Perley (Deed Book 3:19; 16:361); and a sawmill and grist mill, owned initially by Daniel C. Atkinson (Deed Book 7:10) and later by John W. Perley (Deed Book 16:361).

Until the 1840s, both sets of mills were local enterprises. However, with its potential for complex industrial development became noticed by large and powerful mill interests in southern New Hampshire and in Massachusetts. The developers of the Amoskeag Mills in Manchester, New Hampshire tried first to establish their mills in Lochmere, but the Bamfords would not sell (Kelly 1975:27). Mill developers from Lowell, Massachusetts persisted and in 1846 the Lake Company began acquiring all mills, water privileges, and flowage rights associated with the Winnipesaukee River for its entire length. The primary purpose of these acquisitions was "to hold the head waters of New Hampshire streams as reservoirs" (Kelly 1975:28-30). The Lake Company built new and improved existing dams on the river, but leased the mills and water rights to mill operators.

By 1863, the Lake Company had uncontested control of the Lochmere mill district; the Perley mills had been acquired in 1853, and after 10 years of litigation, the courts awarded the Company all water rights (Deed Book 40:141). Improvements to the upper dam by the Company resulted in the demise of all but two mills at Gibson's Falls, a box mill on the west side of the river and a sawmill on the east side (Wallings County Map of 1859).

The sawmill and grist mill at Burleigh Bridge continued to prosper, however, under the management of Bryon W. Brown, who with a partner added a sawmill and shingle mill to the operation (Runnels 1882:214). In addition, G. William Blanchard built a excelsior mill at this location in 1869 (Runnels 1882:214).

In 1882, the only mills left in Lochmere were the Brown and Symonds sawmill and grist mill at Burleigh Bridge; all other mills were archeological sites (Runnels Historic Map of 1882). After 1900, a pulp and leatherboard mill replaced the sawmill/grist mill complex (Kelly 1975:26).

The Lake Company era ended in 1910 with sale of land and flowage rights to Public Service Company of New Hampshire (Deed Book 128:189). In 1912 a new dam was built, and in the 1920s a hydro-electric power station replaced part of the leatherboard mill site. In 1962, the State of New Hampshire, through the New Hampshire Water Resources Board, purchased land, the dam, and flowage rights from Public Service. In 1976, the dam was rebuilt, canal (see Continuation Sheet #10)
filled, and power station dismantled. A new hydro-electric facility on the east side of the river is now under consideration by state and federal agencies.

Summaries of sites associated with the fishing and mill industry follow, with site numbers consequent from the last used for prehistoric sites:

14. James Gibson Cellarhole. Documented as the site of James Gibson, this cellarhole is directly associated with the earliest settlement of Lochmere and original builders of the first sawmill, grist mill and dam at Gibson's Falls. No testing has been done, and its integrity is unknown.

15. Cellarhole. Recorded as NH 31-31 (Hoornbeek 1978:92), this cellarhole has been documented as the site of a Lake Company house (Wallings County Map of 1859; Runnels Map of 1882). The site is not readily visible as the foundation is at ground level, but the rectangular outline appears quite intact.

16. Dow/Lake Company Cellarhole. About 1816, Durgin sold his privilege to Simon Sanborn and Joseph Dow (Runnels 1882:212) who, for twelve years, operated the Gibson/Durgin mills. Prior to Lake Company ownership of the house site (Wallings County Map of 1859 and Runnels Map of 1882), the site was owned by Joseph Dow (Deed Book 9:136). Dow was married to Ruth Gibson of the Gibson mill family and acquired the property from her brother, Caleb, in 1816 (Deed Book 9:512), about the same time shared ownership was acquired in the mills. The integrity and research potential appears to be high.

17. Gibson/Durgin Mill Site. The first set of mills at the upper location were built by the Gibson brothers, probably a sawmill and grist mill together. By the early 1800s, the Gibson mills and privileges had been sold to a new owner, Willoughby Durgin, who rebuilt the dam and the sawmill and grist mill joined to it (Runnels 1882:212).

18. Sanborn Mill Site. By the early 1820s, Durgin sold a small privilege to Capt. Jesse Sanborn for a new mill venture (Runnels 1882:219). A carding and clothing mill was built on this location.

19. Mill Sites. Around 1831, Pearsons sold a privilege to Josiah C. Philbrick who built a shingle and clapboard mill (Runnels 1882:212). At the same time, Stephen D. Shirley acquired from Jacob Bamford river frontage (Deed Book 13:377) and built a tannery (Runnels 1882:467). A box mill was also built, distinguished by being one of two mills that remained operative after the Lake Company improved the Pearsons Dam at Gibson's Falls between 1853 and 1859. Runnels does not locate on the 1882 map the position of Philbrick's mill, No tangible archeological remains have been identified at these locations.

(see Continuation Sheet #11)
Of considerable interest are the continuous foundations. An archaeological investigation has not been carried out to determine the various site functions, but it is highly possible that one or more of the "missing" mill sites belong to this location.

20. Cellarhole. This cellarhole has been documented as a Lake Company dwelling site (Wallings County Map of 1859; Runnels Map of 1882). For reasons of safety, the cellarhole has been filled by its present owner. Its integrity cannot be assessed without testing.

21. Canal. As part of the mill complex, a canal was built. Now silt-filled, it is visible in its entirety at low water.

22. Shirley Cellarhole. Site of the Stephen D. Shirley house, ca. 1830, owner of the tannery (Runnels Map of 1882), now identified by a brick mound. No testing has been done, and integrity is questionable.

23. Mill Foundation. (site 21) is a cut bank for a mill foundation. No identification of its function has been made.

24. Mill Foundation. A forty foot section of foundations. No identification of its function has been made.

25. Mill Site. Within the prospering Burleigh Bridge mill section in 1869, G. William Blanchard built a mill to manufacture excelsior for mattresses out of poplar wood. The mill was driven from the upper dam, not the lower dam, and employed 20 men. It burned in 1878 (Runnels 1882:214). Runnels (Map, 1882) indicates improvements and grading of the river-bank associated with the present dam, and the fragmentary remains make integrity of the site questionable.

26. Burleigh Bridge Mill Complex. Burleigh Bridge, was owned by Jacob Bamford, who built a dam and operated a grist mill prior to 1790 (Deed Book 6:174). In 1790, he sold a clothiers privilege to Issac and Somersby Pearson of Boscawen (Deed Book 6:174) who built a fulling mill. They sold in 1792 to Stephen Chase who then sold to Joseph Burleigh in 1793 (Deed Book 3:19).

(see Continuation Sheet #12)
In 1814, a sawmill and grist mill were built by Daniel C. Atkinson, who purchased the sawmill/grist mill privilege and dam from Bamford in 1814 (Deed Book 7:10). Atkinson improved the lower dam and built a canal across the point of land to the west to power his mills. This complex of clothing mill, grist mill, and sawmill continued to operate without change until the late 1830s.

In 1837, John W. Perley acquired the fulling mill and water rights from Burleigh's widow (Deed Book 16:361). He also acquired rights to the "ox bow", and apparently the sawmill/grist mill and related privilege from Atkinson.

After acquisition by the Lake Company, the mills at Burleigh Bridge continued to prosper. In 1866, Bryon W. Brown improved the grist mill operation "with 2 runs of stones ... grinding from 7,000 to 8,000 bushels of western corn per annum" (Runnels 1882:214). In 1870, this mill had five wheels, a capacity of 30 bushels per hour, and operated six months of the year (U.S. Industrial Census - 1870). The Brown and Symonds sawmill and shingle mill in the same location had six wheels; unright, circular, and cutting off saws; and, jointing, shingle, and matching machines. Eight men were employed for six months of the year, and capital was valued at $10,000 (U.S. Industrial Census - 1880).

Sargent speculated on the walls' origin and functions, suggesting they may be traces of Fort Atkinson, an 18th century English fort reportedly built near this location. Rather, the walls appear to be important tangible records of part of the Burleigh Bridge mill complex, probably dating to the Atkinson/Brown periods of use. The integrity of these remains, and the presence of fill north of these, indicate good potential for the site to yield information regarding early mill activity in this area.

27. Leatherboard Mill. After 1900, a pulp and leatherboard mill replaced the sawmill/grist mill complex at Burleigh Bridge. The mill had several buildings, large vats for raw materials and pulp, and a large field for dying square hard board, still often called "leatherboard field" (Kelley 1975:26).

The foundation of at least one building remains intact under the powerline right-of-way. Cut granite blocks of the north wall are readily visible, and the entire rectangular outline is mounded but precise. Sargent (1976:12) tested under the powerline and recorded gravel fill to 47 cm, but testing did not continue to original soil. The integrity of the foundation, and the presence of sterile fill over the historic grade, offers considerable potential for cultural material in context related to the leatherboard operation.
28. Catering Dam. Originally constructed by the Gibson brothers and rebuilt by Durgin, the dam was used to power all mill operations at Gibson's Falls prior to 1828. The dam did not cross the river completely because of the law regarding fishing rights and the custom to have a "rollway" section to permit passage of logs being transported via water to downstream locations (Runnels 1882:280).

29. Pearson's Dam. In 1828, Sanborn and Dow sold to Major Edward Pearsons of Exeter. A new straight dam was constructed to serve Pearson's mills (Runnels 1882:212). This remained the primary dam at Gibson's Falls until 1878. The wooden dam is visible at low water completely crossing the river, and a diver reports a considerable wooden substructure under water remains.

30. Pearsons' Cellarhole. The dwelling on this site was originally owned by Capt. Pearsons, owner of two sawmills and dam (Deed Book 10:166). Later, in 1852, the parcel was acquired from the Lake Company by another mill owner, John W. Perley (Deed Book 21:568) and remained in his possession until after 1859 (Wallings County Map of 1859).

31. Pearsons' Sawmill Site. Constructed about 1828 by Major Edward Pearsons, the sawmill remained operative until at least 1859 (Wallings County Map 1859).

Intrusions & Date Limitations:

In Lochmere, as in much of New Hampshire, soil profiles and prehistoric sites are quite shallow. A typical unaltered soil profile consists of a brown sandy loam (A-horizon, or top soil) to a depth of 12 to 17 cm, a yellow-orange or reddish-yellow-brown sandy zone (typical B-horizon, or subsoil) to an average depth of 30-33 cm, and a light yellow to white sandy gravel (B/C interface) grading into coarser till gravels. Pebbles and cobbles occur throughout the profile. With the exception of subsoil features, most of the occupational debris comes from the top soil and uppermost levels of the subsoil. Therefore, cultivation to a depth of 20-22 cm can greatly alter a site.

Site limits on the map show only areas where subsoil integrity of artifacts and features has been demonstrated by shovel testing. However, cultivated areas also have research potential. While mixing of components within a plow zone limits some kinds of interpretation, the relative horizontal position of artifacts remains remarkably true to the original distribution; therefore, site size, functions, and temporal periods of occupation may be evaluated.
Areas of major disturbance have been noted in the individual site descriptions. These include house lots, landscaped areas, railroad cut and fill, powerlines, and roads. Historical land alterations have segmented prehistoric archeological sites, but not destroyed them.

The greatest impact on both prehistoric and historic archeological sites has been in the southern part of the District by 20th century development of hydro-electric facilities by Public Service Company of New Hampshire and the New Hampshire Water Resources Board. In contrast, the upper area at Gibson's Falls has been little disturbed through the years. By 1882, the colonial mill sites were under water. Because the river banks were part of flowage rights and have been controlled by single, successive owners since 1852, no development, other than occasional small boat docks, has taken place near the mills. Differences in development limit comparison of the areas, as there are fewer resources at Burleigh Bridge to be described and interpreted.
Future work in this District should enable researchers to elaborate upon the data base accumulated during excavations at Weirs Beach (NH 26-32), and as a result of the Lakes Region and Coastal Zone Surveys of New Hampshire. Such work could provide a means of assessing the adaptive models posited by Ritchie and Funk (1973) for the Northeast.

Settlement shifts within the District are suggested. The earliest occupation may lie adjacent to the ancient outflow from Lake Winnisquam on the east. Although most areas show a sequence from Middle Archaic to Woodland, variation in density through time is an indication of patterns of greater and lesser use. For example, site 5 has Middle Archaic, Late Archaic, Middle Woodland, and Late Woodland components, but the highest density of artifacts is from the Late Archaic and Late Woodland periods. The Middle Archaic is best represented across the river at site 12 on the southern slope of the drumlin, and again at the top of the drumlin. Within the broader distribution of Archaic components, Woodland components appear to be much more localized, as at site 9.

Also, the presence of lithic materials exotic to New Hampshire, such as red jasper and various cherts, poses an interesting research problem. These raw materials at Lochmere are found alongside locally obtainable quartz, rhyolites, and argillites. Comparison of diagnostic artifacts from sites in the District with stone from lithic source areas elsewhere in the Northeast could provide information on prehistoric trade networks and patterns of resource procurement. Comparable data has recently been obtained from Mr. Jasper at Berlin, New Hampshire and sites in the Tamworth area. Geographical and temporal patterns of raw material distributions are attainable goals. It should be noted that Lochmere is ideally suited for studies of population and materials movements, as two major historical trails -- the Winnipesaukee and Winnisquam -- converge at or near Lochmere (Price 1967).

The presence of lithic workshops offers the potential for comparative technological studies. This has begun with the attribute analysis of a subassemblage from site 12, and will continue next with the debitage from site 10. Subsequent studies of sites within the District, and comparison with sites elsewhere in the Lakes Region and state, may identify technological signatures for some periods of occupation in the form of distinctive percentages of technological attributes; these signatures, should they exist, would be a valuable aid for the chronological ordering of New Hampshire sites lacking diagnostic implements, as has been done elsewhere for Archaic periods (Hume 1980).

The historical archeological sites of the Lochmere District offer the potential to study a variety of techniques in water power management. Because the water rights of the river were initially owned by two families, two series of mill operations developed -- one using the upper section, and the other using the lower location. During the early years of settlement, mills of similar function were duplicated at both locations.

Although the mills of the upper section are better preserved and more varied, archeological recording of the dams, canals, and mills of both locations, together with continued archival research, will greatly increase our understanding of the technology employed in each location. Differences in the flow and contour of the river created different problems to be solved to utilize the flow of the river for power, and from the beginning different techniques were required to gain the necessary head of water to turn the wheels which powered the mills.

(See continuation sheet 16)
The mill remains assume a broader significance for industrial archeological research, for each generation utilized the water power of the river according to the technology of its day. As a result, there remains for study, at the present time, archeological sites representing a century and a half of water power technology, dating from the 1770's to early 1900's. If a new hydro-electric facility is constructed, two centuries of water power structures will be in evidence within the District.

Several domestic structures are represented by cellarhole sites. Admittedly, some of these may prove not to have integrity, but intact foundations of different size and location alone may increase our awareness and understanding of the life of mill owner families. Site 16, one of the earliest, is teaming with artifacts, and others filled in are more likely to retain integrity of contents than the average cellarhole that has remained exposed. An intriguing research problem is to relate contents to periods of local enterprise and Lake Company domination. Differences in wealth and social status, as measured against standards for each period, may be discernable in the domestic wares that were in use.

Finally, Lochmere achieves a distinction in being the community that rebuffed the development interests of the Amoskeage Mills corporation. Whether Amoskeag would have developed the potential of the site at this location any differently than the Lake Company can never be known, but an interest in development as opposed to reservoirs to serve interests downstream may have stimulated further operations at Gibson's Falls, rather than permitting and causing them to lapse.
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Kelley, Barbara C., Dorothy H.C. Cate, and Alice Atherton, Compilers

King, Thomas F.

McAllister, Mary Beth, Charles E. Bolian and R. Scott Dillon

Moorehead, Warren King

Price, Chester B.
Registry of Deeds, Belknap County, New Hampshire

Ritchie, William A. and Robert E. Funk

Runnels, Moses T.

Runnels, Moses T. and A.P. Ayling, Compilers
1882 Historical Maps of Sanbornton.

Sargent, Howard R.


Starbuck, David R.


United States Industrial Census - Belknap County, 1870

Walling Map of Belknap County - 1859
Verbal Boundary Description:
The Lochmere Archeological District is bounded as follows:

Boundary Justification:
As illustrated on an accompanying map, boundaries follow tangentially the known limits of prehistoric sites with subsurface integrity. Control points for boundaries were determined by shovel test pits to delimit areas of prehistoric occupation with the potential for disturbed subsoil features.