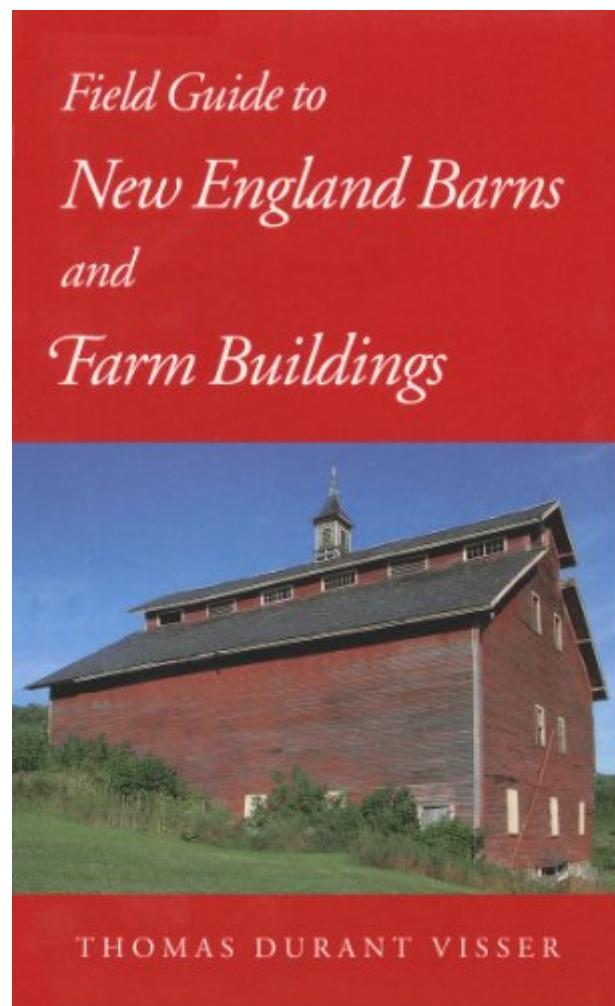


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# Field Guide To New England Barns And Farm Buildings (Library Of New England)



## **Synopsis**

A generously illustrated handbook for identifying and understanding structures that symbolize the region's unique cultural and historical landscape

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This is the definitive book on barns. The author has thoroughly researched and documented use, construction, types and all other key aspects of the New England Barn. Outlined with clear detail, Dr. Visser takes explains use of the barns, how to understand all types of barns and the evolution of the barn. Easy to read, good pictures, the book allows you to understand and date the New England barn. Scholarly book, not just a picture book. I can't recommend this book enough.

Great book.

arrived in fine shape. thank you.

We bought this as a christmas gift for a neighbor and he is thoroughly impressed with it! A very informative read, according to him, he is thrilled with it! I was also really pleased with how quickly the book arrived, in time for Christmas. Great book, Great book store!

very helpful

The title of this review speaks for itself, as this is a "Northern New England's Basic Review of Barns," and not of New England-not a field guide. Professor Visser's hard work could have been much better edited and supported. I have a strong field biology background, and have worked with a wide range of field guides; this is not one. There is no systematic presentation of the different types (species,) of barns, with basic range maps of typology. There is no break down of individual anatomy, or detailed description of construction characteristics that separate one type from another. Supporting photos and illustrations of those characteristics you typically find in a field guide are limited at best. I was very disappointed in the book in general, but feel it is important to point out that the scholarly components are a five star but that can only be accredited to Prof. Visser work and years of experience. A field guide is an amalgamation of effort by many members of a team, and here the publishers and editors "dropped the ball." It would seem as though they lost interest in the project, and decided it did not deserve their attention. I validated this review, in as such; I am a Dutch Amish trained Barn Wright, with decades of experience in and around barns. I currently work with barns on a daily basis all over North America in the restoration and reclamation industry and as a timber wright, and consultant. A true field guide is warranted for publication before many of these incredible pieces of architectural history are lost forever. If you like barns and want another book to read about them, this is a good read. If you want a field guide with definitive illustrations, range locations maps, photos, and joint differentials of the varied types...this is not it.

The following is an excerpt from a review in Vernacular Architecture Newsletter, Feb. 1999. The outbuildings of rural dwellings have customarily received less attention than the dwellings themselves. The fields of architectural history and historic preservation have long focused on dwellings, for such reasons as their sheer abundance and the fact that they may have been repositories of the fanciest and trendiest architectural detail. But visitors to rural areas will often find that a farmstead's ensemble of outbuildings may overshadow the dwelling in size, number, or visual prominence. The outbuildings reflect past activities of people and animals, and connect the dwelling

to the system of fields, fences, driveways, and other farmscape elements. Thomas D. Visser, Associate Professor and Interim Director of the Historic Preservation Program at the University of Vermont, recognizes that barns and other outbuildings are far more important than as mere picturesque elements of the rural landscape. From the massive barn to the lowly privy, "each has a story to tell." In his *Field Guide to New England Barns and Farm Buildings*, Visser provides "clues for deciphering the many layers of history spread over the rural landscape... to help observers... realize the wonderful insights that can spring from an understanding of the evolution of our rural heritage." Visser's book may be used two ways, as a reference book and as a handy, portable field guide. It stands alone as a good concise history of New England farm buildings with an understandable concentration on barns, the most necessary structure of a farmstead other than the dwelling. The specific fieldwork for this volume took two years and was concentrated in areas preselected for their relevance. The fieldwork not only made possible this excellent guide to identifying, understanding, and appreciating farm buildings, but recorded a dwindling cultural resource. Visser has for years encouraged the preservation of barns, building interest among their owners. This book, it is hoped, by increasing awareness of these often neglected structures, will advance the cause of their preservation. The *Field Guide to New England Barns and Farm Buildings* will prove informative and entertaining to a wide audience, from agricultural historians to New England residents who haven't truly appreciated the value of farm buildings as cultural resources.

Despite many mistakes in the layout and composition of this little book, the author has done an admirable job of researching and presenting a dauntingly diverse subject, except for the inadequate photography. One imagines him spending many hours taking and cataloguing and captioning the numerous photos, which are essential to understanding the subject and its details. Too often, however, the camera is too far away or the photos are reduced to such small size that the reader comes away with an impression, rather than a clear idea. It's evident the book suffers from budgetary constraints, and in this instance those constraints have hurt badly. A final complaint -- the title is misleading. Despite the inclusion of a few Connecticut tobacco barns, this is a guide to NORTHERN New England barns. Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine barns are well represented.

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