

PH0000736

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Connecticut	
COUNTY: New London	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 70.10.06.0019	DATE 10/6/70

1. NAME

COMMON:
Converse House and Barn

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
185 Washington Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Norwich

STATE Connecticut	CODE 06360	COUNTY: New London	CODE 011
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Kernit F. Belcher

STREET AND NUMBER:
185 Washington Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Norwich

STATE:
Connecticut

CODE:
06

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Norwich Town Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Norwich

STATE:
Connecticut

CODE:
06

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: 1. Historic American Buildings Survey
2. Connecticut Historic Structures and Landmarks Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1. 1960 2. 1967 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: 1. Library of Congress
2. Connecticut Historical Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:
2. 75 Elm Street

CITY OR TOWN: 1. Washington, D.C.
2. Hartford

STATE:
Connecticut

CODE:
06

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Connecticut
COUNTY: New London
ENTRY NUMBER: 70.10.06.0019
DATE: 10/6/70
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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This irregularly shaped frame building has two and one half stories and sits on a random ashlar foundation. Its heavy roof is broken into several steep gables and covered with patterned gray and red slate. A hip-roofed tower which is the locus of the center hall and stairway is fronted by a seven-sided porch with wood columns and flat pointed wood arches in between.

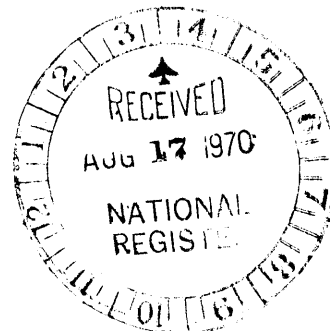
The exterior of the house is flush horizontal boarding which is painted a light pink brown. The trim--which consists of brackets, elaborate wooden arches in the gables, the wooden supports for the porch in the front and a stoop in the back, balcony railings over projecting bays and the framing of the windows--is painted a much darker brown.

Despite the irregularities of the exterior, the floor plan is fundamentally rectangular, running east-west and having an entrance hallway in the west end. There are two stairways: one in the back and a larger U shaped stairway with open string stairs, square paneled newel posts, a moulded handrail and turned balusters, three per step. The flooring is oak throughout. The dining room is paneled in walnut and has a simulated beamed ceiling. The fireplace in this room is faced with a tile mural which suggests a Dutch landscape. There are less elaborate fireplaces in the living room and a second floor bedroom. The first floor has seven rooms, the second five, and there is one third floor room in the tower.

There is a large barn and carriage shed at the southeast corner of the lot. This is an L-shaped building with a leanto now enclosed to make a garage. It has steep gable roofs and pierced barge boards with a diamond pattern. Its color and that of the trim are the same as the house.

Known changes in the house since its construction around 1870 are the enclosing of the barn leanto, changes in the organization of the kitchen space and the replacement of a window on the south side of the house to permit some modernization of the kitchen.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



2. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) c. 1870

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This house is important because it is characteristic of domestic building of the 1870's when High Victorian Gothic was the prevailing fashion in architecture. The vertical proportions, irregular shape, and polychrome exterior combine to enforce an effect of calculated restlessness. Other aspects of the building which make it a paradigm of High Victorian taste are the complex roofline with its many gables and dormers and the solidity and structural relevance of its trim which contrasts with the delicacy of earlier Gothic ornamentation.¹

The original owner was probably Colonel Charles A. Converse who with his wife lived in the house for many years. Colonel Converse gave the Converse Art Gallery, home of the Norwich Art School, to the Norwich Free Academy in 1906.

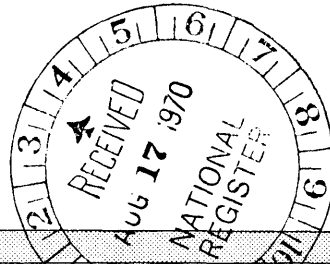


¹Marcus Whiffen in his book American Architecture since 1780 uses the photograph of the Converse House from the HABS Survey as an example of High Victorian Gothic.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS Conn-260) and (HABS Conn-263)



10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds		LATITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "	41	32	03	
NE	° ' "	° ' "	72	05	00	
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Constance Luyster, Administrative Trainee

ORGANIZATION: Connecticut Historical Commission DATE: July 28, 1970

STREET AND NUMBER: 75 Elm Street

CITY OR TOWN: Hartford STATE: Connecticut CODE: 06

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: [Signature]
 Title: Liaison Officer and Chairman Connecticut Historical Commission
 Date: July 28, 1970

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

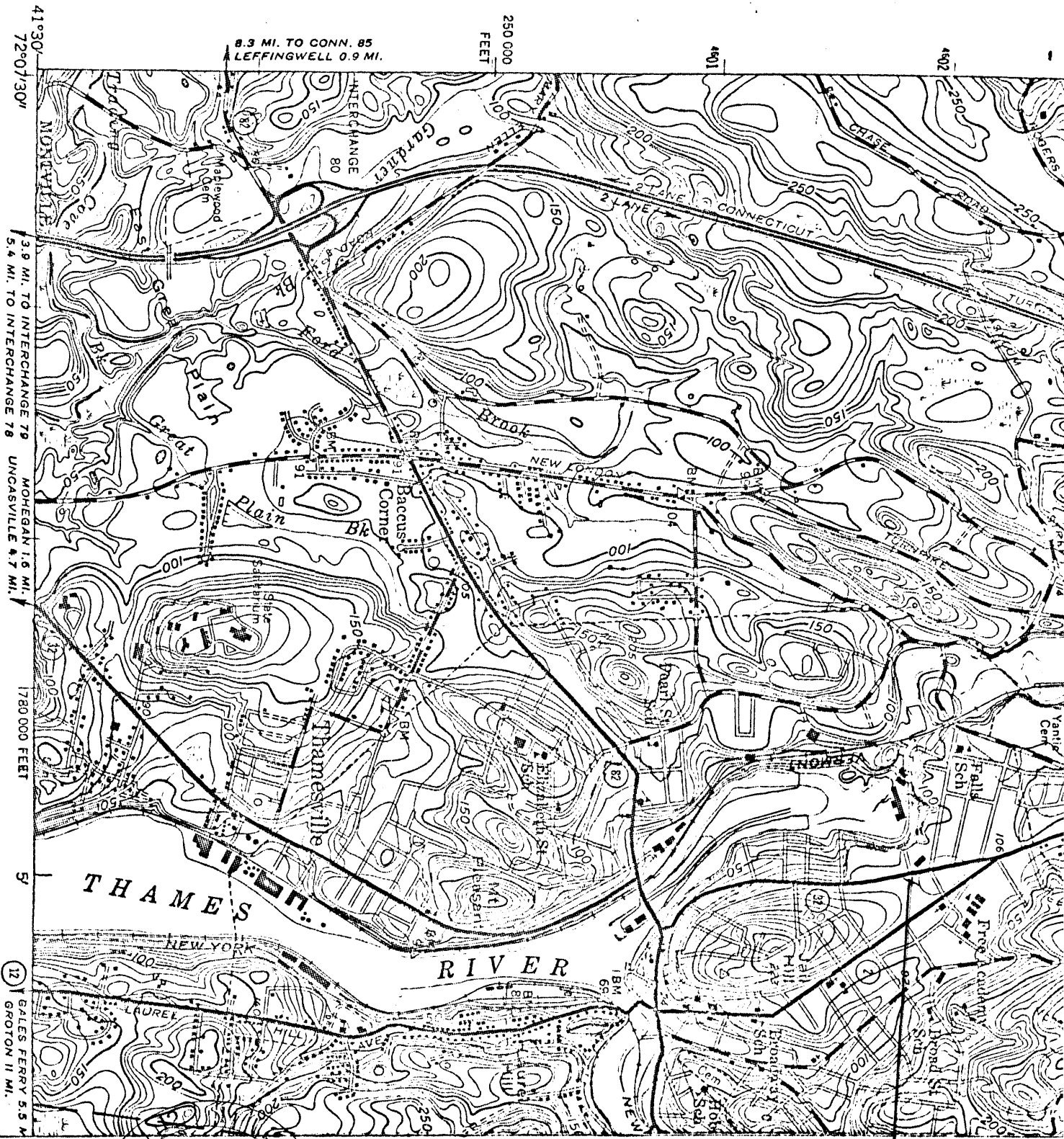
[Signature]
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

OCT 6 1970

Date _____

ATTEST:
[Signature]
 Keeper of The National Register
 Date: AUG 25 1970

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



8.3 MI. TO CONN. 85
LEFFINGWELL 0.9 MI.

250 000
FEET

41°30'
72°07'30"

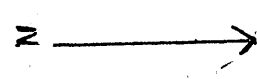
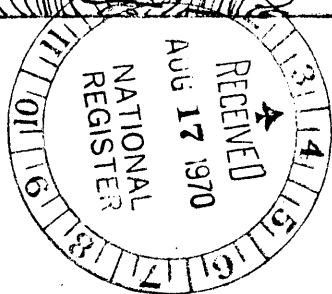
3.9 MI. TO INTERCHANGE 79
5.4 MI. TO INTERCHANGE 78
MOHEGAN 1.6 MI.
UNCASVILLE 4.7 MI.

1780 000 FEET

5

12

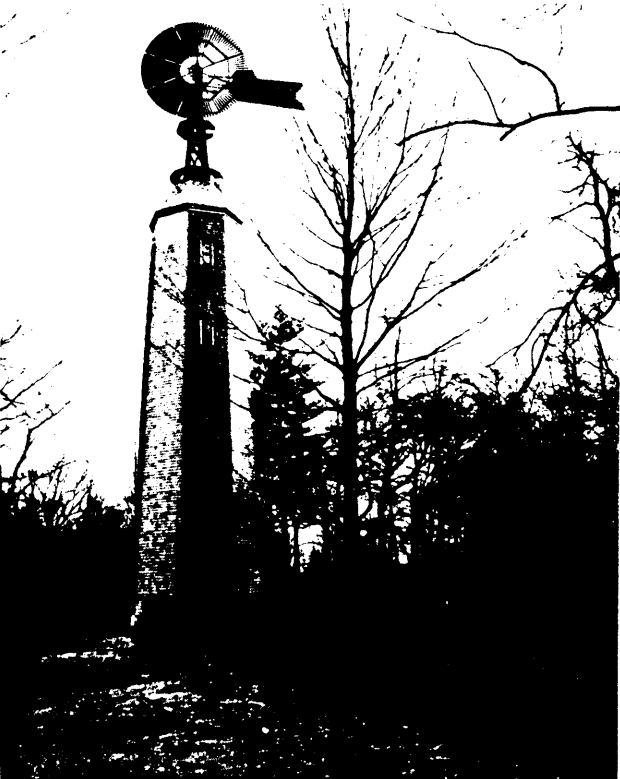
GATES FERRY 5.5 M
GROTON II MI.



CONVERSE HOUSE
AND BRN
Latitude 41° 32' 03"
Longitude 72° 05' 00"



Converse House and Barn (house), New
London County, Norwich. *Jack E.
Boucher for HABS (Library of Congress)*



Bronson Windmill, Fairfield County, Fairfield. *Fairfield
Historic District Commission*