

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received JUL 23 1985
date entered AUG 23 1985

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Elijah Mills House

and/or common NA

2. Location

street & number 45 Deerfield Road NA not for publication

city, town Windsor vicinity of Wilson

state CT code 09 county Hartford code 003

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<u>NA</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name David A. & Lynne F. Gillette

street & number 45 Deerfield Road

city, town Windsor NA vicinity of _____ state CT

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Windsor Land Records, Town Clerk

street & number Windsor Town Hall, 275 Broad Street

city, town Windsor state CT

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

State Register of
title Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1975 federal state county local

depository for survey records Connecticut Historical Commission

59 South Prospect Street

city, town Hartford state CT

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Overview

Built in 1822, the Elijah Mills House is a 2½-story, Federal, brick, gable-roofed structure located in the village of Wilson in the southeastern corner of the Town of Windsor. The house faces east on Deerfield Road at the northwestern corner of Deerfield Road and the approach road to the Bissell Bridge over the Connecticut River (see site plan) in a largely residential neighborhood that has some industry.

Exterior

The house consists of a 31' x 37' main block and a rear ell at the southwest corner. (Photographs 1-4) The front elevation is laid up in Flemish bond, the others in common. The front entrance has a paneled door with narrow molded surround under a modest leaded fanlight. The 12-over-12 windows, regularly spaced, have chiseled stone sills, painted white, and rowlock lintels. The scars of a full-width front porch which was removed in 1978 (Photograph 5) and the gable roof of an earlier portico are on the facade.

The south elevation features an entrance, 12-over-12 windows, and a bricked-up semi-elliptical window in the gable end. On the north elevation are 12-over-12 windows and a 6-over-6 window in the gable end. The south elevation has a shed-roofed porch with railing and a door with two round-arched lights, presumably installed in the late 19th century. (Photograph 6) Two brick chimneys rise from the ridge line several feet inside the end walls.

The ell was built in several parts in the 19th century. The original gable-roofed section, the kitchen, is 1½ stories high, about 17-feet square and of frame construction. It was enlarged six feet to the south by the addition of a flat-roofed section with two 6-over-6 windows, on brick foundations, that extends the side porch of the main block toward the rear. (Photograph 3) Separately, the ell was increased in length by 21 feet, creating an attached barn. (Photographs 4 and 7) The barn section has two windows on the south, two on the west (one of them enlarged to a loading door) and one on the north. On the south this section is extended under a shed roof over the barn doors.

A former larger barn, free standing to the south, was demolished at an unknown date. The property was a farm at the time the house was built.

Interior

The front door of the house opens to a full-length central hall. The paneled back door is identical to the front except that its fanlight has wooden radial muntins while the front fanlight is leaded. The back door has latch only, no doorknob. (Photograph 8) The south wall of the hall, 11 inches thick, is a brick bearing wall, while the north wall, 5½ inches thick, is of stud construction. At the mid point of the hall there is an arch; beyond the arch the hall widens to the north, where the stairway rises to the second floor.

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Description

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(Photograph 9) The wall configuration there is an ogee curve, convex at the post, concave beyond. It seems likely that the arch was added since the detail of a post abutting a curved wall is out of the ordinary.

There are two rooms on either side of the hall, each with a fireplace. All fireplaces have shallow brick fireboxes, hearths of square brick and wooden mantels. In the north front room the mantel includes moldings around the firebox and a broad shelf supported by moldings. The corners of the fireplace wall in this room are curved. (Photograph 10)

The south front room has a mantel with rope, chevron and beaded moldings. (Photograph 11) In the room behind it a cast-iron surround has been added to the wooden mantel. (Photograph 12) These two rooms have molded chair rails on four sides.

The next room to the rear, in the fore part of the ell, is the kitchen. It has a large fireplace, with beehive-shaped bake oven opening from the wall to the left. (Photograph 13) The contour of part of the oven is visible to the left, now exposed because the wall that formerly covered it was removed when the kitchen was enlarged. Window trim in the kitchen is flat, whereas it is molded in the main block. A transverse stairway rises in a straight run from the south porch extension to the second floor between the main block and the kitchen. The rear wall of the main block at the stairway is exposed brick.

The layout of the second floor is similar to that of the first, with four rooms grouped around a central hall whose south wall is an upward continuation of the brick bearing wall. Only the two front rooms have fireplaces, relatively simple in design. In the ell are two garret sleeping rooms. The one on the south was converted to storage space by changing its west window to a loading door. (Photograph 14. Also, compare exterior view, Photograph 3.)

The roof framing of the main block consists of heavy purlins, common rafters, ridge pole and wide roof boards. The north chimney bows forward so as to emerge from the roof centered on the ridge line. (Photograph 15) The south chimney has an adjacent smoke oven. (Photograph 16)

In the barn the rest of the kitchen oven contour is visible and above it a portion of the original wall of the ell. (Photograph 17) The rear wall of the kitchen is brick down to the ground. The door to the cellar is at the right of the original corner post. (Photograph 18) The door leads to a portion of the kitchen cellar that was added when the kitchen was extended to the south. The girt is in place that divides the original kitchen cellar from the extension. The base of the kitchen chimney is comprised of three piers separated by two arches, side by side.

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In the cellar of the main block the walls and floor are brick, as in the space under the kitchen, and the brick bearing wall is visible. The north chimney is supported by brick piers with arches back to back. (Photograph 19) The south chimney base has an arch on the east but on the west appears as a solid pier. Brick is laid in a cove from the top of the pier to a timber under each hearth.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates c. 1822 **Builder/Architect** Elijah Mills

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Criterion C - Architecture

The Elijah Mills House is a good example of an early 19th-century Federal-style house, executed in the brick for which Windsor was famous. Of equal interest are the several 19th-century alterations to the interior of the main block and to the ell, showing how the house developed during the early years of its history. Fortunately, few alterations have been made in the 20th century.

As late as 1846, 40 brickyards were operated in Windsor.¹ Some of the first brick houses known to have been built in Connecticut, where 18th-century brick construction is uncommon, were built in Windsor. The leading scholar on Connecticut Colonial houses, J. Frederick Kelly, cites the Thomas Allyn House, c. 1740, 119 Deerfield Road, as the first in the state.² The Town of Windsor Historical Survey lists three other brick houses as dating from the 18th century.³ In addition, there are 11 later brick structures in the Federal or Greek Revival styles, having their gable ends toward the street.⁴ In examples built at about the same time as the Elijah Mills House, the Edward Moore House, 464 Broad Street, has four bays and the house at 245 Deerfield Road has a central chimney. Thus, of the dozen and a half early brick houses standing in Windsor, the Elijah Mills House is the only 5-bay, twin-chimney example in the Federal style.

It is to be noted that the name Deerfield Road has been in use only since World War II. Prior to that time, the street was a section of Windsor Avenue, the main thoroughfare from Hartford north to Windsor center. (See USGS map.) Eleven of the early brick houses are located on this thoroughfare.

Several members of the Mills family operated brickyards in Windsor in the early 19th century. Elijah Mills was one of them and it is understandable that he used brick as the building material for his own house.⁵ The fact that he was in the business may explain the profuse use of brick for walls and floor of the cellar, an unusual material for the purpose. Another member of the family, Oliver W. Mills, did the same thing at 148 Deerfield Road.⁶

Most of the design features of the Elijah Mills House are typical of the period, including the five bays, twin chimneys, central entrance with fanlight, central hall and 4-room plan. It is surprising that the north gable end apparently never had a semi-elliptical window. The increase in the width of the hall toward the rear, permitting the stairway to be offset to the

9. Major Bibliographical References

Howard, Daniel, ed., Glimpses of Ancient Windsor, from 1633 to 1933, Windsor: Windsor Tercentenary Committee, 1933.

Mills, Marguerite, interview, January 19, 1985.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than one

Quadrangle name Hartford North

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

18	694720	4632040
Zone	Easting	Northing

B

Zone	Easting	Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property is described in the Windsor Land Records at volume 347, page 260. The boundary of the parcel encompasses the land that now goes with the house.

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

state NA code NA county NA code NA

state NA code NA county NA code NA

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David F. Ransom, Consultant

Edited by John Herzan,
National Register Coordinator

organization Connecticut
Historical Commission

date January 20, 1985

street & number 59 South Prospect Street

telephone 203 566-3005

city or town Hartford

state CT

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title Director: Connecticut Historical Commission

date July 2, 1985

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date

8/23/85

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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north, is uncommon. The moldings of the south front room fireplace mantel, the rounded wall of the hall offset and the rounded rear corners of the north front room express the delicate ornament and curved surfaces of the Federal style.

How many of the seven wooden mantels are original is hard to say. The lines of the hall arch, thought to have been added, and of the mantel in the north front room have some similarity, and may date from the same time. The installation of the cast-iron surround in the south rear room perhaps was contemporary with that of the round-arched side door of the south front room, both being late 19th century rather than Federal.

The reasons for all the changes to the ell are not clear. In particular, enlarging the kitchen and its cellar by six feet seems to have been a great deal of work for limited benefit. The addition of the barn structure, the garret rooms above it and the transverse stairway to the ell's second floor may all have occurred at one time, as a needed increase in farm facilities. The added stairway provided the occupants of the garret rooms with access to their quarters without disturbing the family in the main block. The fact that the rear wall of the main block along that stairway is exposed brick is difficult to explain. It could not have been an original exterior wall unless the whole kitchen ell is an added feature.

Leaving these matters unresolved, the well-proportioned Elijah Mills House is architecturally valuable as the only 5-bay, twin-chimney Federal brick house in Windsor. The 19th-century changes that occurred to it add to its interest as a cultural artifact.

1. Daniel Howard, ed., Glimpses of Ancient Windsor, from 1633 to 1933, Windsor: Windsor Tercentenary Committee, 1933, p. 40. The large number of brickyards resulted from the presence of large deposits of suitable clay.
2. J. Frederick Kelly, The Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut, New York: Dover Publications, 1963, reprint of Yale University Press, 1924, p. 65. Connecticut Hall at Yale University also was built in brick, c. 1750.

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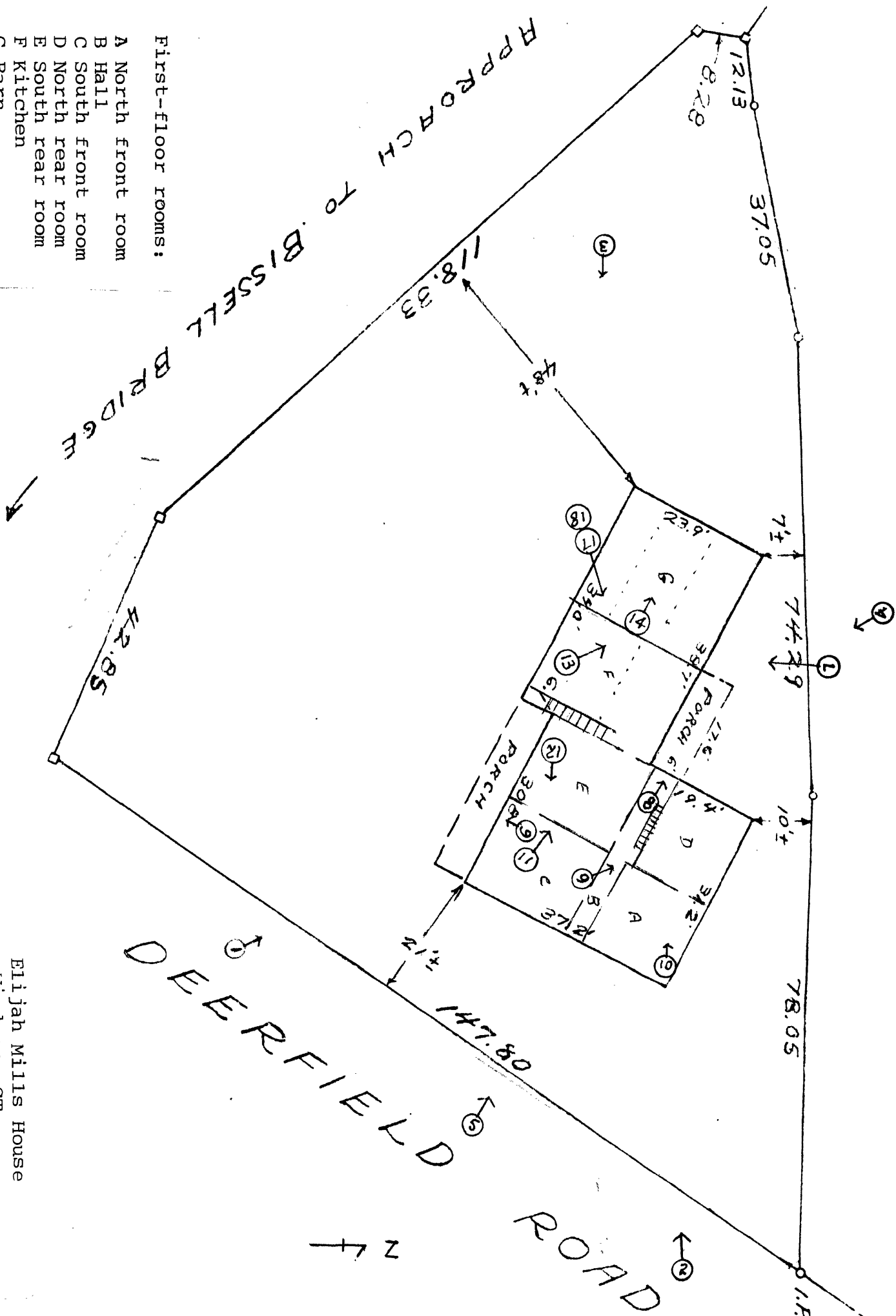
3. Col. Oliver Mather House, 323 Broad Street, 1777; Taylor-Chapman House, 407 Palisado Avenue, 1764; David Payne House, 27 Park Avenue.

4. Col. James Loomis House, 208-210 Broad Street, 1822; Oliver W. Mills House, 148 Deerfield Road, 1825; William Shelton House, 40 Pleasant Street, 1830; Warren A. Barbour House, 860 Windsor Avenue, 1827; Capt. James Loomis House, 881 Windsor Avenue, 1825; Lucien B. Loomis House, 901 Windsor Avenue, 1825; Martin Barber House, 992 Windsor Avenue, 1835; Gordon Loomis House, 1021 Windsor Avenue, 1835; 1053 Windsor Avenue, 1823; Timothy Dwight Mills House, 184 Deerfield Avenue, 1830; 411-413 Windsor Avenue.

5. The sign on the house reads "Elijah and Samuel Mills House." The survey inventory form calls it the Samuel W. Mills House, but Miss Marguerite Mills, great-great-granddaughter of Elijah Mills, states that Elijah built it. Samuel was his son. Miss Mills lives in the house at 148 Deerfield Road, 1825, listed in the National Register of Historic Places February 19, 1982, built by her great-grandfather, Oliver W. Mills, brother of Samuel. Interview with Miss Marguerite Mills, January 19, 1985.

6. Just how unusual brick-lined cellars in Connecticut may be is unknown. The Elijah Mills House is the first the author has seen with such a cellar. Miss Mills states that her residence, the Oliver W. Mills House, had the same description of cellar when built (but now has a concrete floor as part of an effort to control moisture).

- First-floor rooms:
- A North front room
 - B Hall
 - C South front room
 - D North rear room
 - E South rear room
 - F Kitchen
 - G Barn



Elijah Mills House
 Windsor, CT
 Scale: 1" = 20'
 Photo key - 