

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED MAR 31 1982  
DATE ENTERED APR 29 1982

**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

Aaron Barlow House

AND/OR COMMON

Aaron Barlow House

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Umpawaug Road at Station Road

N/A NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Redding

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

N/A VICINITY OF

5th

STATE

Connecticut

CODE

09

COUNTY

Fairfield

CODE

001

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED
- N/A

**STATUS**

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

**PRESENT USE**

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Jon S. & Gabrielle E. Hiltunen

STREET & NUMBER

Umpawaug Road at Station Road

CITY, TOWN

Redding

STATE

Connecticut

N/A VICINITY OF

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Town Office Building

STREET & NUMBER

Route 107

CITY, TOWN

Redding

STATE

Connecticut

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

See continuation sheet

DATE

" " "

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

" "

CITY, TOWN

" "

STATE

"

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

## CHECK ONE

## CHECK ONE

EXCELLENT

DETERIORATED

UNALTERED

ORIGINAL SITE

GOOD

RUINS

ALTERED

MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

FAIR

UNEXPOSED

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

### Setting

The Aaron Barlow House is an 18th-century, 2½-story, 5-bay, twin-chimney gable-roofed, frame house on stone foundation, sited on a knoll, facing east toward Umpawaug Road and the Saugatuck River, in the West Redding section of the town of Redding, Connecticut. (Photograph 1.) The front yard slopes down from the house to a stone fence in a broad sweep of grass and trees. Two acres of land still go with the house in this traditionally rural neighborhood which is showing signs of more intensive development as more and more corporate headquarters are established in Fairfield County.

A 1-story, gable-roofed wing, added in the 1940s, projects from the north elevation of the house. The wing is 15x24 feet, compared with the 39x30 feet size of the main block. (See sketch map.) A modern garage, southwest of the house, is the only outbuilding. The former barn of the property, visible to the south, has now been altered in the spirit of modern architecture and is a separate dwelling. A country ambience still prevails; the house is in a quiet location without being isolated.

### Exterior

There is a central doorway in the 5-bay facade with an 8-panel, 20th-century door under a row of six old transom lights. A dentil course above the fascia over the transom lights is the only embellishment in the otherwise plain doorway surround. The nine 12-over-12 windows of the facade, not old, also have plain surrounds. The clapboards, gutters, and leaders are of 20th-century origin.

The broad, wood-shingled roof is dominated by the two ashlar stone chimneys, with caps. The two chimneys because of their height and mass are an imposing presence. The roof line on the south slopes down in a "catslide", concave curve over a 1-story extension to the rear, while on the north elevation the rear slope is longer than the front slope, to form a saltbox effect.

On the south elevation there is one 12-over-12 window in the attic, and two more at second-floor level, not evenly spaced. The rear window is further from the ridge line than the front one. At the first floor, 6 panelled double doors are positioned behind the ridge line under a cyma molded cap and the molding continues down the jambs. This is the only molding on the exterior of the house, but it appears to be of 20th-century origin, as do the doors. West of the double doors, toward the back of the house, are three more windows. The last one lights the one-story section and is thought to have been converted from a door after that section ceased to serve its original function as an office. There are two more windows to the east of the double doors, toward the front. (Photo 2.)



**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

AARON BARLOW HOUSE, REDDING, CT

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Description

Item number 7

Page 1

The north elevation, only, is shingled. This condition is thought to be left over from earlier days when all the exterior siding was heavy shakes. This elevation has a small 6-over-6 attic window, two 12-over-12 windows at the second floor, and one, toward the front, at first-floor level. The new wing takes the place of a second window toward the back. The wing, covered with clapboards, has two 12-over-8 windows in its east elevation, one 12-over-12 on the north, and two 12-over-8 and a door on the west elevation. The windows and doors have plain surrounds similar to those of the main block. (Photograph 3.)

The fenestration on the west elevation of the main block, from the north, consists of one 12-over-12 window, one 6-over-6, a door, and a 3-over-3 window high under the gutter, before the shed extension. The north roof line of the shed appears to be straight rather than concave. There is a 12-over-12 window in the north elevation of the extension. The ground slopes off to the rear of the house, making possible a basement garage entrance under the shed extension.

Interior

The Aaron Barlow House is a large structure, with some 1680 square feet on the first floor, 1170 feet on the second, plus a full basement and attic. The floor plan of the two main floors is conventional, consisting of central hall with two rooms on either side. On the first floor the hall is nine feet wide, and leads from the front door to the back door with the stairs rising mid-way against the south wall. The hall has old plaster walls and ceiling (eight feet high), a chair rail, and two breaks in the floor boards that suggest a change has been made in the floor plan over the years. Most of the flooring throughout the house is old, wide boards.

Major rehabilitation of the interior in the 1940s included work by a cabinet maker who built new fireplace surrounds and paneling, re-using some old materials. The library, the south front room, is dominated by his bookcases. Ceiling beams are exposed in this room, the former plaster ceiling having been removed. In the dining room (the north front room) the paneled fireplace wall and adjoining corner cupboard are thought to be original, although now painted white. (Photograph 4.) The ashlar stone fireplace is one of several in the house, and, like the one in the library, its hearth is a single piece of stone. The fireplace mantel and the room's ceiling cornice, that breaks out over the windows, date from the 1940s restoration.

The right rear room is now the kitchen. There is a large walk-in cupboard north of the chimney. The former window on the north wall has been converted to the door to the 1945 north wing.

The left rear room, the living room, has exposed ceiling beams, and incorporates in its space the one-story rear extension (office), the partition that presumably once divided them having been removed.

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCERS use only

received

date entered

AARON BARLOW HOUSE, REDDING, CT

Continuation sheet

Description

Item number 7

Page 2

This room has another large stone fireplace with surround of wide, vertical, feather-edged-and-beaded boards. A double dentil course defines the top of the fireplace opening. (Photograph 5.) This treatment was part of the 1940s restoration. There is an oven toward the left and top of the fireplace back wall.

The triangular wall under the stairs to the second floor is covered with raised, vertical panels. The stairs have a closed string with widely-spaced turned balusters and with half-balusters at the newel posts. Whether this whole arrangement is old or was created during the 1940s restoration is uncertain. A cupboard half way up the stairs is thought to be a former smoke oven. (Photograph 6.)

At the top of the stairs, to the left, the rear room on the second floor, now a bathroom, has a bricked-up fireplace. There is access behind the chimney to the south front room, the master bedroom. The ceiling of this room was raised several decades ago to accommodate a four-poster bed. The attic floor over this room is raised above the level of the rest of the attic floor.

A small room in front of the hall now serves as a nursery. There are two bedrooms on the north side of the hall, the front one having a small fireplace with stone hearth. The corner post is visible in this room. The ceiling height of the second floor is lower than that of the first floor, and lines in the flooring indicate that changes have been made in the past in the positions of partitions.

The attic stairs are immediately south of the stairs from the first to the second floor. In the attic the roof framing is visible. There are 14 pairs of rafters, on approximately 40-inch centers, joined at the ridge line with mortise and tenon and peg. There is one heavy purlin low on the west roof slope, but none on the east slope. Wide roof boards are nailed to the rafters. The two stone chimneys, in good condition, are four feet square as they rise through the attic. (Photograph 7.)

Stairs descend to the basement below the first to second floor stairway. Much of the basement is taken up by the two big, square, stone chimney bases, which have wood beams under the four fireplaces. The south chimney is coved for the hearths, while the corresponding section of the north chimney is obscured by modern heating ducts. Concrete has been poured for the floor. Several iron columns have been added to help support the first floor.

# 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/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) <b>Local history</b>
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 18th Century

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Unknown

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### Criteria

The Aaron Barlow House embodies the characteristics of early Georgian style domestic architecture that became prominent in the Colonies beginning in the mid-18th century. These characteristics, all present in the house, include the 2½-story height, 5-bay facade, twin chimneys, central entrance, central hall, and two rooms on either side of the hall. The absence of exterior decorative trim (the doorway and window surrounds are plain) suggests the house may date from early in the Georgian style period. (Criterion C.) Much of the interior trim dates from the 1940s, and is not part of the historical architectural significance of the house. The association of the house with Colonel Aaron Barlow, with Joel Barlow, poet and statesman, and with General Israel Putnam, all of whom were active at the time of the Revolutionary War, gives the house an important place in local history. (Criterion B.)

### Architecture

The house enjoys a fine location. The knoll-top site, overlooking the Saugatuck River, was chosen with care and has proven over the centuries to offer a fine view of the surrounding countryside. The Aaron Barlow House with its broad roof and twin stone chimneys forms a striking silhouette that is as enjoyable today as it was when the structure was first built. The "catslide" roof and the survival of all the original framing lend added interest and significance.

In the Aaron Barlow House the chimneys are built entirely of stone. Chimney bases in most 18th-century houses are massive stone structures, but above the level of the bases brick often is used as the building material. Even in all stone chimneys the top section, at and above the roof line, often has been replaced with brick because of maintenance problems. The two chimneys in the Aaron Barlow House are completely of stone, and in good condition.

On the other hand, the interior trim of the house has been altered, particularly during the 1940s restoration, to a considerable degree. The fireplace apertures and hearths, as distinguished from the mantels and surrounds, appear to be original, as do many of the doors and the dining room corner cupboard. The paneling and vertical boarding may be original to



**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

AARON BARLOW HOUSE, REDDING, CT

For HCERS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Significance

Item number 8

Page 1

the house, but also may well have been moved from their original locations. The 1940s work was carefully done by craftsmen and the general effect is pleasing, if not authentic. Apparently, historical accuracy was not an objective of the work.

A picture taken before 1940 (Figure 8) shows the house before the wing was added to the north. It also shows a window occupying the space on the rear elevation where there is now a door. The absence of a back door raises the question of what was the center hall treatment. The HABS/WPA Census of Old Buildings form, c. 1930, mentions a "wide central hall which runs all the way through" although the picture attached to that form, like Figure 8, shows no back door. A subsidiary thought to the hall-and-back-door situation is the likelihood that the house did have more than one door, and therefore the doorway on the south elevation may be original even though the present doors and moldings are of 20th-century origin.

Aaron Barlow, Joel Barlow and General Putnam

The year that Aaron Barlow (1750-1800), blacksmith, took up residence in the house is uncertain, but it was at about the time of the Revolutionary War. He participated in several of the war's campaigns, notably as a sergeant in the 5th Regiment Connecticut Line during the Northern Campaign to Montreal and Quebec. The diary he kept during the campaign, from June 3 to December 6, 1775, has been preserved and is a valuable source document in connection with the history of that military episode. After the war he served in the Connecticut legislature, 1792-95, and in the 1790s achieved the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the 4th Connecticut Militia. With his brother Joel, Aaron operated a grist mill on the nearby Saugatuck River for the kiln drying of corn for export to the West Indies.<sup>1</sup> One theory has it that the low rear extension to the house was an office in connection with the operation of the mill. Aaron moved to Virginia in 1800, for reasons unknown, and died there the same year, of yellow fever.

Aaron's younger brother, Joel Barlow (1754-1812) was nationally known as a poet and statesman. While attending Yale he often visited his brother, and is said to have written his most famous work, The Vision of Columbus, published in 1787, in the southeast chamber of the house, which is the room that later had its ceiling raised for a four-poster bed. Joel also served as minister to France, and was a friend of many dignitaries of the day.

The brigade of General Israel Putnam (1718-1790) was encamped in Redding for the winter of 1778-79 (Connecticut's Valley Forge) at a site east of the Aaron Barlow House, now recognized as the Putnam Memorial Camp Grounds (Israel Putnam State Park). Putnam was troubled by deserters and spies. He ordered the execution of one of each, in an effort to discourage others. According to tradition<sup>2</sup>, the wife of Smith, the deserter, saw her husband shot from the attic window of the Aaron Barlow House. Putnam is said to have been a friend of Barlow's and to have enjoyed social evenings at the house.

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

AARON BARLOW HOUSE, REDDING, CT.

Continuation sheet

Significance

Item number

8

Page

2

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

The Age of the House

According to long-standing local tradition, the house was built well before 1750, perhaps c. 1730. This tradition was reinforced when, during the 20th century, workmen uncovered a brick in the south chimney in which the digits 28 have been clearly incised, with what may be a portion of a 7 preceeding them. (Photograph 9.) This brick is interpreted as evidence that the house was built in 1728.

An undated, unsigned typescript at the house states that the builder was David Starr, the next owner David Barlow, his son-in-law, followed by his son, Aaron Barlow. The land records<sup>3</sup> index does not show any transfers of titles corresponding to this sequence. West Redding people have a belief that some of their early land records are missing, but the Town Clerk's staff is unaware of any gaps in the records. There is no break in the volume sequence. Moreover, standard genealogies show that Aaron Barlow was the son of Samuel Barlow.

The probate records of Samuel Barlow<sup>4</sup> record a distribution to Aaron Barlow and Joel Barlow in 1782 of one-half of a house and two-thirds of a barn on property whose boundaries are described as running from one "stake and pile of stones" to another, and thus may or may not relate to the nominated property.

As a final element of confusion, one source states that "He (Aaron Barlow) built the large colonial house on the corner ...."<sup>5</sup> As Aaron was born in 1750, it is unlikely that he would have built a house, particularly one so fine and large, before the 1770s.

A postulate that would encompass these several observations is the supposition that a small house may have been built first on the site, and subsequently enlarged, perhaps by Aaron Barlow, to its present size. It is hard to visualize either of the present chimneys as the central chimney of a pre-Revolutionary War house, and nothing in the attic framing or in the foundation's masonry suggests such a possibility. As the Georgian-style, four-room, central-hall plan did not come into use until about 1750, it is unlikely that the house in its present configuration was built in this country location prior to that time.

Summary

While original-source material on the origin of the Aaron Barlow House is not at hand, and its early history therefore is obscure, the house nonetheless obviously is an 18th-century structure outstanding for its position, size, original framing, and handsome twin stone chimneys. Its

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

AARON BARLOW HOUSE, REDDING, CT

Continuation sheet Significance

Item number 8

Page 3

For HCERS use only  
received  
date entered

association with Aaron Barlow, Joel Barlow and General Putnam's nearby encampment make the house important in local history.

1. Todd, p. 158. The practice of kiln drying corn was not common. Todd does not describe the procedure, nor does he throw any light on why the product was attractive to the West Indies market. The introduction of high temperatures into the dust-laden atmosphere of a grist mill suggests the hazard of explosion. It is difficult to think that normal grist mill operations and kiln drying were carried on in the same mill.

2. Todd, p. 37. In a statement that appears to be contradictory, Todd, on p. 39, states that the prisoner who was shot was a 17-year-old boy.

3. Land records for the years prior to 1767 are at the Town of Fairfield. The Town of Redding was split off from Fairfield in that year.

4. Probate Record No. 354 at the Connecticut State Library.

5. Todd, p. 149.

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

AARON BARLOW HOUSE, REDDING, CT.

Continuation sheet Bibliography Item number 9

Page 1

Town of Fairfield Land Records

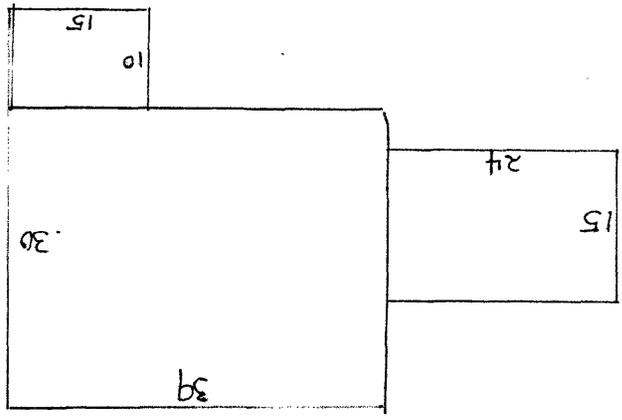
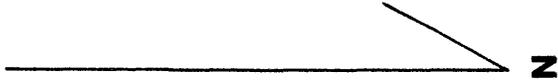
Probate Records at Connecticut State Library

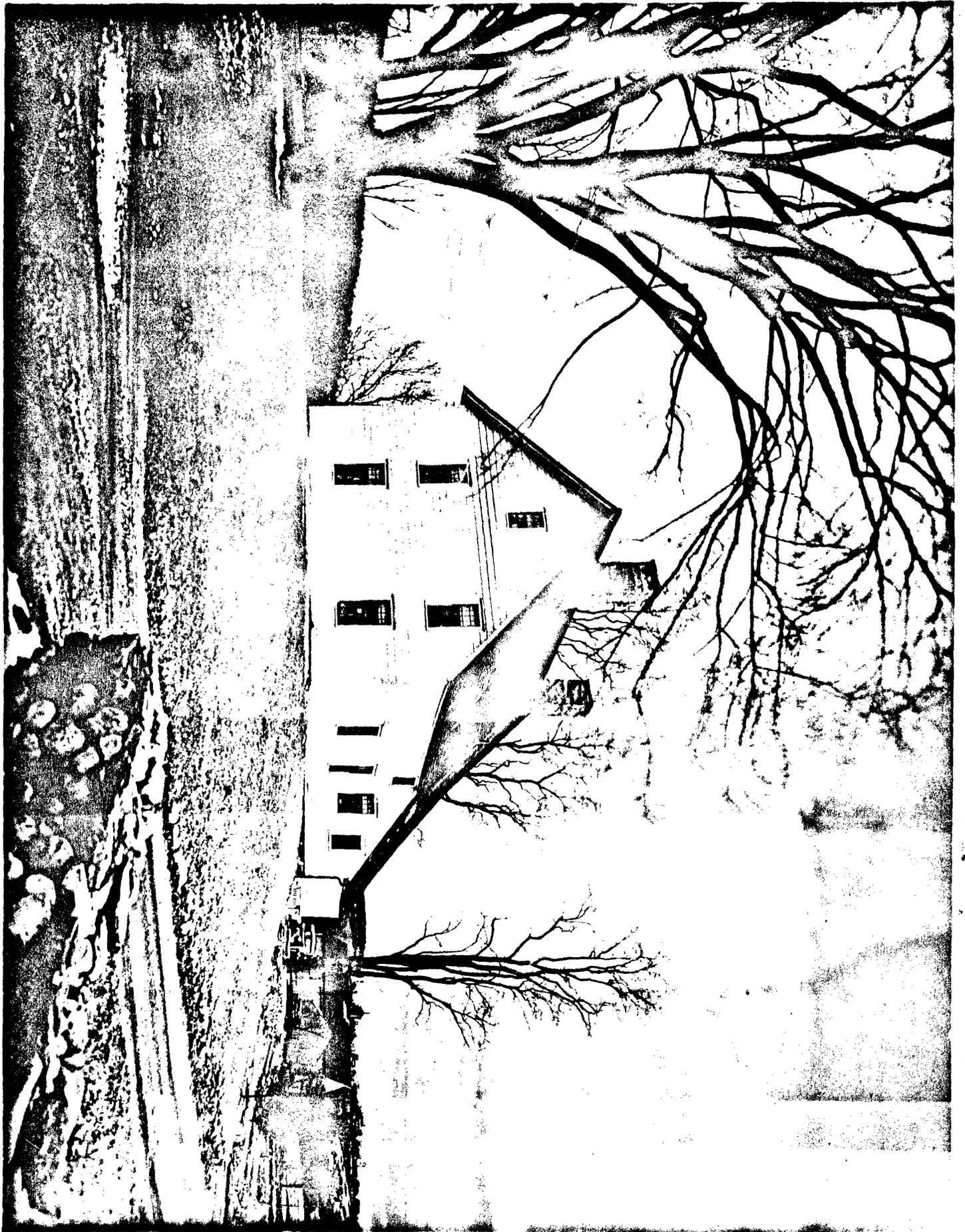
William Edgar Grumman, The Revolutionary Soldiers of Redding, Connecticut,  
Hartford: Case, Lockwood & Brainard Co., 1904.

Charles Burr Todd, The History of Redding, Connecticut, Second Edition,  
Newburgh, New York: Newburgh Journal Company, 1906.

Aaron Barlow House  
Redding  
Fairfield County, CT

Sketch Map and Photo Key





Aaron Barlow House  
Redding  
Fairfield County, CT  
HABS/WPA Picture, c. 1930s  
VIEW SOUTHEAST  
Photograph 8 of 9