

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 Bissell Tavern—(Bissell's Stage House)

and/or common Ebenezer Fitch Bissell house

2. Location

street & number 1022 Palisado Avenue

N/A not for publication

city, town Windsor

vicinity of N/A

state Connecticut

code 09

county Hartford

code 003

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	N/A being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: Vacant

4. Owner of Property

name Peter J. O'Meara

street & number 1938 Poquonock Avenue

city, town Windsor

N/A vicinity of

state Connecticut

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Windsor Town Hall

street & number 275 Broad Street

city, town Windsor

state Connecticut

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title State Register of
Historic Places

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1985

federal state county local

depository for survey records Connecticut Historical Commission, 59 So. Prospect Street

city, town Hartford

state Connecticut

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Bissell Tavern is a single-family, two-story frame dwelling, five bays wide by two bays deep with a ridged, hip roof pierced by end chimneys. (Photograph #1) A one-story rear ell and an attached shed extend 44 feet behind the main structure. (Sketch I) It is located at 1022 Palisado Avenue in the north end of Windsor, Connecticut. In the early 1700s this road was the northern extreme of a linear settlement which began at the Palisado Green, an early settlement area of Windsor. (Map #1) Today, this street is part of a secondary, north-south thoroughfare between the Massachusetts' line, Windsor and Hartford. The Bissell Tavern is two miles north of Windsor center and a half-mile west of the Connecticut River in a semi-rural, agricultural and residential area. Surrounding buildings were constructed from the late nineteenth century through the mid twentieth century. The nominated property has a 200-foot frontage on the east side of Palisado Avenue with an average depth of 200 feet. The structure sits back from the road about 15 feet. The one-acre house lot, with a few scattered trees, is bordered on the south by a single-family residence. To the north is a large, well-preserved Victorian structure. On the north side of the Bissell Tavern property is a dirt drive and a barn complex of old but undetermined age consisting of three restored and refurbished structures connected in an ell. The 44.6 acres east of the nominated property is cultivated agricultural land. The Bissell Tavern structure has 3,358 square feet plus a 1,766 square foot basement area.

Exterior:

The building, an example of the late Georgian domestic architecture, is constructed on a low, coursed rubble-stone foundation. (Photograph #6) This has been faced in the front and on both sides with common bond brick. A wooden water table creates a beveled projection above the brick. (Photograph #3) The main foundation measures approximately 38' x 33', and the ell 14' x 44'. The rear one-story ell and attached shed also rest on a rubble-stone foundation. Gray asphalt shingles cover the entire building. Under the shingles are old, horizontal clapboards and wooden corner boards. (Photograph #5)

The main structure is a rectangular two-story mass typically five-bay and symmetrically balanced with a center entry. The six-over-six double-hung sash windows retain original casings and simple surrounds. Above paneled double doors with a plain surround is a five-light transom. Over this entry is a mid-nineteenth century hipped porch-hood supported by strut brackets. (Photograph #1) Windows on the north exposure are asymmetrically arranged. (Photograph #4) A similar window layout on the south end is partially obscured by a 14' x 6' hip-roofed porch with decorative brackets and railing. (Photograph #2) Centered at the rear on the first floor of the main structure is a raised-panel door. Over this door is a mid-twentieth century stairway leading to a second-floor porch and door. (Photograph #3) The rear one-story ell and attached shed also rest on a rubble-stone foundation. The roof is asphalt-shingled and in need of repair. The cornice is shallow and unadorned; the eaves are boxed. Both brick chimneys need masonry work and rebuilding.

The exterior of the Bissell Tavern has not appreciably changed since it was constructed c. 1790. There have been only minor alterations to the structure. The south-end porch was probably added in the late 1800s. Window rearrangement on the north and south ends and the removal of single column supports for the front entrance hood occurred after the 1930s. Asbestos siding and asphalt roofing were installed in the 1950s. The rear exterior stairs were attached in the 1960s. (Exhibit I)

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received

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Also represented in:

Census of Old or Distinctive Buildings in the State
of Connecticut, Federal Writers' Project,
Works Progress Administration c1930

x/state

Depository: Connecticut Historical Society
1 Elizabeth Street
Hartford, Connecticut

Town of Windsor, Historic Resources Inventory, Spring 1981

x/local

Depository: Connecticut Historical Commission
59 South Prospect Street
Hartford, Connecticut

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Windsor, Ct.

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Interior:

The first floor of the Bissell Tavern is laid out on a symmetrical four-room plan bisected by a center hall extending the depth of the house. (Sketch I) In the foyer the ceiling is raised over the front door to accommodate the five-pane light. The hall is dominated by a single run of thirteen stairs to the second floor. (Photograph #7) A door at the top of these stairs closes off the second floor. The balusters, hand-rail and newel post are mid-nineteenth century. In the four rooms off the first-floor hall, the walls are plaster. Corner posts, molded baseboards, girts, and beams are visible and preserved in all rooms. Numerous six-panel doors are in good condition. The four first-floor fireplaces retain good examples of Georgian-style mantelpieces. (Photograph #8)

Along the east wall of the south-east room is a door to the kitchen ell. (Sketch I) This one-story ell has a brick oven over an ash pit enclosed behind raised-paneled cupboards and iron firedoors. (Photograph #9) In the northeast corner of the kitchen is a toilet room. The kitchen ell is connected to a low shed. A dirt cellar extending under the main part of the house and the kitchen ell is accessible by stairs in the south corner of the kitchen. Under the ell and the east half of the house the cellar is head-high. (Photograph #13) The primitiveness of the rubble-stone foundation suggests a dating prior to c 1790 and the possibility of the remains of an earlier structure. However, no documentation has come to light to confirm this theory.

The second floor layout is identical to the first floor except that the hall does not extend the depth of the structure. (Sketch II) A repositioning of the north wall of the southeast room has created a small bedroom at the middle-front of the second floor thereby shortening the hall. The northwest room has been opened through to the northeast room, creating a closet and passage-way between rooms. The northeast room has been converted to a kitchen-dining area. Part of the southeast room has been made into a bathroom. In all of these modifications, the original framing, wide-plank floors and fireplaces have been preserved. (Photograph #10)

The attic, accessible by stairs off the second floor hall, is in original condition. It clearly shows the hip-roof framing. (Photograph #12) Two brick chimney stacks come through the wide-plank attic floor. The north chimney has been damaged by fire which scorched the beams and roof. However, all wood members are solid despite some charring. (Photograph #11)

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 checked="" 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) family history
Criteria B and C		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates c1796

Builder/Architect attributed to Ebenezer Fitch Bissell, Sr.

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Bissell Tavern is significant for several reasons. First, its original owner, Ebenezer Fitch Bissell, Sr., was a member of a prominent early Windsor family which was active in agricultural, military, and commercial affairs during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Second, Bissell's son and grandson and later his grandson's brother-in-law, Nathaniel Lynds (Lines), operated an inn and tavern at this location from approximately 1816 to 1833. During this time, it was a convenient stopping place along the thoroughfare from Hartford and Windsor, Connecticut, to Northampton and Boston, Massachusetts. (Criterion B) Third, the Bissell Tavern is a good and relatively well-preserved example of late Georgian domestic architecture and contributes to the understanding of Palisado Avenue's lineal historical development. In addition, the Bissell Tavern is also believed to be the only remaining eighteenth century tavern in Windsor. (Criterion C)

Historical Background

The Bissell family is known to have settled in Windsor before 1640. The original homestead was built three quarters of a mile south of the Bissell Tavern. The Bissells also gained extensive land holdings nearby through marriage into the Hayden family. By 1770 Ebenezer Fitch Bissell, Sr., had acquired a share of the family property from his father and during the next decade farmed his land. (Map 2)

In April, 1775, Ebenezer Fitch Bissell, Sr., responded to "the Lexington Alarm" as a member of the Windsor-Simsbury militia. He and his son, Ebenezer Fitch Bissell, Jr., also served in Colonel Huntington's Seventeenth Continental Regiment, Fourth Company. While in the Seventeenth Continental, Ebenezer, Sr., rose from first lieutenant to captain in command of the Seventh Company, part of the contingent of 10,000 Connecticut colonial militia ordered to New York by Governor Trumbull at the request of General George Washington after the British were routed from Boston. Crossing Long Island Sound in schooners from New London, the Seventeenth Continental remained in that area from April to the close of 1776. The regiment was involved in fortifying New York City, defending the Brooklyn front, and engaging in the disastrous Battle of Long Island. Lieutenant Ebenezer Fitch Bissell, Sr., and his troops were captured in the battle of Long Island on August 27, 1776. All were imprisoned, some on a prison ship, others in the Old Sugar House, and still others at a New York church. Bissell was remembered by survivors as having visited his men daily while in captivity, but he saw many of his soldiers die of starvation. He concluded his military career as one of the captains appointed to guard the Burgoyne prisoners enroute through Connecticut south. He and his son, who also reached the rank of captain, returned to Windsor after the war. Both served as members of the Connecticut General Assembly.

The agricultural development of Windsor's northern section from the time of settlement through the mid 1800s resulted in the town's growth as a village. After the war Ebenezer, Sr., continued to farm his land in the vicinity of the tavern until his death in 1814 and, in 1814 and, according to the 1820 census, Ebenezer, Jr., also farmed. Palisado Green, located to the south of the Bissell Tavern, became an important trading center

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1.0 acre

Quadrangle name Windsor Locks, Ct.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A 1 8 | 6 9 6 32 0 | 4 6 39 6 80
Zone Easting Northing

B | |
Zone Easting Northing

C | |

D | |

E | |

F | |

G | |

H | |

Verbal boundary description and justification The verbal boundary descriptions of the Bissell Tavern may be found in Vol. 351, Page 293 Deed Book of the land records of the Town of Windsor, Ct., Windsor Town Hall, 275 Broad Street, Windsor, Ct.

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

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Gail Gene Nettles, Consultant

Edited by John Herzan,
National Register Coordinator

Town of Windsor

organization Windsor Planning Department

date November 30, 1984

street & number 275 Broad Street

telephone 688-3675

city or town Windsor

state Connecticut

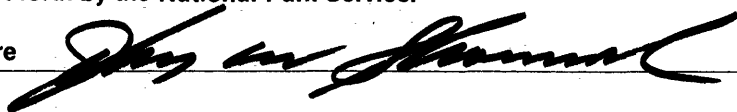
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

 national state x 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

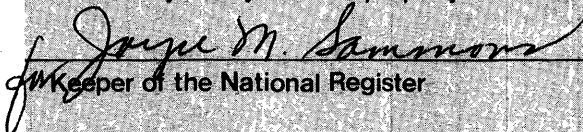
date July 2, 1985

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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National Park Service**

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because of the port facilities at the terminus of the Farmington River. (Map 1) The only thoroughfare from Windsor and Hartford to Northampton and Boston ran through Hayden Station, the name given the northern extension of Palisado Avenue in Windsor. Consequently, inns, stage stops, and eating and drinking places were established along this route. In addition to the Bissell Tavern, three other taverns are known to have existed along this thoroughfare in Windsor.

Windsor land records and state license records indicate that Ebenezer Fitch Bissell, Sr., probably built or contracted to have built the Bissell Tavern between 1790 and 1796. Bissell, Sr., was related by marriage to a local carpenter-builder, Thomas Hayden,¹ who is known to have built an almost duplicate structure at 5 North Meadow Road in 1767.¹ It is therefore possible that Hayden also constructed the tavern. Ebenezer, Jr., was granted a state tavern license in 1816 and renewed it in 1818-19-20-21-22. (No evidence is available to explain the 1817 lapse.) In 1823, he and his son Fitch Bissell jointly took out the license. From 1824 through 1833 Fitch Bissell was the licensee. In 1826 and 1827 Fitch's brother-in-law Nathaniel Lynds (Lines) received a license to manage the Bissell Tavern, although there is no record of his receiving one after 1827. Operated as the Bissell Tavern and referred to as Bissell's Stage House, this Bissell family enterprise lasted through at least three and possibly four generations. Supposedly the south front room was used as the barroom; the doors bear "marks and dents, made by the stage drivers cracking their whips while waiting for drinks."³ At some point between 1825 and 1827 Washington Lodge #70 A.F. & A.M. held its meetings in the tavern also.⁴ With no further evidence after 1833 that 1022 Palisado Avenue served as a tavern, the structure passed in 1841 to the Hayden family, then back to the Bissells (Hiram E. in 1870, Frank in 1878), and back again to a Hayden (James) in 1905, and finally out of early Windsor family ownership. It has remained a single-family residence and is thought to be the last remaining early tavern in Windsor.

Architectural Significance

The Bissell Tavern is architecturally significant because it typifies late Georgian domestic architecture in the Connecticut River Valley. It is also the only local inn/tavern known to have survived. Furthermore, in spite of minor exterior renovations over the years, the Bissell Tavern's basic architectural integrity, both exterior and interior, is clearly evident.

Endnotes

1

Preston Maynard, "Historic Resources Inventory - Windsor, Ct.," Spring, 1981.

2

Ibid.

3

Hattie F. Granger, "Things Worth Knowing Concerning Windsor," The Windsor Crier, December 1917, Vol. 2, No. 12, p.6.

4

Robert Fitch Belden, "History of Washington Lodge #70 A.F. & A.M. of Windsor, Connecticut," Part I, p. 17.

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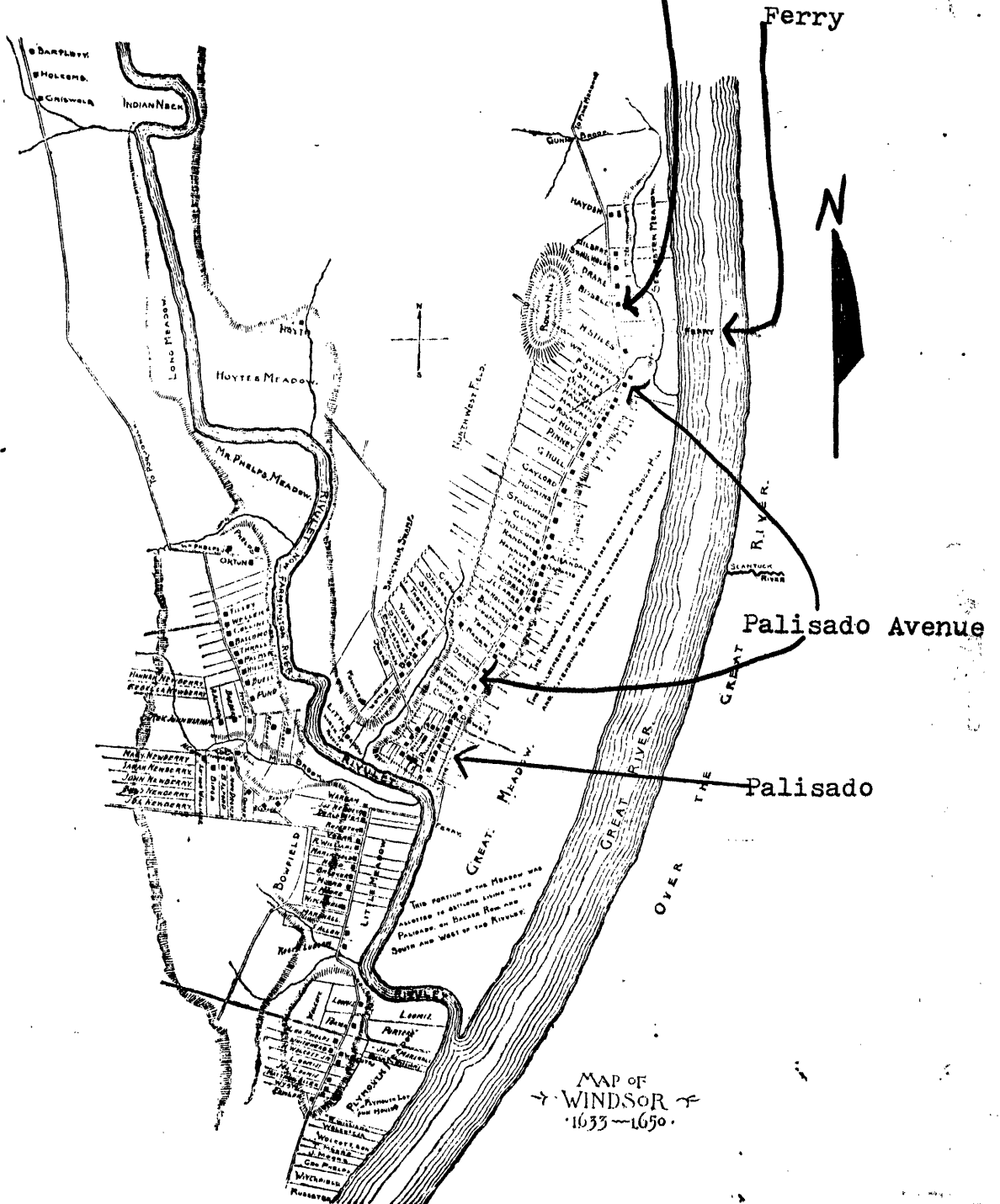
BIBLIOGRAPHY

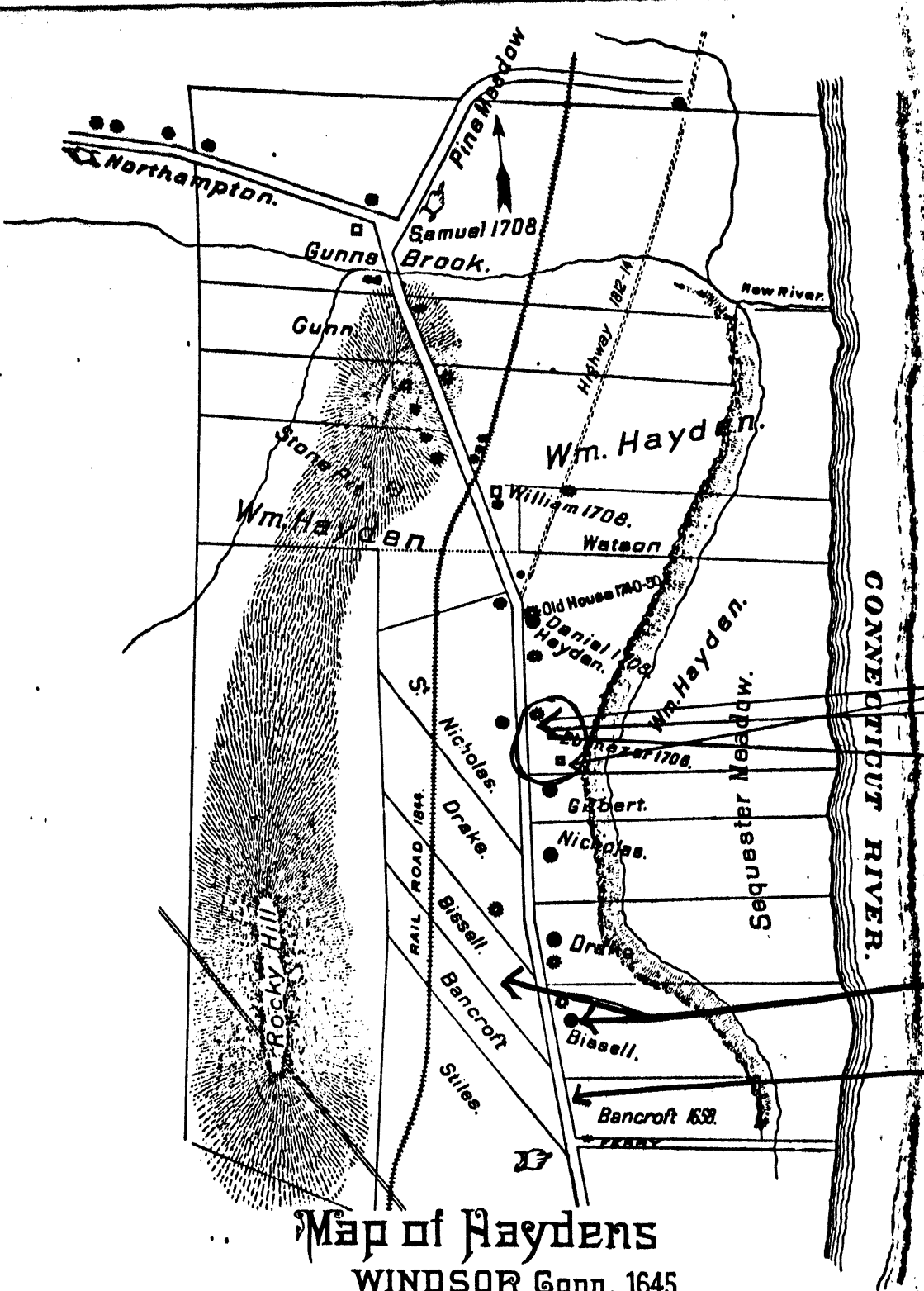
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- Granger, Hattie F. "Things Worth Knowing Concerning Windsor: The Story of Old Highways." The Windsor Town Crier, Vol. 2, #2, Dec. 1917, pp. 6-7.
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- Jones, Edward P. Genealogy of the Descendants of John Bissell of Windsor, Connecticut by 1640. Manuscript, March 1939. At Connecticut State Library, Windsor Historical Society.
- Maynard, Preston. "Historic Inventory, Building and Structures -Windsor, Connecticut," March 1981.
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- Windsor Land Records, Vol. 351, p. 293, Vol. 222, p. 229, Vol. 88, p.363, Vol. 83, p. 8, Vol. 76, p. 438, Vol. 64, p. 218, Vol. 49, p. 426, 497, Vol. 47, p. 120, Vol. 41, p. 120, Vol. 17, p. 231, Vol. 16, p. 124, Vol. 15, p. 236, Vol. 14, p. 78.
- Probate Records, Vol. 64, p. 218.
- Windsor Historical Society. The Post Road & its Taverns. 1976.

Windsor, Connecticut - 1635-1650

Map #1

Bissell - 1640





Map #2
 Windsor, Ct. 1645
 (Hayden's-Hayden
 Corner-property
 owners)

N
 Ebenezer Fitch
 Bissell, Sr., Jr.,
 &
 Fitch Bissell
 1770-1830

Bissell
 land-1640
 Palisado Avenue

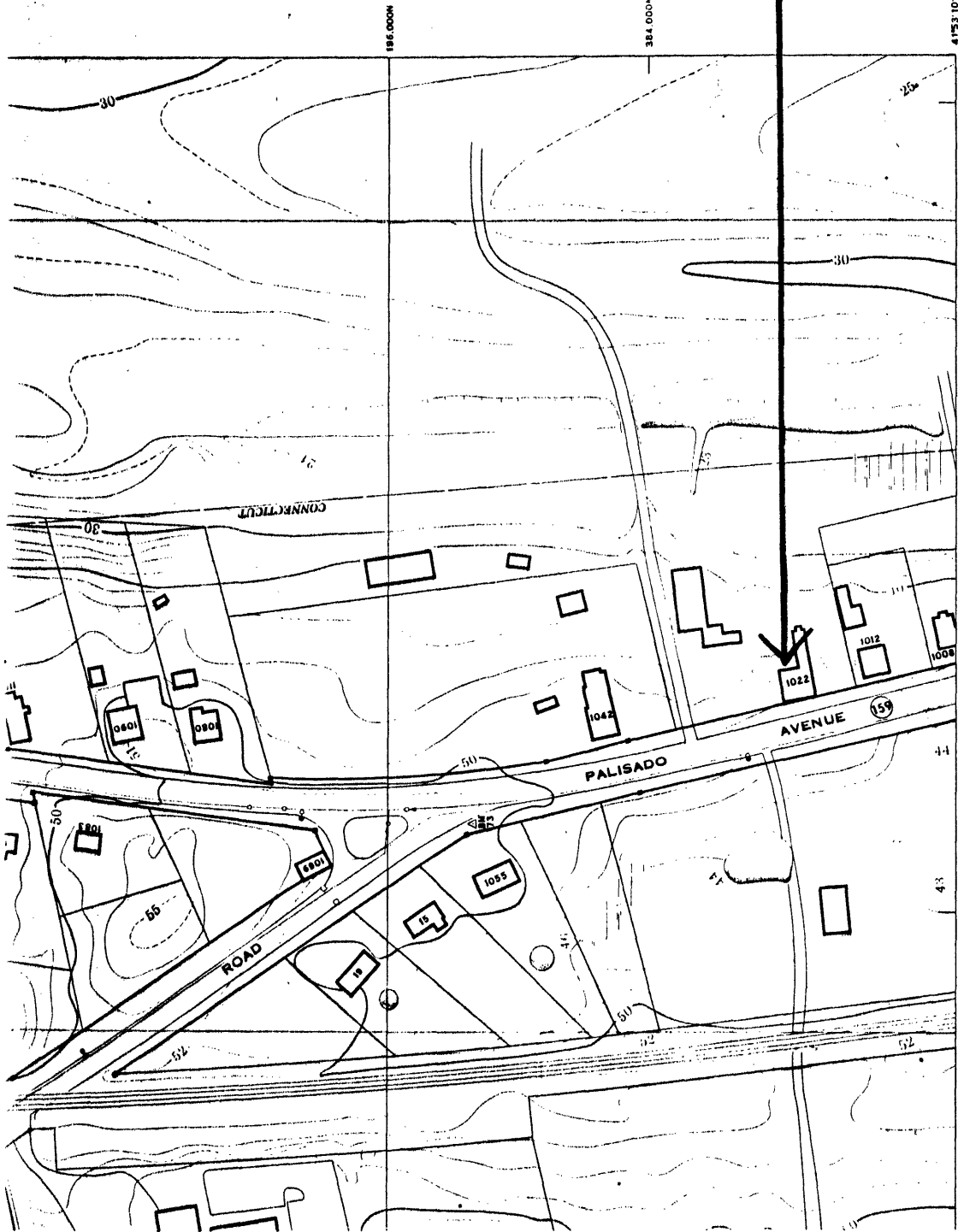
Map of Haydens

WINDSOR Conn. 1645.

by Jabez H. Hayden. Sept. 2nd 1885.



Bissell Tavern Site -1022 Palisado Ave.
Windsor, Ct.

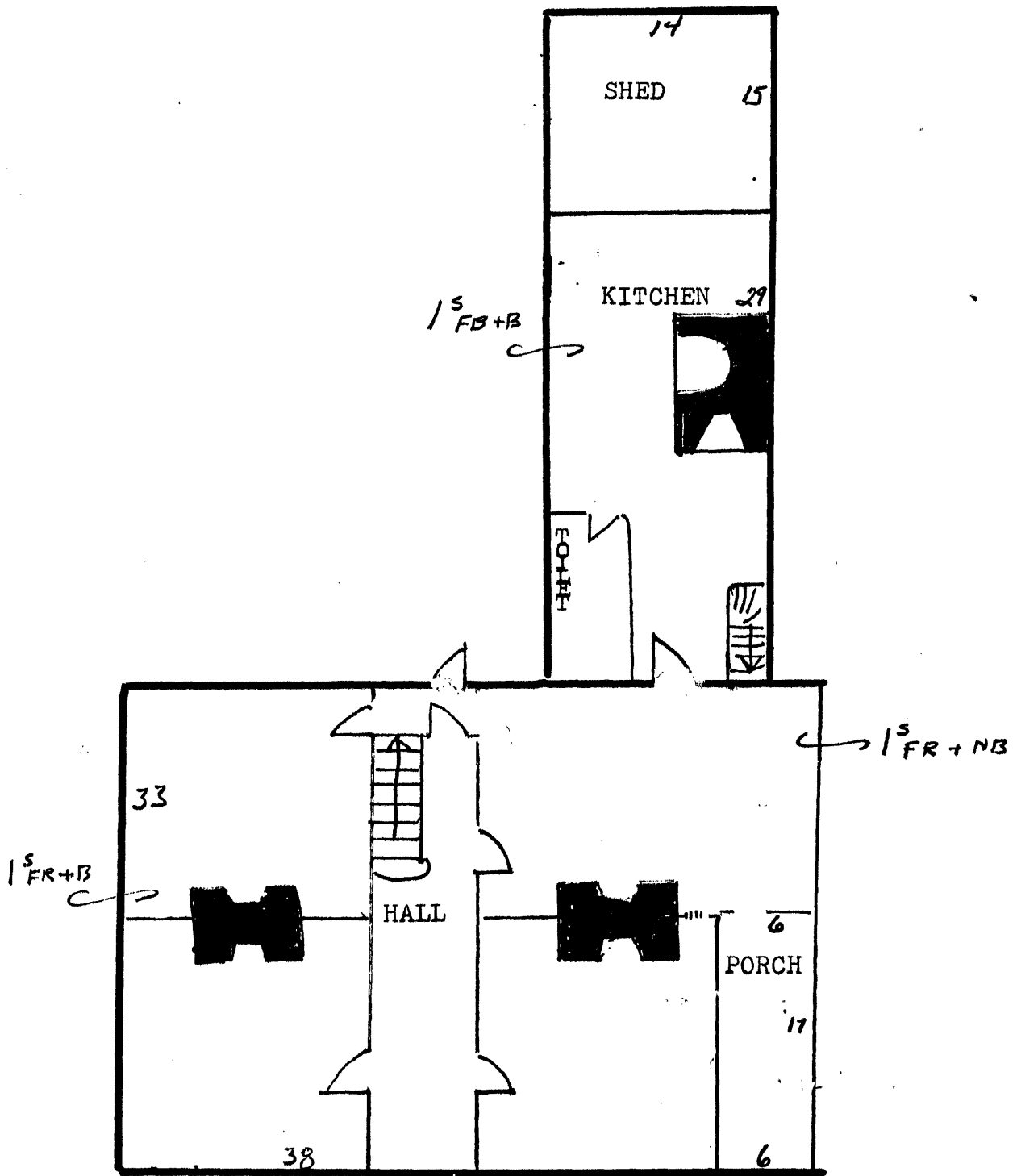


Scale: 1 : 24 000

THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
COMMISSION ON REGIONAL PLANNING
HARTFORD COUNTY, CONNECTICUT

SHEET 761	SHEET 646	SHEET 649
SHEET 760	SHEET 645	SHEET 648
SHEET 749	SHEET 644	SHEET 647

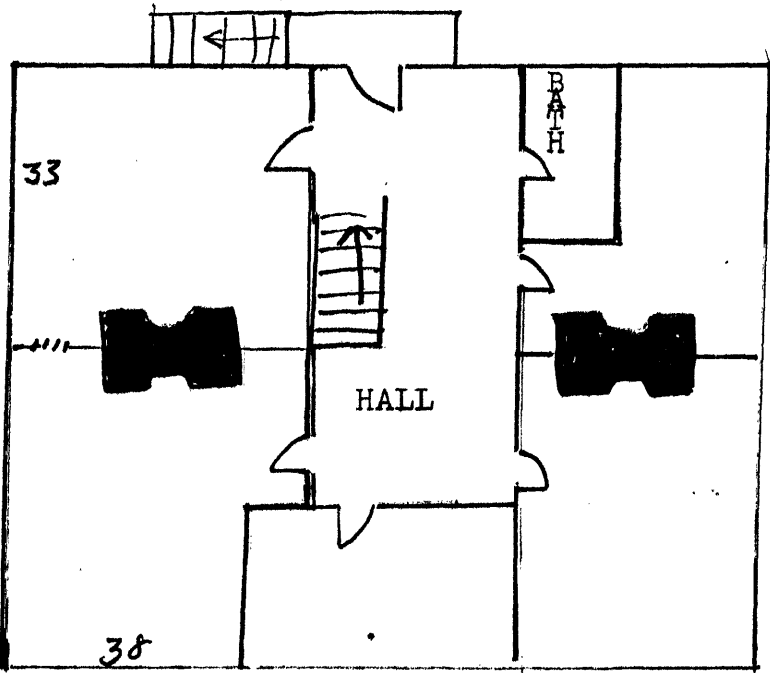
SKETCH I
BISSELL TAVERN
WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT



FIRST FLOOR

Not drawn to scale

SKETCH II
BISSELL TAVERN
WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT



SECOND FLOOR

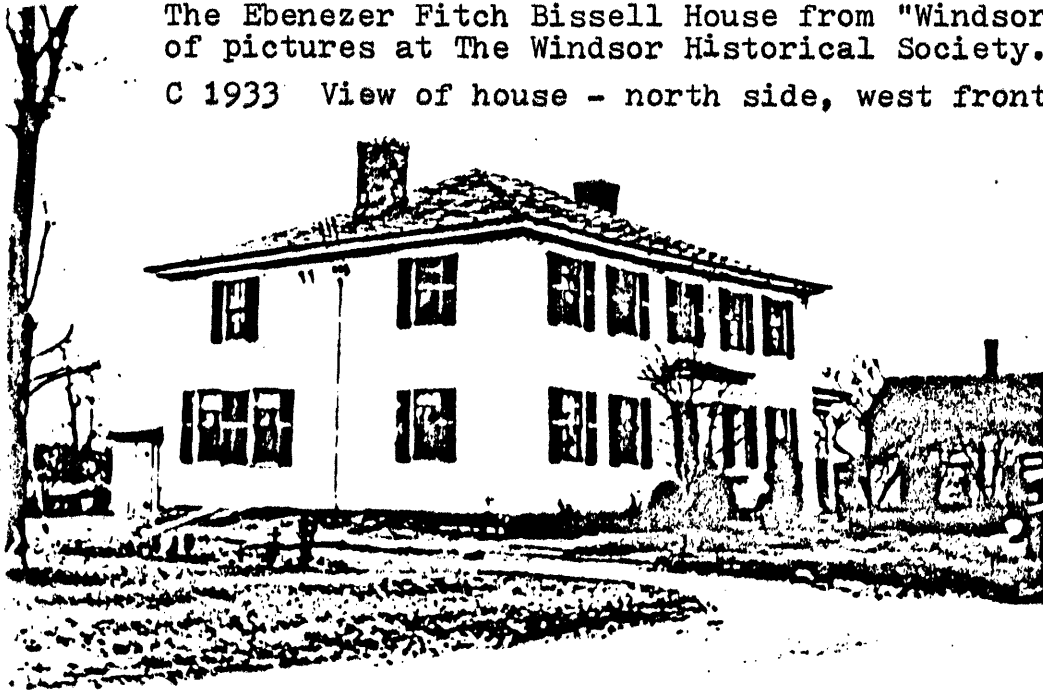
Not drawn to scale

EXHIBIT I

(Bissell Tavern, Windsor, Ct.)

The Ebenezer Fitch Bissell House from "Windsor Houses", a collection of pictures at The Windsor Historical Society.

C 1933 View of house - north side, west front



from Federal Writers' Project Works Progress Administration,
Census of Old and Distinguished Buildings in Connecticut

C 1930 View of House - south side, west front

