

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 00000834 Date Listed: 8/11/00

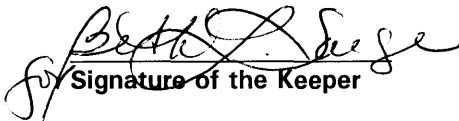
Coult, Abraham, House
Property Name

Hartford
County

CT
State

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

8/11/00
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

8. Period(s) of Significance

The property's period of significance is documented as 1706-c.1840, encompassing its architectural evolution.

This information was confirmed with John Herzan, National Register Coordinator, CTSHPD, by telephone.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without attachment)

PROPERTY NAME

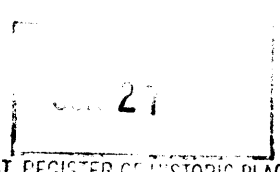
Abraham Coult House, Glastonbury, CT

NATIONAL HISTORIC SERVICE

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824



1. Name of Property

historic name Abraham Coult House

other names/site number NA

2. Location

street & number 1695 Hebron Avenue
city or town Glastonbury
state Connecticut code CT county Hartford
zip code 06033

not for publication NA
vicinity NA
code 003

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official John W. Shannahan, Director, Connecticut Historical Commission
Date 06/21/00

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
- See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register

Boethius Savage

other (explain): _____

JS

Signature of Keeper

8/11/00

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 1 </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 1 </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register NA

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) NA

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6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: single dwelling

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: single dwelling

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

COLONIAL/Postmedieval English

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

roof ASPHALT

walls WOOD/weatherboards

other _____

7. Description

The Abraham Coult House is a two-story gable-roofed frame Colonial building constructed ca. 1706, enlarged at unknown dates in the 18th century, modernized with Greek Revival-style features ca. 1840, and moved in 1972 (Photographs 1-6). Covered with clapboards, it is a 38' x 30' building with ell, now facing southwest on a five-acre parcel in the eastern part of the Town of Glastonbury, 1,500 feet northwest of its original location (Exhibit 1). The house was built in the two-room plan, or perhaps originally as a one-room structure, as evidenced by the bake oven in the west front room fireplace. The rear of the house, including the kitchen with a second bake oven, was added at an unknown date, perhaps later in the 18th century, with consequent changes in the roof. The added Greek Revival trim such as the corner pilasters appears stylistically to date from ca. 1840.

The Abraham Coult House, sited well back from Hebron Avenue, is approached by a 1,700-foot drive which leads to a striking view of the front elevation (Photograph 1). In the front elevation, windows in the five bays are 9-over-6 at the first floor, 6-over-6 at the second in flat surrounds over projecting sills.¹ The central entrance consists of double paneled door under an eight-light transom in splayed molded surround (Photograph 2). Plain pilasters at the corners of the house support a narrow frieze. A tall central brick chimney rises in front of the roof ridge line slightly off center to the northwest. On the southeast side elevation two windows are off-center toward the rear at each floor under frieze and cornice which create a pediment in the gable end. Its tympanum has a single 8-over-8 window which is framed by tapered posts and slightly gabled cornice of the Greek temple form (Photograph 5). The ell consists of a former woodshed under gable roof with small central chimney. A multi-paned oriel has been added, as well as a shed-roofed rear entry (Photograph 4). Grade falls off to the north, leaving the cinderblock foundation exposed under the northeast corner (Photograph 6). The northwest side elevation has three windows at first floor, two at the second, and one Greek Revival attic window in the tympanum above.

The present clapboards are of unknown age but are fastened in part with sheared square-shank nails, suggesting mid-19th-century origin.

The front door opens to a small hall in front of the chimney. The steep stair rises in double dogleg to the left with closed string, 3/4" x 1" oblong balusters, and molded handrail. The three-paneled wall in front of the stair has a strong corner bead at the return toward the wall (Photograph 8).

The northwest front room on the ground floor features a paneled fireplace wall of largely conjectural design with some original or early features which include four-panel door to the basement stair and three-panel (2-over-1) door to the hall. Later moldings and mantel surround the firebox opening, which is the original size (Photograph 9). The stone firebox cheeks have been lined with brick, obscuring the original stone, but the original bake oven in the rear stone wall of the fireplace displays its original tight courses of limed mortar (Photograph 10). It has no flue. Girts in the room are mostly concealed by the dropped ceiling, while exposed gunstock posts are cased and delicately beaded. There is no visible summer beam, but Ballard reports two summer beams, boxed. A sill is in place for a side door on the northwest wall near the front. Ceilings in this room, as throughout most of the house, are plaster² and walls are sheetrock, dating from the 1972 restoration. The ceiling in this room may conceal one or two summers. Ceiling height here is 7' 0", compared to a height of 7' 3" in the southwest front room where a summer is visible.

The southwest front room features a paneled fireplace wall that is a reproduction based on a drawing of the original, fortunately at hand after a fire which occurred at the time of the 1972 move (Photograph 11). The brick jambs of the firebox are at less of an angle than in the southwest room, and display neat lime mortar joints. The back of the fireplace is stone. This room does have an exposed summer beam with lamb's tongue stops running from the fireplace overmantel to the southeast wall. The presence of nail holes suggests that it once was boxed. The end of the joist at the northeast corner of the room has a fine lamb's tongue stop (Photograph 12). The corner cupboard in the southwest corner of the room displays scalloped shelves, incised plate rail, paneled

¹Present windows were custom-made in the early 1970s, with thick muntins designed to approach the probably massive muntins of the early 1700s. There are no sash weights.

²Only the ceiling in the northwest chamber is original plaster.

doors, and barrel back, original to the house (Photograph 13). A chair rail, partially original, runs around the room at sill height over wide horizontal featheredged wainscoting.

In the rear, the partition between the burning room and the kitchen has been removed, opening up the space now lighted by a pair of modern windows (Photograph 14). The walls of the burning room are wide horizontal feather-edged boards; those on the rear wall diminish in width following the proportions of a tree trunk, and are laid in alternating directions. The fireplace has a bake oven over ashpit to the left of the opening. The bake oven is made of hand-hammered dressed stone and the entire fireplace surround is tooled, the lintel painted. The mantel shelf is a replacement with odd elaborate nose molding. A straight-run stair with vertical featheredged sheathing ascends from north to south between the kitchen and the buttery.

On the second floor, the northwest chamber has no summer, but the southwest chamber does have a cased beam, repeating the arrangement found on the first floor. The southwest room has a paneled fireplace wall reproduced during the 1970s restoration, with crossette fireplace surround appropriate for the period from late-18th century through the Greek Revival (Photograph 15). This fireplace had been covered over, but was uncovered during the 1972 restoration. The firebox is old, as indicated by the clay mortar. The original rear plate of the house is visible at the rear doorway of this chamber, showing holes for vertical posts in the original rear wall. There are two reproduction three-panel doors. The window surrounds are made of machine-planed wood with square-cut nails. On the second floor the windows are separated from the girts above by wood panels, whereas on the first floor the window lintels die into the girts. The northwest front room has the only original plaster ceiling in the house.

In the attic the masonry of the chimney changes from stone-with-clay to brick-with-clay to brick-with-mortar. A brick smoke oven, three feet square by 40 inches high, abuts the southeast side of the chimney; its wooden door is fastened with square-cut nails, suggesting early-19th century origin. The smoke oven has hooks and bars inside. There is no ridge pole. Attic floor boards are wide (Photograph 16). Triangular purlin bracing is in place at the gable ends (Photograph 17). The purlins themselves are at different heights from the floor, the front purlin 55" above the floor, the rear purlin 41" above the floor. The purlins die into the chimney posts near empty mortises.

In the basement a chief feature is the massive cinderblock chimney base. The joists supporting the first floor on the northwest side are tree trunks (Photograph 18), on the southeast side hand-hewn. All are essentially free from deterioration. They support original wide floor boards (Photograph 19).

The garage near the house to the east was built ca. 1980. It is considered to be non-contributing to the significance of the resource.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance 1706-1950

Significant Dates 1706
ca. late 18C.
ca. 1840

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) NA

Cultural Affiliation NA

Architect/Builder Abraham Coult

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8. Significance

Summary

The Abraham Coult House is significant architecturally because it is an example of an early-18th-century Colonial house which has survived with good integrity despite being moved in the 20th century. The quality of significance is strengthened by virtue of the fact that the Coult House fabric demonstrates several stages of development from its original two-room configuration, first by enlargement to four rooms, then by addition of a lean-to rear section, both later in the 18th century, and finally by substantial Greek Revival-style alterations in the 19th century. The house is well-preserved, effectively reflecting the character-defining changes that were made during the several stages of its development. The building is of interest historically because it was erected by a prominent local citizen, Abraham Coult, and has continued in residential use over the centuries in its Glastonbury neighborhood, surviving a 20th-century threat to survival that was resolved by moving the house. The 20th-century move was carefully planned, and executed with determination despite the setback of a fire. The house was thoughtfully restored after the move and has been meticulously maintained since that time in the Glastonbury neighborhood in which it was built 300 years ago.

Historical Note

According to one account, the Abraham Coult House was built ca. 1706 by Abraham Coult, Jr., of Windsor on land deeded to him by his father, Abraham, Sr., who had received 50 acres of land from the proprietors of Glastonbury on May 23, 1706.³ An alternative reading of history is that Abraham, Sr., built the house and deeded a half interest to his crippled son, Abraham, Jr., in 1713 upon the occasion of the son's marriage.⁴ There is agreement that Abraham, Sr., was a fence viewer for the Town of Glastonbury, responsible for such activities as settling boundary disputes and setting standards for weights and measures. The detailed chain of title, with notations as to volume and page in the Glastonbury Land Records, is set forth in the *Colonial Dames* report. Dates for Abraham Coult, Sr., are not known. Abraham, Jr., died in 1717. Abraham, III, was born in 1714. At the time of the death of Abraham, Jr., half the dwelling and 1 1/2 acres of orchard were valued at 50 pounds, a relatively high figure.⁵ After Abraham, Sr., returned to Windsor the house sat vacant until he sold it with 17 acres and orchard in 1739 to Josiah Hadlock of Windsor. The property changed hands several times thereafter until purchased in 1744 by Stephen Strickland, who retained ownership to his death in 1793/94. The Sellew, Strickland, and Hubbard families followed in the chain of ownership during the 19th century.

By the mid-20th century the house, vacant and deteriorating, and its surrounding acreage were in the hands of the Metropolitan District Commission, a regional water and sewage authority, which determined to demolish it. The house stood only several feet from the road at the time (see Exhibit 1). Local interest in opposition to demolition was headed by Richard Ballard, chairman of the Glastonbury Heritage Committee,⁶ who prepared a useful description of the property. The sentiment to save the house resulted in its purchase by Gil Keegan at a cost of \$500 on the condition that he remove it. The moving project was undertaken and proceeded to the point where the house was jacked up off its foundation on blocks, at which time a fire caused by vandals occurred. Damage was limited to charring of timbers in the right rear corner and to interior finishes. Despite this setback the move was completed. The stone chimney above the chimney base was moved with the house. The original foundation stone was recycled in stone walls on the grounds at the new location. On the original site the house faced south; on the present site the house faces southwest.

Prior to 1972, the house had been adapted for occupancy by several families. Demising partitions had been introduced to facilitate such usage. After the move the added partitions were removed, other changes reversed, and original finishes restored by Anthony Maurer (later Maurer & Shepherd, Joyners) of Glastonbury.

³Jefferson.

⁴Keith, *Colonial Dames*.

⁵The inventory of the estate of Abraham Coult, Jr., is at the Connecticut State Library.

⁶The Glastonbury Heritage Committee was formed as part of the town's preparations for the approaching nation's bicentennial celebration.

The new site is 1,500 feet northwest of the original site, on a 5.36-acre parcel. The present owners acquired the property in 1975. Subsequently, an abutting 15.6 acres to the north was purchased, making a total of 20.95 acres (Exhibit 1), but the nominated property is the 5.36 acres to which the house was moved in 1972.

Architectural analysis of the Abraham Coult House and its history have been addressed in a series of reports. First, in the 1930s came the Works Progress Administration Census of Old Buildings form, followed in 1942 by the *Colonial Dames* volume written by Elmer Keith. Keith was a statewide leader in the early historic preservation work in Connecticut by virtue of his position as director of the Works Progress Administration Federal Writers' Project *Census of Old Buildings*. His *Colonial Dames* work is useful for its comprehensive chain of title, among other things. Richard and Patricia Ballard prepared their carefully detailed architectural description and analysis, for the Historical Society of Glastonbury in 1964. At the time the house was moved, in 1974, the *Hartford Times* published an informative three-column story. The series was continued by an entry in the Capitol Region Council of Governments' 1978 Townwide Reconnaissance Survey, by Nancy S. Jefferson's Connecticut Historical Commission Building and Structures Inventory Form of 1992, and by this documentation in 2000. Photographs and snapshots of the house before and during the 1974 move are at the Historical Society of Glastonbury (see Exhibit 3).

Architecture

The Abraham Coult House is a good case study of the growth an early-18th-century house that was built as a two-room structure, first enlarged by construction of two more rooms and then by addition of a kitchen lean-to later in the 18th century, and finally altered with features in the Greek Revival style in the 19th century. Much of the fabric from each period has survived the passage of time, as well as a move and a fire, and today is well-preserved.

The general framing and layout of the house are intact. The bake oven in the rear wall of the west front room fireplace is essential to an understanding and interpretation of the house. Remarkably little wood deterioration, as in the sills, which often suffer rot and insect infestation from ground contact, and in other timbers, has taken place. Much of the fabric of original finishes remains in place, notably the corner cupboard in the southwest room, paneled fireplace wall of the west front room, horizontal feathered sheathing of the borning room, several three-panel and batten doors, front stair, massive stone chimney with smoke oven, boxed gunstock posts, and wide floorboards throughout. The discrepancy in treatment of the summer beams, visible in the northwest rooms at first and second stories, but not visible in the southwest rooms, is unexplained.

Examination indicates that the original 1706 structure was two stories of one room each, and chimney, being the present northwest front corner of the house. This analysis is supported by the length of the attic purlins and by the difference in basement ceiling joists, the earlier tree trunk type being in the northwest corner, the later adzed type in the southwest corner.⁷ Selective demolition to determine whether the plates conform to the purlin lengths would be needed to confirm this analysis. The additional two front rooms were added later in the 18th century, perhaps in the 1750s or earlier as indicated by the exposed summer and girts and embellished chamfers of the southwest front room, and the chimney was rebuilt at the time. The location of the chimney slightly off-center is consistent with this sequence on the theory that if the two halves of the house had been constructed simultaneously it is likely that the chimney would have been centered. The house continued to be one room deep. During the late-18th-century period of general prosperity the kitchen was added under the lean-to roof framed with change of pitch at the rear purlin, which is lower than the front purlin. Then about in the 1840s the house was increased in size to full two stories, the roof re-framed accordingly, and the Greek Revival features added. Differential in lengths of front and rear rafters and holes in the end girts for vertical supports noted by Ballard are consistent with this analysis.

⁷This interpretation is clouded by the Ballard observation (p. 6) that before the move there was a basement under the east half of the house only. Since the house faced south at the time, the basement, which is essential to building the chimney base, was, according to Ballard, under the opposite half of the house identified as being first by the present discussion, and unsatisfactorily reverses the sequence of development.

The 19th-century brought extensive Greek Revival alterations to the exterior, most of which remain. The corner pilasters are well-proportioned, the frieze above them somewhat narrow but faithfully carried around the house, the crown molding well-proportioned and complete, effectively forming, with the raking cornices, the gable end pediments. The frieze and cornice over the front door with flanking sidelights and pilasters⁸ all were in keeping with the contemporary style at time of execution, as are the temple-like surrounds of the attic windows.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Ballard, Richard and Patricia. The Abraham Coult House. Report for Historical Society of Glastonbury, February 1964.

Capitol Region Council of Governments. Townwide Reconnaissance Survey of Glastonbury, 1978.

Chapin, The Reverend Alonzo. *Glastonbury for Three Hundred Years*. Hartford: Case, Tiffany & Company, 1853.

Curtis, John Obed. Comments during site visit and walk through, November 4, 1999.

Glastonbury Assessor's Field Card for 1691 Hebron Avenue. (U.S. Postal Service uses street number 1695.)

Jefferson, David W. and Nancy S. Connecticut Historical Commission Building and Structures Inventory Form. November 1992.

Keith, Elmer. Abraham Coult House, Glastonbury. *Old Houses of Connecticut*, Connecticut Society of Colonial Dames in Connecticut, 1942.

J. Frederick Kelly. "The Norton House, Guilford, Conn.." *Old-Time New England* 14(January 1924)35: 122-130.

Lohr, Steve. "268-Year-Old Restoration Job," *The Hartford Times*, August 18, 1974, p. 5.

Works Progress Administration, Federal Writers' Project, Census of Old Buildings in Connecticut, Elmer Keith, Director. Glastonbury Number 15, n.d. (ca. 1930s).

⁸At the time of the 1970s move, the Greek Revival doorway was replaced with the present doorway, designed to approximate the pre-existing ca. 1760s feature.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repositories: Historical Society of Glastonbury, Connecticut State Library

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 5.36

UTM References

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing		
A	18	4621490	704300	B	18	4621270	704320
C	18	4621040	704290	D	18	4621240	704250
D	18	4621480	704200				

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary is shown by the line around the shaded area on Town of Glastonbury Engineering Maps 32 and 48 shown at Exhibit 1, attached.

Boundary Justification

The boundary is the boundary that prevailed at the time the house was moved in 1972. Additional acreage subsequently acquired to the rear is not included.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title David F. Ransom, reviewed by John F.A. Herzan, National Register Coordinator

organization Architectural Historian date October 1999

street & number 83 Avery Heights telephone 860 953-8626

city or town Hartford state CT zip code 06106

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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List of Photographs

Photographs were taken on September 28 and November 4, 1999, by David F. Ransom. Negatives are on file at the Connecticut Historical Commission.

Photograph 1

Front elevation
View northeast

Photograph 2

Front entrance
View northeast

Photograph 3

Front and southeast elevations
View north

Photograph 4

Southeast elevation
View northwest

Photograph 5

Southeast attic window
View north

Photograph 6

Northwest elevation
View south

Photograph 7

Northwest and front elevations
View east

Photograph 8

Front stair
View north

Photograph 9

Southwest front room
View south

Photograph 10

Southwest front room
bake oven
View east

Photograph 11

Southeast front room
View north

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Photograph 12

Southeast front room
rear girt
View north

Photograph 13

Southeast front room
corner cupboard
View south

Photograph 14

Kitchen and borning
room
View north

Photograph 15

East chamber
View north

Photograph 16

Attic
View north

Photograph 17

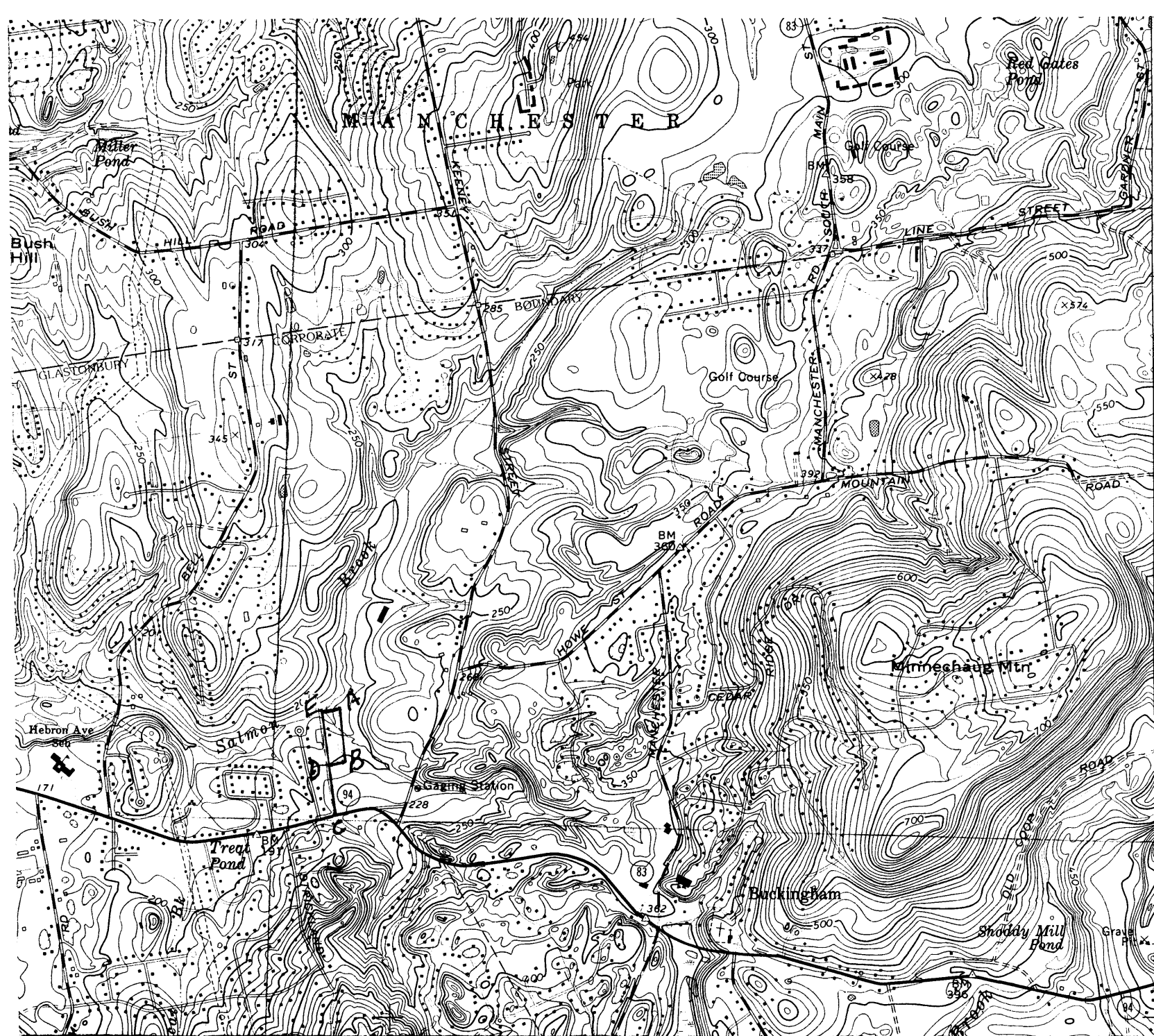
Attic, southwest corner
View south

Photograph 18

Basement, northwest side
View northeast

Photograph 19

Basement, southeast side
View northeast



4624
 330 000
 FEET
 4623
 4622
 4621
 3.8 MI. TO CONN. 85
 42'30"

ABRAHAM COLT HOUSE
 GLASTONBURY, CT
 UTM REFS:
 A 18/4621490/704300
 B 18/4621270/704320
 C 18/4621040/704290
 D 18/4620840/704250
 E 18/4621480/704200