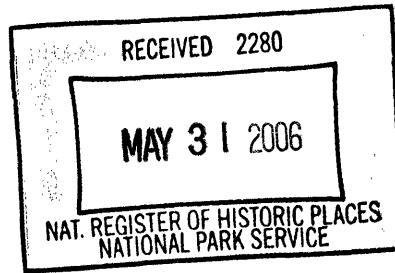


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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name King, George, House

other names/site King-Hart House (use for publication); Kingsland

2. Location

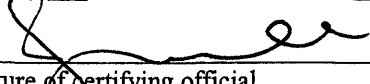
street & number 12 North Main Street not for publication N/A

city or town Sharon vicinity N/A

state Connecticut code CT county Litchfield code 003 zip code 06069

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

 _____ Date 5/5/06
Signature of certifying official
Jennifer Aniskovich, Executive Director, Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism
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

King-Hart House

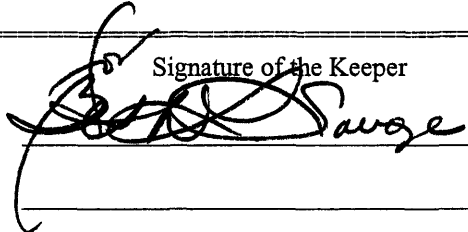
Name of Property

Litchfield, CT

County and State

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.
 other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper


Date of Action

11-6-06

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
 (Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
 (Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

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

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

Contributing

Non-contributing

2
4
6

0 buildings
0 sites
0 structures
0 objects
0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

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

1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling/guesthouse
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/outbuilding

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling/vacant
DOMESTIC/secondary structure/storage

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

COLONIAL/Georgian
LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Colonial Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone
walls brick
roof wood shingle
other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

King-Hart House, Sharon, Litchfield County, CT

Section 7 Page 1

The King-Hart House, a Late Georgian-style, brick masonry building, was erected in 1794 and remodeled in the Colonial Revival style in 1925. A contributing building in the Sharon Historic District (National Register, 1992), it occupies a prominent position at the head of the Sharon Town Green at the intersection of North and South Main Streets (Photographs 1, 2, 3). A small triangular parcel (.07 acre; not part of the nominated property) in front of the house, which contains the 1885 Civil War Monument, was part of the Sharon Green until North Main Street was relocated in the 1960s.¹

The 12-acre property, which is partially bordered by the Sharon Burying Ground (Hillside Cemetery) on the west, slopes away from the road (see Exhibit A for site plan). The house, landscaped grounds, and other contributing buildings and structures, occupy the front third of the lot. The more steeply sloping back lot extends down to Beardsley Pond Brook on the north. This acreage, once used for grazing and other agricultural purposes, it is now preserved as an open, wildlife habitat. The panoramic vista from the rear of the house includes Indian Mountain (1200 feet), which rises above the valley floor to the northwest.

On the west, where the property is set off from the cemetery by a chain link fence hidden by a tall lilac hedge, a paved driveway leads down to the associated contributing outbuildings: a Colonial Revival Bungalow erected about 1910 and an earlier barn (Photographs 4, 5). The bungalow, which incorporates a typical open porch with columns under the front slope of the gabled roof, has wood shingled walls. A garage is attached at the right end of the façade. Directly to the south, the large gabled c. 1850 English-type barn with the main door on the long eastern elevation rests on a stone foundation. Additions to the original barn between 1900 and 1925 included another bay on a concrete foundation at the north end, and a garage and a woodshed on the east.

The landscaped grounds are composed of large areas of lawn, bordered by planting beds or hedging, and punctuated by islands of ground cover with shrub groupings and/or mature deciduous and ornamental trees. Historic contributing site features include the eighteenth-century stone well near the southeast front corner of the house and a swimming pool at the rear, which is situated in a direct line with the center-hall axis of the main house. The latter contributing structure, constructed c. 1925 of reinforced concrete with a bluestone coping, is set within an open grassed area flanked by matching perennial borders. Two concrete cold frames, also contributing, are located northwest of the pool.

The original house consists of the 1794 gambrel-roofed King residence (45' x 30') with its pre-existing 1769 brick ell, and several large gambrel-roofed brick additions to the rear and east erected in 1925 to plans drawn by Ford, Butler & Oliver, Architects, of New York City. The two-story main block has a stone foundation and twin end chimneys. Narrow projecting wings at the rear of the end elevations are original integral features (Photograph 2). Capped by attenuated extensions of the gambrel roof, these wings display diminutive fanlights in the peaks. A partially glazed exterior door is located in the return on the east side.

Limestone quoins and flared lintels detail the five-bay façade and end elevations of the main block, which has a moulded brick watertable. A gabled portico, with a cornice embellished with mutule blocks, is supported by tapered columns with tryglyphs on the necking of the capitals (Photograph 6). The doorway, with operable sidelights and a rectangular transom with leaded tracery, is surmounted by a blind fan of brick. The wide 12-panel Dutch door is carried on full-width iron strap hinges. Gabled façade dormers, including the one in the center featuring a Palladian window, also are detailed with

¹ Until recently, the monument included a wooden replica of the original cast-iron cannon, which was missing for a number of years. The present owner located the original had it repaired and reinstalled.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

King-Hart House, Sharon, Litchfield County, CT

Section 7 Page 2

mutules, as is the boxed cornice of the main roof. The 12-over-8 sash in the dormers and Palladian window is original. Window sash on the first floor, presently 12-over-12, date from the Colonial Revival remodeling of 1925. Louvered blinds, which were added by 1940 to the first-floor facade windows, are now in storage.² Iron pintels (attached to the frames) and holdbacks (shutter dogs) in the brick remain in place.

At the rear of the main block, brick additions step down to follow the slope of the property, beginning with the 1769 one-story brick structure with a loft (20' x 26'), which became the keeping room ell of the King House.³ Raised a half story about 1910,⁴ it now serves as a dining room and hyphen connector to a larger two-story, gambrel-roofed section (33' x 24'), added in 1925. The central dormer on the rear (north) elevation of this addition echoes the tripartite detailing of in Palladian dormer on the original façade (Photograph 7). Here, however, a single French door to the roof balcony is flanked by double-hung windows and surmounted by a separate fanlight with wood tracery. The lower slope of the gambrel roof, supported by columns, extends out over a stone terrace.

The hipped-roof, Colonial Revival-style columned porch on a high stone foundation that wraps around the northwest corner of the main block was in place prior to the remodeling (Photograph 2), as was a greenhouse on the east side of the ell. The latter structure was replaced in 1925 by the present gambrel-roofed service wing (44' x 27'), which features a broad façade gable and small shed dormers (Photograph 3).

The Georgian floor plan of the main house is organized around a 10-foot wide center hall that runs the full depth of the main block and has a 10-foot high ceiling (Exhibit B). An exterior doorway at north (rear) end, nearly identical to the main entrance, was installed during the Colonial Revival remodeling in 1925 (Photograph 8). It also features a Dutch door with sidelights and interior strap hinges, but the transom there has wood tracery patterned after the design of the 1794 transom over the front door.

The main staircase is set off from the hall in a recess at the right rear (Photograph 9). Applied decorative scrollwork under the treads and paneling below elaborate the closed string. The balustrade, which returns along the stairwell opening in the upper hall, consists of a carved cherry or mahogany railing with reverse curves at the hand-offs to the newel posts, which have molded caps (Photographs 10, 11). Closely spaced flat balusters are tapered on both edges at the treads.

Each of the four first-floor rooms off the hall has a fireplace; the one in front room on the east side has a corner location (Photographs 12, 13). Shallow Rumford-type fireboxes, which have honed limestone cheeks and lintels, are bordered with simple frame moldings, and there are paneled cupboards above the molded mantel boards. Similar fireplace surrounds are found in the second-floor chambers (Photograph 14).

Most of the original interior finishes remain. Exterior brick bearing walls, which vary in thickness from 15 to 24 inches, are plastered directly over the masonry; vertical oak plank partition walls are finished with lath and plaster. Flared beaded jambs and narrow window seats frame the windows. Instead of the usual fielded paneling, passage doors consist of six flush panels bordered by narrow half-round to resemble a beaded edge. Although this design is repeated on the reverse side of several doors, most display the more typical recessed panels between the stiles and rails. The present

² The blinds appear in the photograph taken that year, the only Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) documentation for the house.

³ Opinions differ on the provenance of this section. It may have been an ell to an earlier house that was moved across the road and latter demolished, or a freestanding, one-room, end-chimney house, as reported in Sara Emerson Rolleston, *Heritage Houses...* (New York: The Viking Press, 1979), p.86.

⁴ Dated from notes by Caroline B. Hart, on file at the Sharon Historical Society.

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National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

King-Hart House, Sharon, Litchfield County, CT

Section 7 Page 3

Some of the more basic construction of the main block is partially hidden. Although the stone foundation is still visible in the cellar, carrying beams and floor joists are generally covered by a painted canvas ceiling. An unusual feature is the root cellar ten feet below grade under the northwest corner, now used as a wine cellar. Large stones that step up the west wall provide cantilevered support to the chimney foundation at this end of the house. Open gains for joists in the foundation walls there indicate that this sub-cellar was once floored over at the same level as main cellar. In the gambrel half attic, rafters are let into pegged mortises in the ridge beam. Intermediate longitudinal beams, acting as purlins, were added in this century, probably to support the weight of several layers of roof shingles. The present owner has replaced the multiple sheathing with wood shingles installed directly over the original roof boards.

Interior features of the additions generally reflect their respective ages. For instance, the 1769 keeping room contains a cooking hearth on the north wall flanked by two bake ovens set forward and flush with the plane of the fireplace (Photograph 13). Although both board-and-batten oven doors remain in place, the brick beehive of the right-hand oven was removed to make way for a new fireplace in the rear addition. The 1925 china closet on the right, designed with a silver safe, extends into the space once occupied by a stair or ladder to the loft. The original faux striated painted finish on the vertical beaded wainscot has been professionally replicated. Steps to the left of the keeping room fireplace lead down to the addition for the living room, now used as library (Photograph 14). Architectural features there include a fully paneled fireplace wall, detailed with fluted pilasters with rose-incised capitals, and exposed hewn ceiling beams. French doors in the first (northwest) bay open onto the stone terrace. The service wing includes a kitchen, pantry, and laundry on the first floor with an integral recessed porch at the northeast corner, accessed by a round-arched opening at grade. Servants' quarters on the either side of the hall on the second floor have operable transoms above the doors.

King-Hart House

Name of Property

Litchfield, CT

County and State

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.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or 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.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

MILITARY

MARITIME HISTORY

Period of Significance

c. 1769 - 1955

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Admiral Thomas C. Hart (1877-1971)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Ford, Butler & Oliver, Architects

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 CT 149.
- 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 repository: Sharon Historical Society

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

King-Hart House, Sharon, Litchfield County, CT

Section 8 Page 1

Statement of Significance

The King-Hart House is an exceptionally well-preserved example of the Late Georgian style, an architectural significance enhanced by Colonial Revival-style additions and remodeling in the early twentieth century. Locally significant as the home of George King, a prominent merchant in the Town of Sharon, the house has statewide historical significance for its association (1925-1971) with Admiral Thomas C. Hart (1877-1971), a pioneer in the development of the United States Navy submarine service and a U.S. Senator from Connecticut (1945-46). In a distinguished 52-year naval career that spanned three wars, Hart served as the commandant of the first submarine base in the United States, located in New London, Connecticut, and rose through the ranks to serve as Chairman of the Naval Board and commander of the U.S. Asiatic Fleet before his retirement in 1944.

Historical Background and Significance

Settled and incorporated in 1739, Sharon developed as a market center in the eighteenth century. Situated at a crossroads, the village center with its colonial meetinghouse and burying ground, coalesced in a linear fashion along the town common, which later became the Sharon Green. As described by the Reverend Timothy Dwight, the handsome village street lies along a declivity in a mountain that runs through the middle of the township, providing panoramic vistas of the surrounding hills.⁵ By the turn of the century, as turnpikes provided access to wider markets, Sharon was an entrepot for the region, a period of prosperity echoed in the stylish houses erected around the Green, including the home of George King, Sharon's leading merchant.

In February 1783 George King and his partner, Eli Mills, bought the property at the head of Town Street from Alexander Steward of New Fairfield, which then consisted of two parcels (totally 23+ acres), one with a dwelling and barn. King, a Connecticut commissary agent during the Revolution, also built a store on the neighboring lot to the east (no longer extant). Known as "King's Old Stand," it served as a stage coach stop and the Sharon post office. In 1795, shortly after the King House was completed, Mills quitclaimed his share of the property back to King. Sharon's population remained fairly stable through much of the nineteenth century and the house remained in the King family. With an economy largely supported by the iron and lime industries and access to the rail transportation (just over the New York border), goods were sent to Poughkeepsie for transshipment down the Hudson River to New York City. When George King died in 1844, the estate passed to his son, Chesterfield, who left the house to his widow, Betsey, and her two nieces in 1905. The following year the heirs sold the property to Sarah Foster Barr of Brooklyn, one of the many city dwellers who "discovered" Sharon in this period. In fact, Sharon became such a popular seasonal retreat, many of the houses that stand today along the Green and South Main Street were built or remodeled in the Colonial Revival style. Among them was "Kingsland," as the nominated property was then known. It was purchased in 1924 by Caroline Brownson Hart, great-great granddaughter of George King, the original builder, and the wife of Admiral Thomas C. Hart. Since the couple moved every few years during Hart's naval career, it first served as a seasonal retreat, with the admiral in residence during summer shore leaves or when he was based in Connecticut or Rhode Island. Their extensive remodeling of the house was mostly completed in 1925 and Kingsland became the Hart's year-round home in 1944.⁶

⁵ *Travels in New England and New York*, Volume II (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1969), Letter XVIII, p. 354.

⁶ Plans drawn c. 1950 (architect not identified), which were donated to the Sharon Historical Society by Caroline Hart, include the floor plan attached as an exhibit to this nomination. Except for a minor change in the layout of the second floor of the ell, they correspond to the original 1924 plans by Ford, Butler, & Oliver, now in possession of the present owner.

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National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

King-Hart House, Sharon, Litchfield County, CT

Section 8 Page 2

The remarkable naval career of Thomas C. Hart, a farm boy from Michigan who became a four-star admiral, began in 1892.⁷ At age 15, Hart was accepted at the U.S. Naval Academy, having secured his congressional appointment through competitive examination, outscoring many much older college-educated candidates. After graduation in 1897, Ensign Hart saw active service in the Spanish American War on a relic of the Civil War, the *Hartford*, a steam-powered, wood-hulled frigate that had served as Admiral Farragut's flagship in the Battle of New Orleans in 1862. Returning to the Naval Academy in 1906 as an ordnance instructor, Hart met his future bride, Catherine Brownson, daughter of Captain (later Admiral) Brownson, then superintendent of the school, whom he married in 1912.

Thomas C. Hart's advancement through the ranks followed a fairly traditional pattern, one designed by the Navy to produce well-rounded officers. While military historians recognize that Hart's greatest professional contribution was in the submarine navy, his rise to the top of the pyramid in competition with his academy class of 1897 largely depended upon receiving key duty assignments in the other areas of naval service. In fact, his selection for the Naval War College at Newport, Rhode Island, in 1922,⁸ followed by a major command at sea in 1925 as skipper of the battleship *Mississippi*, virtually assured his eventual promotion to flag rank. As a rear admiral, Hart's subsequent appointment as superintendent of the Naval Academy from 1931 to 1934, where he is credited with major academic reform, was yet another important step in his career.

Hart's first tour with the submarine navy began in 1916 with the command of New London-based submarine flotillas operating in European waters, for which he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross,⁹ and as commandant of the base during World War I. In 1918 he became Director of Submarines for CNO (Chief of Naval Operations) with a temporary rank of captain. Following his tour of duty as head of the torpedo station at Newport, Rhode Island, then the Navy's sole testing and production facility, Hart was promoted to Rear Admiral in 1929 and became the commander of the Navy's entire submarine fleet (Atlantic and Pacific) the following year. Although now in a position to put his theories on submarine warfare into practice, Hart was faced with the problem of modernizing the submarine force at a time when the size of the fleet was limited by international treaty.¹⁰ Despite his extensive lobbying in Washington for a new balanced multi-purpose submarine force, on the eve of the Great Depression, the prospects remained dim for building any new boats. Before his return to shore duty as head of the Naval Academy in 1931, however, Hart had set up a new organizational structure for the submarine navy and perfected new submarine designs that incorporated German U-Boat technology.

In 1936, as chairman of the General Board of the Navy (established in 1909), Hart was responsible for the composition and deployment of all naval forces. With the passage of the Naval Expansion Act of 1938, funds became available to actually test and build Hart's smaller, more efficient submarines for coastal defense; the prototype, the *Marlin*, was built at Electric Boat in Groton, Connecticut in 1939. He also developed long range attack submarines specifically designed for operation in the Pacific Theater, which, along with the heavily armored "Hart" class cruiser, were also ready for full production when World War II began, a decided strategic advantage.

Promoted to four-star admiral in 1939, Hart was given command of the Asiatic Fleet. His fleet of cruisers, submarines, and gunboats was based at Shanghai, China, which except for the International Settlement there, was already occupied by

⁷ Hart's career, as summarized in this nomination, was taken from James Leutze, *A Different Kind of Victory: A Biography of Admiral Thomas C. Hart* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1981). Leutze, a distinguished military historian at the University of North Carolina, based his book on Hart's 21-year diary and private papers, as well as official military and state department records, and places Hart's service within the broader context of American history.

⁸ Even at this early date, war games at the college included naval battles with Japan.

⁹ A considerable logistical challenge, since submarines at that time had a limited range and had to operate with surface support provided by tenders.

¹⁰ Half of the 106 U.S. submarines then in service were decommissioned to comply with the tonnage limits established at the London Naval Conference in 1930.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

King-Hart House, Sharon, Litchfield County, CT

Section 8 Page 3

the Japanese army, as were Nanking and other major port cities. Although charged with protecting American interests in the face of increasing aggression by the Japanese,¹¹ in the two-year build up to World War II, Hart also had to assess the naval capabilities of Dutch and British forces and develop an international defense plan for the Far East. His task was complicated by the far flung interests of these colonial powers; the Dutch East Indies and British Singapore were separated by thousands of miles of ocean.

Withdrawing his forces to the naval station at Cavite in the Philippines just prior to the World War II, Hart met with General Douglas MacArthur, then retired from the U. S. Army and serving as a paid advisor to the Philippine Army. MacArthur (not called back to active service as a Lieutenant General in the U. S. Army until September 1941) was an old family friend, but securing his cooperation proved problematic. Having already decided to surrender the Philippines to the Japanese in the event of war, MacArthur rejected any joint American army-navy defense plans, and the general's plan to use the Asiatic Fleet solely for convoy duty was unacceptable to Hart, who believed naval forces should concentrate on offensive action. Acting on naval intelligence warnings of impending Japanese attack, Hart, as the senior officer present, prepared for war, restructuring his command for the islands' defense, deploying one of his cruiser divisions to Java, and ordering all military dependants, including his wife and daughter, home to the States.

When word came of the Japanese strike that decimated the American fleet at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, across the international dateline in the Philippines, it was three o'clock in the morning of December 8th; Hart immediately deployed the rest of the Asiatic Fleet. On his standing orders in the event of impending attack, most of his surface ships (cruisers and destroyers) and PBYS (patrol flying boats) left Manila Bay before the first Japanese attack on the Philippines six hours later. U. S. air power was mostly destroyed on the ground at Clark Field along with part of the industrial base and submarine pens at Cavite, but only one of Hart's submarines was lost to enemy action. When Manila was declared an open city and occupied by the Japanese Army, MacArthur withdrew his forces to Bataan and Cooregidor and Hart left the Philippines to rejoin his fleet in Java.

Arriving in the port of Surabaya on January 2, 1942 after a 1000-mile journey by submarine on board the *Shark*, Hart learned of his appointment as the top naval commander in the newly formed joint Allied command in the Pacific Theater (ABDA), which now also included the Australian navy. Although well aware of Dutch resentment of British and American dominance of ABDA, Hart was unprepared for the political outcome. When the Dutch objected to serving under an American naval commander, Hart was summarily replaced by a Dutch admiral and ordered back to the States.¹² Supposedly recalled by Franklin D. Roosevelt for reasons of age or ill health, it was clear that Hart was a scapegoat in president's effort to maintain an international defense force in the Pacific.

Hart, who was already known to the American public because of a laudatory cover story by Claire Booth Luce in *Time* magazine (November 1941), received a hero's welcome and was awarded a second DSC.¹³ As the only ranking officer in the States with direct knowledge of the war in the Pacific, he was besieged by the press. Only after the *Washington Post* ran a story headlined "Let Hart Speak" did the Navy allow him to go public. Although Hart never considered himself an effective public speaker, his alert and vigorous demeanor at press conferences and before Congress belied his age and effectively silenced his critics. After an extended leave at the family home in Sharon, Hart returned to Washington to his old job as Chairman of the Naval Board, but the Navy had one more assignment before he could retire. Court martial proceedings against Admiral Kimmel and others high ranking officers involved in the Pearl Harbor debacle were put on hold until after the war, but an official board of inquiry was established to investigate and take depositions. Due to the

¹¹ In December 1937 at the start of the undeclared Sino-Japanese War, Japanese planes had sunk the *Panay*, a U.S. gunboat that patrolled the Yangtze River.

¹² While under Dutch command, most of the Hart's Asiatic Fleet was lost, either sunk by the Japanese or by running aground.

¹³ In one of the absurdities of global politics, Hart was decorated for his service by Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

King-Hart House, Sharon, Litchfield County, CT

Section 8 Page 4

rank of the personnel involved, a full admiral was needed to head the board; Hart was selected, much to his dismay, as most of the witnesses were his friends or academy classmates. Consisting of depositions taken from the principals and observers in the United States and at outlying bases in the Pacific, the Hart record, compiled over a period of six months, remains as the only comprehensive eyewitness account of this major event in American naval history.

Retiring with the rank of four star admiral by a special act of Congress,¹⁴ in late 1944 Hart accepted an interim senatorial appointment from Governor Raymond Baldwin of Connecticut to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Republican Francis T. Maloney. At the end of his term in November 1946, Hart chose not to run for election and returned to his country home in Sharon, where he lived until his death on July 4, 1971. Hart was buried with full military honors in Arlington Cemetery. The following year, in recognition of his distinguished naval service, the *U.S.S. Thomas C. Hart*, a destroyer escort, was launched at Pascagola, Mississippi. In attendance were family members, including his widow and eldest granddaughter, who christened the ship. Caroline Hart died in December 1982, having willed the property in perpetuity to her youngest son George. Although it had been her intention to keep the house in the extended King-Brownson family, her estate sold the property to the present owners in July of 1983.

Architectural Significance

The King-Hart House is significant on several levels. A harmonious assemblage of similar forms and materials, its exceptionally integrated Colonial Revival-style remodeling evolved around the gambrel-roofed brick house erected by George King in 1794, significant in its own right as a well-preserved example of the flowering of the Late Georgian style in the post-Revolutionary period. Never before had such a well-defined architectural pattern language become so identified with a newly assertive American class consciousness. Even in rural settings like Sharon, Connecticut gentry with any pretensions to social status turned to this style and material, a trend that reached its zenith by the turn of the century.

Most architectural historians agree that the Late Georgian evolved from the urban Georgian style in America, as exemplified by such mansions as the legendary John Hancock House in Boston. The King House, essentially a scaled-down vernacular interpretation of these stylistic precedents, displays many customary Georgian elements, such as embellished cornices and quoined corners. Certainly the Palladian window is a hallmark of Georgian architecture, but its use here in the central roof dormer is highly unusual. More commonly, this distinctive feature is placed above the doorway in a full-two story facade, as is the case with the 1767 Duke of Cumberland Inn in Rocky Hill, the first known appearance in Connecticut of this feature. Although another typical Georgian element, a projecting two-story entrance pavilion, was precluded by the facade gambrel roof, the original elaborated portico that takes its place effectively defines and frames the doorway. It is likely that the King portico served as a model for a number of other original or restored porticos found nearby, a type known today as the "Sharon porch." The use of cornice returns on the portico and dormers instead of full pediments is consistent with the overall reduction in the boldness of the architectural detailing. Of interest is the departure from precedent in the truncated wings, which are embellished with the small fanlights, just enough of a suggestion of the emerging Federal style to confirm the owner's awareness of fashionable trends.

¹⁴ Customarily, officers retire at the next lower rank.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

King-Hart House, Sharon, Litchfield County, CT

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The main block is exceptionally well preserved. The Colonial Revival features, the new doorway at the rear of the spacious central hall and the first-floor replacement windows, are the only exterior changes. Except for the oak flooring, the interior finishes and detailing are original and generally convey an informal, colonial appearance. Contributing to this informality are such original features as the unusual flush paneled doors, and the nicely detailed, but simple fireplace surrounds. While the scrollwork and paneling on the stairs are typical details, the location and design of the rest of the staircase is less conventional.

Since regional "borrowing" of design elements by master builders was a common practice, it may have been adapted from recessed staircases found in earlier, more formal Late Georgians, such as Oldgate in Farmington. Built about 1786, it was one of the first of several elaborately detailed houses designed by William Spratt, the English-born architect, especially in Litchfield, Connecticut. Another possible source is a house Spratt designed for a wealthy merchant in western Connecticut, which was completed by 1790.¹⁵ Although there the balustrade terminates in a more conventional spiral volute and the rectangular-section balusters are not tapered, it utilizes the same type of handoffs at similar intermediate posts, and also displays applied scrollwork.

The remodeling in the early twentieth century was cleverly designed to enhance the original structure. Unlike many restorations in the Colonial Revival period, here the additions respect and complement the original style and form, producing a stylistically cohesive complex. The few changes made to the main block, such as a new doorway at the rear of the hall, echo but do not duplicate earlier features and clearly read as newer work. While each of the additions is individually designed, which adds considerable architectural interest, their exterior detailing is deliberately low key, keeping the focus on the original building. For example, the Palladianesque interpretation of the balcony entrance on the major rear addition is suitably referential but clearly appropriate for a subordinate elevation.

The remodeling was designed by Ford, Butler & Oliver, Architects, which maintained an office on Park Avenue in New York City from 1908 to at least 1942. The firm specialized in designing or remodeling country estate houses in the 1910s and 1920s, mainly on Long Island. Since this field was dominated by many more prominent New York architects, there are only a few references to the firm or the principals in published sources. There is no biographical information available on Ford, and limited mention of the other founding partners. Lawrence S. Butler (1876-1954) was a member of Long Island society, whose design work included two Georgian Revivals in his hometown of St. James.¹⁶ Oddly enough, his obituary in the *New York Times* (March 27, 1954) makes no mention of his architectural achievements. Leslie A. Oliver (1877-1942) studied architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and *L'Ecole des Beaux Arts* in Paris.¹⁷ Other residential commissions attributed to the firm include the Ogle House in New Marlborough, Massachusetts,¹⁸ the George Case House and "Rassapeague," both in Nissequoque, Long Island, and the 1916 Colonial Revival-style Smith House in Charleston, West Virginia.¹⁹

¹⁵ See photographs of both staircases in Sara E. Rolleston, *Heritage Houses: The American Tradition...* (New York: Viking Press, 1979), pp. 107 and 129. The western Connecticut example is not identified by name or location. The King House also is included in this publication and depicted on pp. 86-89.

¹⁶ *Long Island Country Houses, 1860-1940* (W.W. Norton & Co., 1997), p. 97.

¹⁷ *New York Times*, April 13, 1942.

¹⁸ *House and Garden* 56. (September 1929), pp. 100-111. This was the only house design in the four references to the firm in the Avery Index. One of the others was the firm's major additions to the Garden City Hotel in New Jersey, originally designed by McKim Mead and White, which was featured in *Architectural Review* 19 (April 1913), pp.142-144.

¹⁹ The latter two houses are listed on the National Register, Rassapeague in 1993 and the Smith House in 1984.

King-Hart House

Litchfield, CT

Name of Property

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 12

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	18	626350	4637530	3	18	626470	4637950
		Zone	Easting			Zone	Easting
			Northing				Northing
2	18	626210	4637930	4	18	626450	4537569

____. See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By:

Reviewed by Matt Blood, National Register Coordinator

name/title Jan Cunningham, National Register Consultant

organization Cunningham Preservation Associates, LLC date 6/30/05

street & number 37 Orange Road telephone (860) 347 4072

city or town Middletown state CT zip code 06457

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name J. Barclay II & Janna C. Collins

street & number 12 North Main Street, P.O. Box 1127 (mailing address) telephone 860 623 0662

city or town Sharon state CT zip code 06069

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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9. Major Bibliographic References

Clouette, Bruce and Maura Cronin. "Sharon Historic District." National Register Inventory Form, 1992.

Federal Census, MS, 1860-1930.

Ford, Butler & Oliver, Architects. "Alterations to the House of Capt. Thomas Hart, USN," September 1924, revised December 1924 (construction level plans and elevations; 4 pages reviewed for this nomination).

Historic American Building Survey (CT-149).

Leutze, James. *A Different Kind of Victory: A Biography of Admiral Thomas C. Hart*. Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1981.

Mackay, Robert B, Anthony K. Baker, & Carol A. Traynor. eds. *Long Island Country Houses and Their Architects 1860-1940*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co. for the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities, 1997.

Rolleston, Sara Emerson. *Heritage Houses: The American Tradition in Connecticut 1600-1900*. New York: Viking Press, 1979.

Sedgewick, Charles F. *General History of the Town of Sharon*. Reprint edition, Sharon Historical Society, 2000.

Sharon Historical Society Archives.

Sharon Land & Probate Records.

10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description:

The nominated property is shown on the attached site plan based on an actual land survey and described in the deed recorded in the Sharon Land Records in Volume 100, page 400.

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries of the above described property encompass all the land and buildings associated with King-Hart House since 1924.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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CONTINUATION SHEET

King-Hart House, Sharon, Litchfield County, CT

Section: Photo Page 1

List of Photographs*

Photographer: Cunningham Preservation Associates, LLC

Negatives on File: SHPO

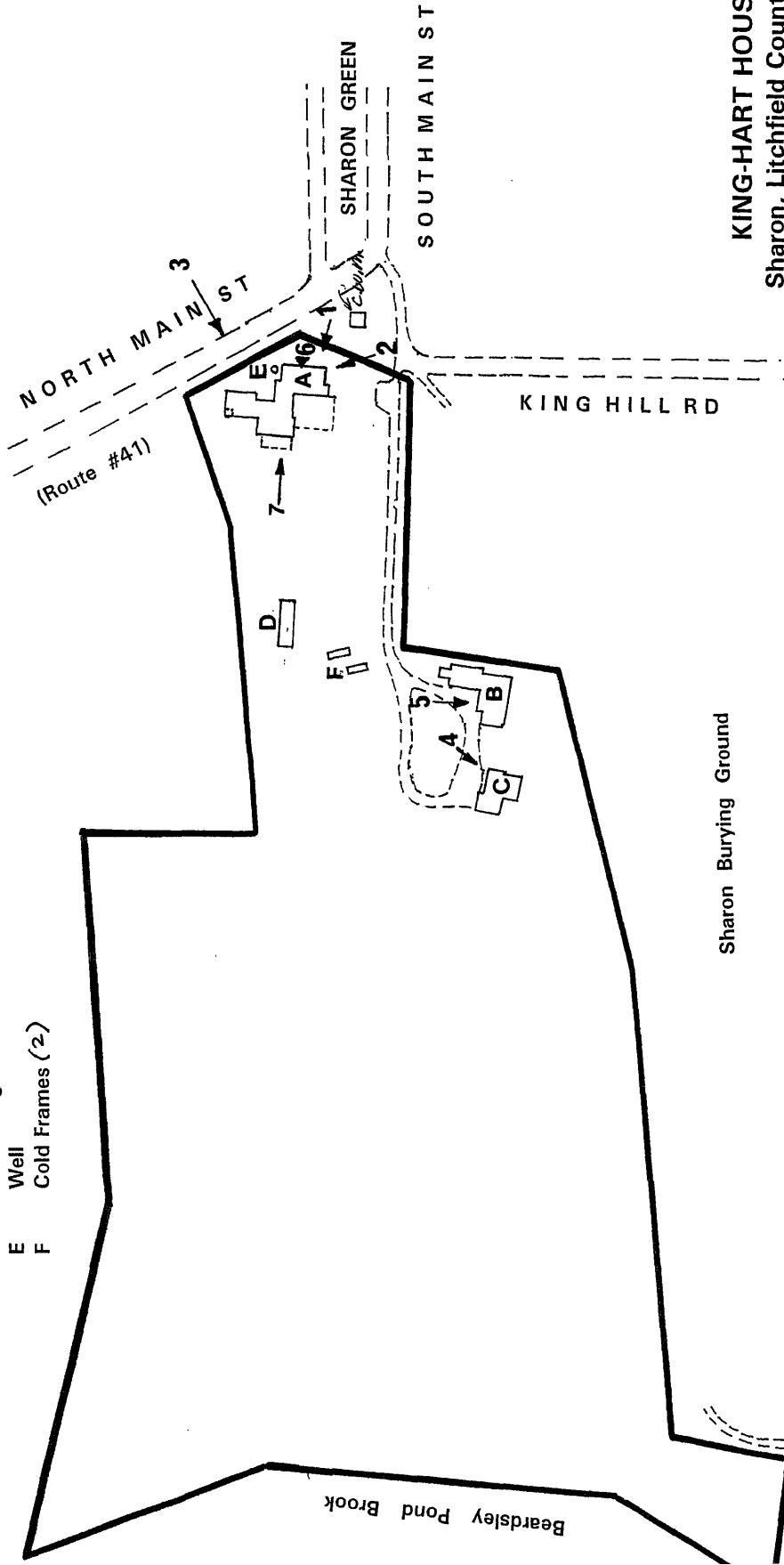
Date: 4 & 5/2005

1. King-Hart House, façade, camera facing NE
2. King-Hart House, west elevation, camera facing E
3. King-Hart House, east wing, camera facing NW
4. King-Hart House, guest house, camera facing NW
5. King-Hart House, barn, camera facing W
6. King-Hart House, portico, camera facing N
7. King-Hart House, rear elevation, camera facing S
8. King-Hart House, center hall with rear doorway and main staircase (R), camera facing NE
9. King-Hart House, upper hall, camera facing NE
10. King-Hart House, main staircase from above, camera facing N
11. King-Hart House, west parlor (*spare room on plan*), camera facing NW
12. King-Hart House, east parlor (*reception room on plan*) with corner fireplace, camera facing NE
13. King-Hart House, west parlor chamber, camera facing NW
14. King-Hart House, keeping room (*dining room on plan*) fireplace in ell, camera facing NW
15. King-Hart House, living room, camera facing SW

* Note: Room designations on c. 1950 plan (Exhibit B) in italics.

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE KEY

- A House
- B Barn
- C Guesthouse
- D Swimming Pool
- E Well
- F Cold Frames (2)



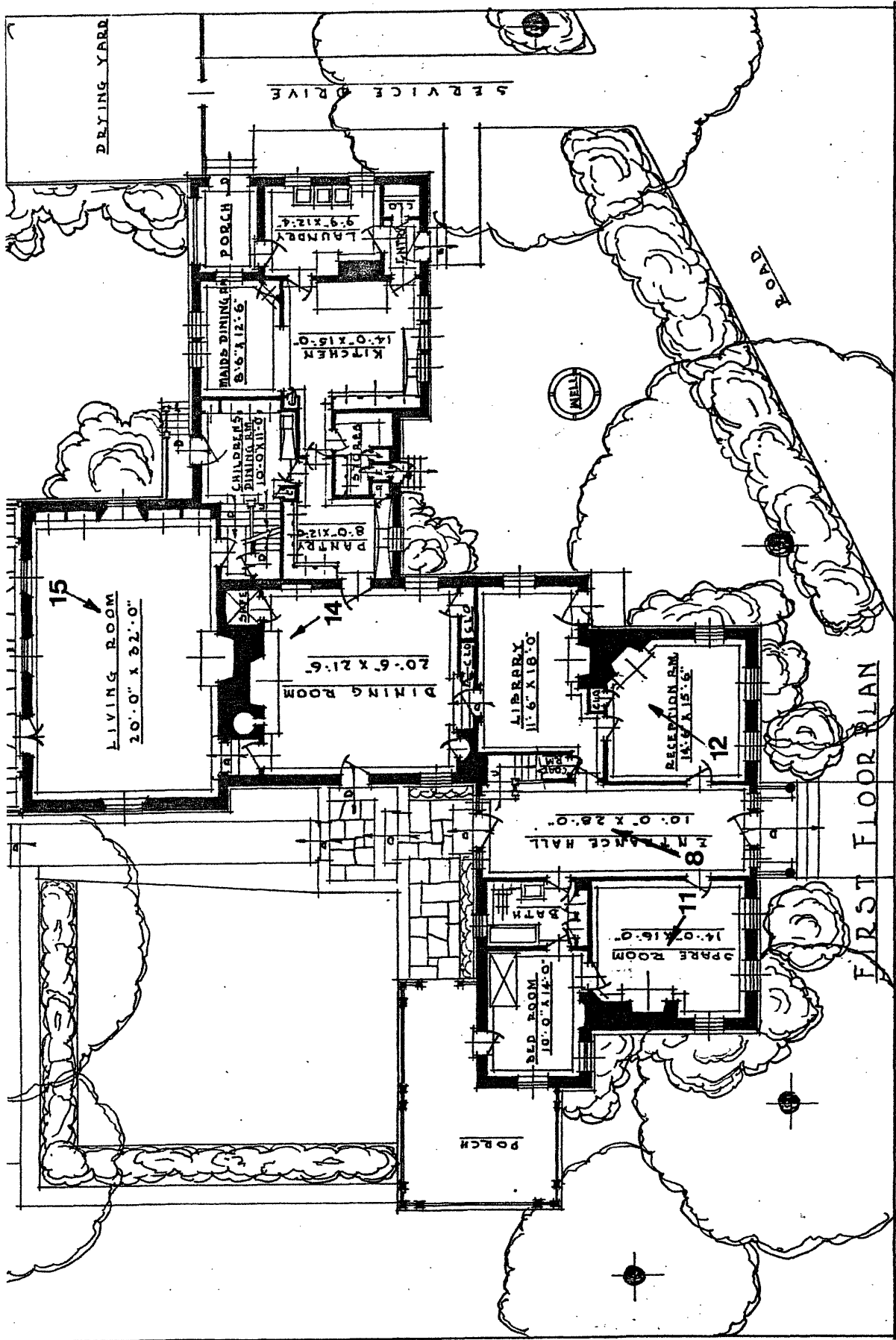
KING-HART HOUSE
Sharon, Litchfield County, CT

EXHIBIT A: SCHEMATIC SITE PLAN

Approx. Scale: 1' = 200"

Bold Line: Surveyed Boundary of Property
Numbered Arrows: Photograph Views

Base Map: Property Survey & Map, July 1983
Cunningham Preservation Associates, LLC 6/05



KING-HART HOUSE
 Sharon, Litchfield County, CT

EXHIBIT B: FIRST FLOOR PLAN, c. 1950
Courtesy of the Sharon Historical Society

Approx. Scale: 3/32" = 1'

Numbered Arrows: Photograph Views
 Cunningham Preservation Associates, LLC 6/05