	I/NPS NHHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86 eslee House, Wallingfor National Regis	
1. NAME OF PROPERTY		MAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Historic Name: <u>Joseph Blakeslee</u> Other Name/Site Number: <u>NA</u>		000
2. LOCATION Street & Number: 1211 Barnes Roa	<u>d</u> Not f	or publication: <u>NA</u>
City/Town: Wallingford		Vicinity: <u>NA</u>
State: CT County: New Haven 3. GLASSIFICATION	Code: 009	Zip Code: <u>06492</u>
Ownership of Property Private: x Public-local: Public-State: Public-Federal:	Category of Property Building(s):_x_ District: Site: Structure: Object:	
Number of Resources within Prope Contributing	Noncontributing buildings sites structures objects Total	ational
Number of Contributing Resources Register: NA_	Previously Listed in the N	acional

Name of related multiple property listing: NA

ignature of Keeper

PROPERTY NAME

Joseph Blakeslee House, Wallingford, CT

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United States Department of the Interior

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION	
4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION	
As the designated authority under the National Historic Dresewation Act of 1006	
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	Ē
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.	
03/09/98	
Signature of Certifying Official Date John W. Shannahan, Director, Connecticut Historical Commission	
John W. Shannakan, Director, Connecticut Historical Commission	
State or Federal Agency and Bureau	
In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National	
Register criteria.	
Mobibeer Criteria.	
Signature of Commenting or Other Official Date	
signature of commenting of other official pate	
Chata as Polanci Access and Durane	
State or Federal Agency and Bureau	
5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION	
$\sim 10^{-1}$	
I, hereby certify that this property is $O(1)$ $O(1)$	_
1 / V / V / 12.90	
<u>V</u> Entered in the National Register <u>COSOM</u> //, <u>Slaw</u> 7.13-96	
Determined eligible for the	
National Register	
Determined not eligible for the	
National Register	
Removed from the National Register	
Other (explain):	

Date of Action

Joseph Blakeslee House, Wallingford, CT

Page 3

United States Department of the Interior National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

. FUNCTION OR USE		
istoric: DOMESTIC	Sub: <u>single dwelling</u>	
urrent:DOMESTIC	Sub: single dwelling	
. DESCRIPTION		
rchitectural Classification: DLONIAL/Postmedieval English	Materials: Foundation: <u>STONE/sandstone</u> Walls: <u>WOOD/Weatherboard</u>	
	Roof: ASBESTOS Other Description:	

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

The Joseph Blakeslee House, built in 1780, is a small Colonial post-and-beam dwelling of one story, three bays, central entrance, and central chimney. Located on a knoll in the area of north central Wallingford known as North Farms, it is now vacant and the site is overgrown with vegetation. In a 1935 photograph it is seen to be pleasantly situated, facing east (Photograph 1, Figure 1).

Rectangular in plan, the Blakeslee House measures 36' 6" long by 28' 4" deep. The front (east) elevation is elevated behind a stone wall and terrace, contemporary with the house, running parallel with a driveway in front that formerly was the road The knoll is planted with a grove of catalpa trees, now infilled with the overgrown vegetation (Photograph 2).

The central front door of the house, originally under a now missing six-light transom, probably showed four raised panels on the exterior with horizontal beaded sheathing on the interior surface, which is an appropriate configuration given the date and character of the building. The present front door is a ca.1920s glazed-and-paneled replacement. Flanking windows are 6-over-6, as they are on the side elevations of the house (Photograph 4). The front sill has started to roll, indicating deterioration and a need for replacement. Clapboards with an exposure of 4 1/2" are secured with wire nails. Corners are finished with plain boards. Above, the roof's simple boxed cornice forms an overhang of about 12". The roof is deteriorated to the point of being partially open to the weather. The roof covering is overlapping shingles, in poor condition. The central chimney is brick above the roof line.

The north side elevation has two windows at both first and second floors. The second floor is framed with a 4" hewn overhang at the gable ends, while rakes are finished with plain boards. There are no cornice bed moldings or rake moldings. (Photographs 3, 4)

On the rear (west) elevation, central paired windows are flanked asymmetrically by doors, both probably not original (Photographs 5, 7). Above, the rear roof slope is covered by shingles which are the same as those on the front, but in better condition. At the lower north corner of the rear elevation the wall is opened up to show a beaverboard-type sheathing under the wooden clapboards, indicating a completely new 20th-century envelope. Moreover, the studs have been sawn off and toenailed into the plate, in further indication of alteration/repair of the house (Photograph 6). The six or seven lowest courses of clapboards buckle outward, a sign they are under compression due to lack of proper structural support.

On the south side elevation the sequence of openings from the west is a door followed by two windows at the first floor, under a single window at the second story, which overhangs the first. The door is glazed over two horizontal panels. (Photograph 8) A well, now without its wellhead, is a few feet south of the door, suggesting that the door is the original back door. The doorway's beaded header and post support the suggestion. Access to the basement is provided by a cut through the earth of the knoll, an unusual feature (Figure 2). Exit from the house via the basement was in the direction of the location of former outbuildings.

The front door opens to a small hall without stair. A cupboard or closet occupies the space in which the stair in a two-story house usually is found. Flooring is narrow hardwood throughout the first story. A four-paneled door leads to the south front room where the chief architectural feature is the sophisticated paneled fireplace wall. The hearth and massive firebox are brownstone, as is the chimney visible through the space of a removed panel to the west. Each cheek of the firebox is a single stone. In the rear wall of large stones a brick bake oven and crane pintle are in place. The moldings of the fireplace surround may be original, while the mantel shelf is added (Curtis). Three square panels make up the chimney breast, with a small cupboard to the upper left and floor-to-ceiling shelves with plate moldings to the right. Small rectangular panels form a frieze under the ceiling. Posts are tapered, sheathed, and beaded. (Photograph 9)

The dados of the other three walls in the room are wide horizontal boards under chair rails and plaster walls. Existing plaster ceiling is a replacement. There are no summers; joists run perpendicular to the chimney as compared with the usual arrangement of running front to back with summers. Fallen plaster toward the front and center reveals an odd extra east-west member, perhaps for cantilevering a feature, now lost, to the front. (Photograph 10) It was not possible to determine whether a comparable member is present in the north front room, since the plaster there is intact. The south wall, which appears to have been substantially re-built, is covered with gypsum board.

The north front room fireplace wall is similar. The door toward the front is followed, in sequence to the rear, by shelves, fireplace and chimney breast (smaller than those in the south room), and paneling (Photograph 11). The molding surrounding the fireplace is new, and the long horizontal panel at the top probably replaces two

original panels. There is possible evidence of a fire in the chimney wall, which would explain these replacements. Corncobs are in the wall next to the chimney, probably dragged there by small animals. The casing of the door to the kitchen is still fitted with original pintles for strap hinges. Other walls are plaster on split lath fastened by square-shank nails, floor-to-ceiling, with no wainscotting, which may have been removed ca.1820 when all-plaster walls became fashionable. An opening in the ceiling shows a tree-trunk joist close to the front plate; such joists more commonly are found in the basement.

The rear section of the house is divided into three rooms, the central kitchen being by far the largest. The kitchen fireplace is obscured by a 20th-century kitchen counter, but to the left the ashpit of its side bake oven and small cupboard above are visible. The cast-iron door of the bake oven appears to date from ca.1825. The ashpit below is boarded up. (Photograph 12). The west wall is finished with wide horizontal feather-edged boards under 12-over-12 windows which are located between the posts of the chimney bay. The narrow muntin profile suggests they are original. (Photograph 13) The two doors in this wall appear to be alterations. The south wall of the kitchen is vertical boards, and a chair rail encircles the room.

A passageway to the south against the rear wall leads to the door on the south elevation. A small room, probably a pantry or bedroom, occupies space in front of the passage. A batten door to the third room, the buttery to the north, is hung with strap hinges on pintles and fitted with an original Suffolk latch. Original shelving appears to be still in place.

The stairway between the kitchen and the buttery leads up to the second floor and down to the cellar. Access to the second floor starts with one riser to a platform, then turns 90 degrees to a straight enclosed run toward the front. There is a window, probably added, in the rear wall at the platform. At the second floor, windows in side elevations are 6-over-6 but paired or double and therefore perhaps dating from the 1920s. A thin purlin is visible at the top of the stairs near the rear plate. Floor boards are wide, in part. The chimney at this level continues to be brownstone. The roof slopes meet at the ridge with two pitched boards without ridgepole (Photograph 14). Second-floor finishes date from ca.1920s when the present two-room plan was built. Original plan is unknown.

The partial cellar is excavated under the rear half of the house. Its walls are brownstone two feet thick (Photograph 15).

A photograph of the property (Federal Writers' Project, Census of Old Buildings, ca.1935) and the Fairchild Aerial Survey show 1211 Barnes Road with a shed across the street, small barns to the southeast, and a larger barn across a driveway to the east.

Joseph Blakeslee House, Wallingford, CT

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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE				
Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Nationally: Statewide: Locally:_x_				
Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C_x_ D_x_				
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A B C D E F G				
Areas of Significance: ARCHITECTURE ARCHEOLOGY Late 18C Early 19C				
Significant Person(s): NA				
Cultural Affiliation: NA				
Architect/Builder: <u>Joseph Blakeslee</u>				

State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

Summary

The Joseph Blakeslee House is significant architecturally because it is a representative example of a small late-18th-century post-and-beam house. In addition to its essential character-defining components, which survive, it has three unusual features: the absence of summers, two fireplaces with bake ovens, and an odd structural timber in the south front room. The house is outstanding for its two sophisticated paneled fireplace walls and the use of brownstone for foundation and chimney. (Criterion A) It is significant archaeologically because the site has the ability to yield information important to history. (Criterion D)

Historical Background

The small house at 1211 Barnes Road, located in what was formerly known as the North Farms area of Wallingford, historically was part of a multi-house farmstead associated with the Blakeslee family. The first member of that family to settle in the Wallingford's North Farms about 1720. On February 13, 1759, two years before his death, Samuel sold his farm, including a house and a barn, to his son Joseph Blakeslee (1732-1804). A subsequent lease of half of the house back to the parents indicates that the dwelling was a south-facing house with some rooms on the second story, probably of lean-to or saltbox form (Wallingford Land Records, Vol. 14, pp, 268-69). This house was replaced about 1793 by Joseph's son Joseph Blakeslee, Jr. (1767-1831). The 1793 house, dismantled and moved in the 1970s to Choate-Rosemary Hall School, Wallingford, is the house often referred to as the "Blakeslee Homestead."

The house at 1211 Barnes Road was built about 1780 by Joseph Blakeslee (1732-1804) just south of his father's homestead. Joseph was a farmer and mason, a Congregationalist in religion, and a Federalist in politics. He was also a veteran of the French and Indian War. For most of his life, despite building the house in 1780, Joseph Blakeslee lived in the house left to him by his father. Soon after moving into the new house he built in 1780, Joseph sold it under duress of court order. Like many middling Connecticut farmers with large families, Joseph Blakeslee probably suffered from the economic privations of the Revolution, which disrupted markets, siphoned off manpower, and necessitated heavy taxes. By 1784 Blakeslee's finances had deteriorated to the point where the County Court seized parts of his landholdings to settle a lawsuit for 10 pounds (Wallingford Land Records, 23/252, 418). Blakeslee moved back to the older homestead (his father's), where he lived (along with other members of his family) until his death in 1804. His son Samuel recalled him as a hardworking man, always in low circumstances, but honest, and respected among his acquaintances (Soulsby, p. 5).

In 1793, after a decade during which the house at 1211 Barnes Road was occupied by other families, another of Joseph's sons, John Webb Blakeslee (1769-1825), bought it back, moved in with his wife, and lived here until his death 32 years later. John W. Blakeslee was a man of modest means; in 1793, the small farm centered around this house was valued at only \$173.64, barely half that of his brother, Joseph Blakeslee, Jr., who lived in the new (1793) house, built on the old homestead.

John W. Blakeslee appears to have been a typical Connecticut farmer of modest station. At the time of his death in 1825, his possessions included a team of oxen, a horse, 15 sheep, two pigs, and four head of cattle, indicative of the small-scale, generalized subsistence farming typical of that period (Wallingford Probate Court, Estate of John W. Blakeslee, 1825, quoted by Clouette, p. 13). His land included 59 1/2 acres surrounding his home lot; two other parcels, one of 14 acres and one of 18 acres, probably located nearby but not contiguous; and a one-acre wood lot. Except for several dozen brooms that he had probably made for sale and barrels of cider, vinegar, and apple brandy, the products of his farm appear to have been intended for his own family's consumption or local exchange.

The most valuable single component of John W. Blakeslee's estate, which totaled \$3,901.49, was the sawmill located on the small pond to the east. Known in the 18th century as the Ezekiel Hall mill (Wallingford Land Records, vol. 30, p, 421), the mill around 1800 was a joint venture among John, his brother, Joseph Blakeslee, Jr., and several other area farmers; John W, Blakeslee eventually bought out the other partners. Along with his cider mill, the sawmill enabled Blakeslee to supplement his limited earnings as a farmer. Still, other than a single silk vest inventoried by his estate, his lifestyle appears to have included virtually no luxury items or evidence of exceptional consumption.

John W. Blakeslee and his wife Ruth Ives were Baptists, dissenting from the Congregationalist religion (and probably the staunch Federalist politics) of his father, Joseph Blakeslee, Sr. According to a turn-of-the-century biography,

They were a family of singers, the father [John W. Blakeslee] a leader in the church choir, and had a good choir in their nine children who grew to maturity (Commemorative Biographical Record of New Haven County, Connecticut, p. 318, quoted by Clouette, p. 5).

Following the death of John W. Blakeslee in 1825, the house (along with a barn, "old barn," "cowhouse," horse shed, and cider mill) passed into the possession of his son, Silas Blakeslee (1808-1893), who also bought the property surrounding the larger house in 1852 from S. Patrick or Paddoc. For the rest of the 19th century and most of the 20th, the property was operated as one large farm of approximately 250 acres, with two dwelling houses. The sawmill also continued as Blakeslee property well into the 19th century. The farm was owned from 1900 to 1935 by the Barnes family and from 1935 to 1963 by the Killam family. Research Park Inc. bought it in 1963 and owned it until 1980, when it was bought by Medway Associates. The state assumed control in 1991. In 1996 title passed to the Wallingford Historic Preservation Trust.

The completeness of information about the house and family is unusual. The unbroken chain of title, seldom found with this degree of authenticity, makes the construction date clear beyond doubt.

Architecture

The setting of the Joseph Blakeslee House was established by a colonial neighborhood of similar dwellings and farms. The neighborhood of the Blakeslee property, known as North Farms or School District Number 4 in the middle 19th century. remained a rural agricultural area until the last half of the 20th century, when modern residential and industrial park development began to alter its character. It was always a somewhat out-of-the-way part of town. Wallingford, which originally included Cheshire and Meriden, was settled in the 1660s and 1670s, with one node in the southern part of town settled from New Haven and another node in what is now Meriden settled by families from the Hartford area. This area, however, lay in between the two earliest occupied parts of town, at some distance both from the more built-up parts and from the New Haven to Hartford road that ran through the center of Wallingford.

It is likely that the Blakeslees in the 1720s were part of the first generation to build their homesteads there. In the early 19th century, parts of Wallingford were transformed as small tinware and Britannia shops evolved into tableware enterprises of industrial proportions. The coming of the railroad and the concentration of large steam-powered factories made Wallingford borough into a thriving industrial center. During this period of development, the Joseph Blakeslee House maintained its remote setting because the North Farms area remained rural and almost completely untouched by industrial development. The sawmill near the Blakeslee House, on a tributary of what in the 19th century was known as the Farm River, represented merely the mechanical side of an agriculture-based economy, and except for some traffic between Durham Center and Yalesville, Barnes Road (which formerly ran north of the house, then curved south along what now appears as a driveway) must have been the archetypal quiet country lane.

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In this setting the house is architecturally typical of its period and its surroundings. It has the post-and-beam framing, center-chimney plan, simple gableroofed form, symmetrical facade, and paneled and wainscoted interior that are characteristic of New England vernacular architecture in the colonial period. At the same time, the relatively light framing members (retaining some flare to the corner posts), the lack of summers, and the use of applied moldings all point to the end of the 18th century.

While generally typical, the Blakeslee House does have three atypical features. A bake oven in the firebox of the south front room fireplace raises unanswered questions about the construction sequence of the house. Normally, a bake oven in a room suggests that the room is or was the kitchen. A bake oven in the position found in the Blakeslee House often indicates that the building originally was a two-room house, and confirming features can be found in the framing and masonry to establish that the rear portion, often a larger kitchen, was added. Such is not the case here. The entire house appears to have been built at one time, leaving the reason for a bake oven in the south front room unknown. The location of the cellar under the rear half of the house is a further obfuscation; if the front of the house was built first, the cellar might be expected to be under it.

The absence of summers in the two front rooms is also unusual, but the framing of the joists in these rooms, parallel with the front and back plates, is more than unusual. It may be unique in Connecticut (Curtis, September 22, 1997).

The third atypical feature is the east-west member in the ceiling of the south room, unexplained, but possibly for framing a front feature such as a porch, although a porch is unlikely in late 18th century. These three enigmatic components of the house's fabrication set it apart from its contemporaries, and raising the level of architectural significance of the Joseph Blakeslee House to a marked degree.

Fine features of the house are the two sophisticated fireplace walls of the front rooms. Their moldings, not all original, and panels are above average in quality and significant for their nearly complete state of preservation. Such paneled walls seldom are found in a house otherwise small and unassuming. Also contributing above-average quality to the house is the brownstone of foundation and chimney. A brownstone quarry known to have existed nearby (at the Mallon Farm) made it convenient to build with brownstone, but stone seldom was so used.

The grove of catalpa trees could only have been set out deliberately, probably early in the 19th century since the trees appear to be 150-170 years old (Photograph 2). Their presence makes a memorable planting association for the house.

Archaeology

Archaeological investigations were concentrated in the 25 x 25-meter area immediately surrounding the house. Thousands of artifacts and ecofacts were found, including ceramics and glassware which suggest occupation by a family of better than average though not wealthy means. These artifacts also seem to concentrate in the date range of late 18th through early 19th century. (Soulsby, p. 14)

average though not wealthy means. These artifacts also seem to concentrate in the date range of late 18th through early 19th century. (Soulsby, p. 14)

Well over 4,000 artifacts and ecofacts were found in the 19 test pits and four larger test units, including a large quantity of shell (over 1,000 fragments), window and bottle glass, nail fragments, coal, some calcined bone, kaolin pipe fragments, and a large variety of ceramics. Some modern material, such as plastic, was also found. Two prehistoric artifacts were also recovered: one quartz flake in S5W10, in association with historic material; and one quartzite flake in N5E5, also in association with historic artifacts. These prehistoric artifacts are considered isolated finds. The site was assigned Connecticut site number 148-6 (Figure 2). The ceramics are a mix of domestic tablewares such as creamware, pearlware, whiteware and Chinese porcelain, and utility wares such as stoneware and red earthenware. (Soulsby, p. 12)

The site appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion D, the ability to yield information important to history. There is a tremendous quantity of archaeological materials, relatively intact, in the immediate vicinity of the house whose analysis can inform the study and understanding of domestic practices in colonial homes. These materials, in conjunction with the document research results, can contribute worthwhile understanding of the lifeways of 18th-century small-town New England farm families. (Soulsby, p. 16)

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Blakeslee, Samuel. Memoir, 1822, typed transcript at New Haven County Historical Society.
- Clouette, Bruce, Historic Resource Consultants, Inc. Blakeslee House. Historic American Buildings Survey, HABS No. CT-439, 1933.
- Commemorative Biographical Record of New Haven County, Connecticut. Chicago: J.H. Beers & Co., 1902.
- Curtis, John O. Joseph Blakeslee House, videotape of walk-through with running commentary, July 25, 1997.
- Letter to author, September 22, 1997.
- Federal Writers Project. Census of Old Buildings in Connecticut, Blakeslee Homestead, ca. 1935.
- Soulsby, Mary, and Clouette, Bruce, Public Archaeology Survey Team, Inc. Report, Archaeological and Historical Documentation, State Project No. 148-127, 1211 Barnes Road, Wallingford, Connecticut, 1993.
- Wallingford Land Records, volume 22/page 39, 22/244, 22/278, 23/128, 25/8, 25/463, 26/271, 26/389, 26/551, 43/4, 96/62, 112/406, 121/215, 172/242, 298/610-612, 306/724, 311/105-121, 499/152, 700/79, 845/159.
- Wallingford Probate Records, distribution No. 206 under estate of John W. Blakeslee, July 4, 1827.

	Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has
x	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-439 Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: #
Prim	ary Location of Additional Data:
	State Historic Preservation Office Other State Agency Federal Agency Local Government University
X	Other: Specify Repository: Public Archaeological Survey Team, Inc, Storrs, CT

OMB 1024-0018

Joseph Blakeslee House, Wallingford, CT

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: 2.44

UTM References: Zone Northing Easting Zone Northing Easting

A 18 4594210 686390 B ___ ____

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary is the border of the 2.44 acres that now go with the house.

Boundary Justification:

While the house was part of a farm of larger size than the present 2.44 acres, most of its farmland now has been developed, terminating visual and historic association with the house.

FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: David F. Ransom, Consultant, reviewed by John F.A. Herzan, National

Register Coordinator

Org.: Architectural Historian

Date: September 1997

Street/#: 334 Avery Heights

City/Town: Hartford

State: CT

ZIP: 06106

Telephone: 860 953-8626

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Photographs

Photograph 1 was copied from Federal Writers Project, Census of Old Buildings in Connecticut, ca.1935, at Connecticut Historical Society. Photographs 2-15 were taken by David F. Ransom in July 1997. Negatives are on file at Connecticut Historical Commission.

Photograph 1 View northwest ca.1935

Photograph 2 Front elevation View west

Photograph 3
Front and north elevations
View southwest

Photograph 4
Window in north elevation
after removal of plywood

Photograph 5
North and west elevations
View southwest

Photograph 6
Detail of Photograph 5

Photograph 7
West and south elevations
View northeast

Photograph 8
South elevation
View northeast

Photograph 9
South front room
View north

Photograph 10
South front room
Front ceiling detail
View east

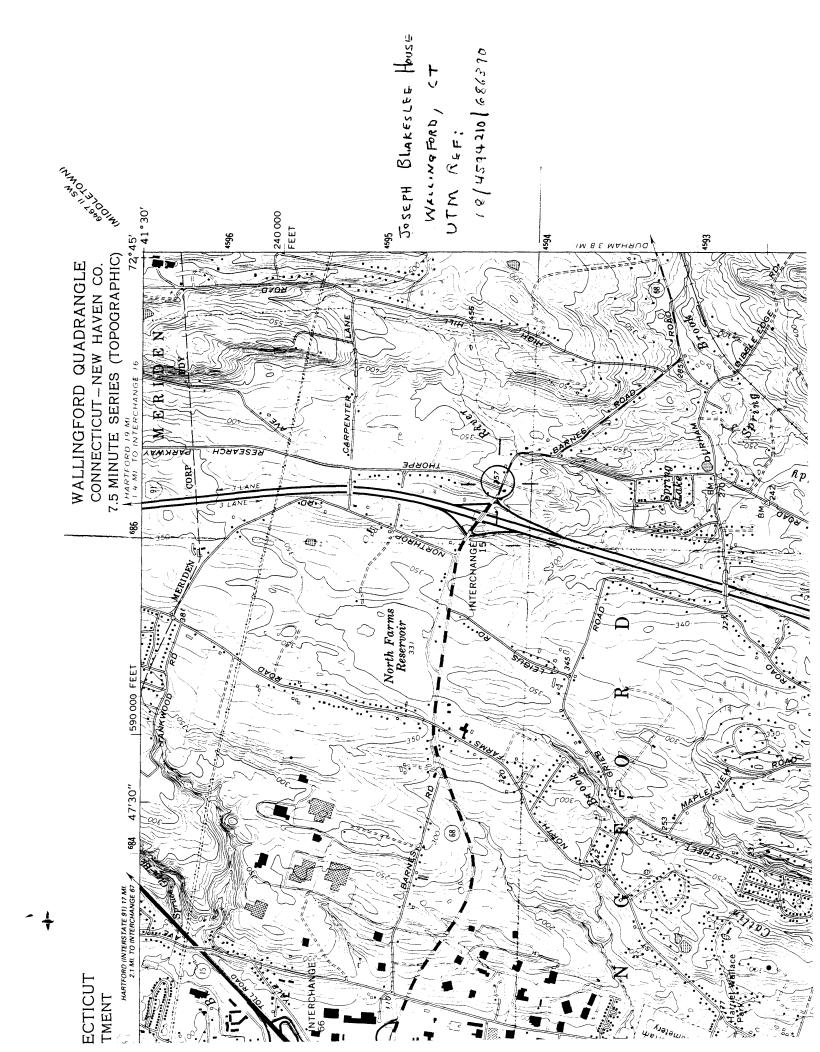
Photograph 11
North front room
View southwest

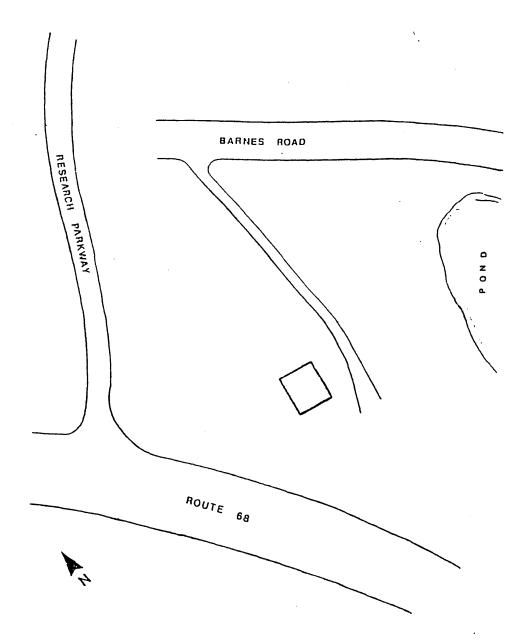
Photograph 12 Kitchen bake oven View east

Photograph 13 Kitchen west wall View southwest

Photograph 14 Ridge

Photograph 15 West cellar wall View northwest





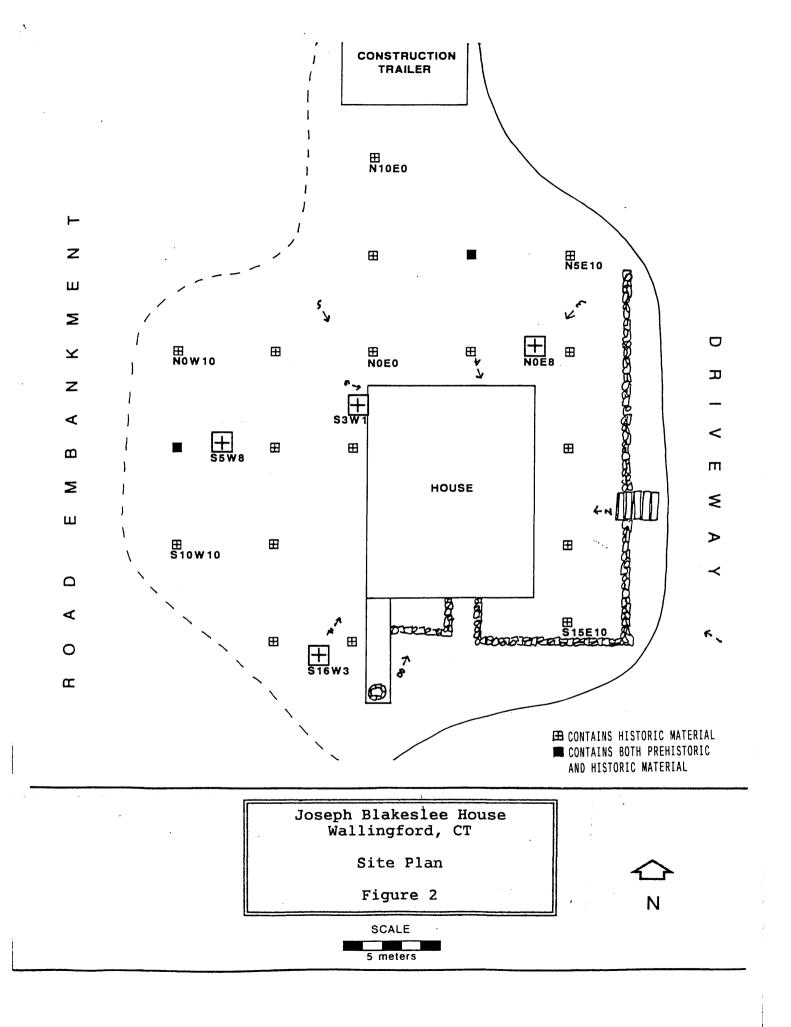
BLAKESLEE HOUSE

1211 Barnes Road Wallingford New Haven County, Connecticut

0 100 FEET **Sketch Map of Site**

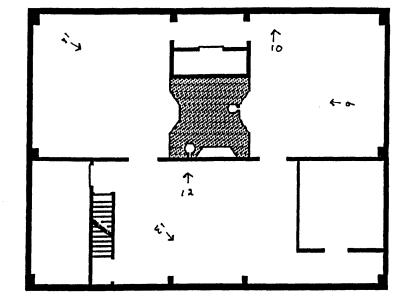
Joseph Blakeslee House Wallingford, CT

Figure 1



Front of House

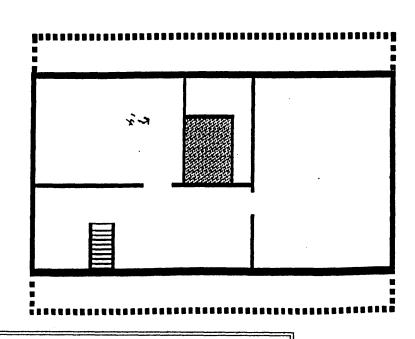






PLAN OF SECOND FLOOR

0 10
Scale in feet



Joseph Blakeslee House Wallingford, CT

Floor Plans

Figure 3