

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

JUN 20 1989

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Hanford Davenport House  
other names/site number Davenport-Green House

2. Location

street & number 353 Oenoke Ridge NA  not for publication  
city, town New Canaan NA  vicinity  
state CT code CT county Fairfield code 001 zip code 06840

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>2</u>	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>2</u>	_____ objects
			_____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing: NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register NA

4. 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.  See continuation sheet.

[Signature] 6/14/89  
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

5. 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] 8/3/89  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Landmarks of New Canaan. New Canaan: New Canaan Historical Society, 1951.

King, Mary Louise. Interview, 27 October 1988.

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 2.7

UTM References

A 

1	8
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6	2	5	5	4	0
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4	<sup>5</sup> 5	7	3	4	0
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Zone      Easting      Northing

C 

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B 

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Zone      Easting      Northing

D 

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is described at the New Canaan Land Records, volume 290, page 445.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary is drawn to encompass the land that now goes with the house and barn.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

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

organization Connecticut Historical Commission date December 4, 1988

street & number 59 South Prospect Street telephone 203 566-3005

city or town Hartford state CT zip code 06106

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south. The east elevation of the ell also has asymmetrical fenestration. (Photograph 5) The foundations of the ell are massive granite blocks, similar to those of the main section, but the sill covers are different, suggesting that the two were not built at the same time, but the cornice of the main block has been carried around the ell, tying the two sections together.

A 2-story bank barn stands northwest of the house in the 2.7-acre grounds. The barn is old, possibly as old as the house. (Photograph 6) Most of the acreage is enclosed with a rail fence whose posts have acorn finials.

The door of the east elevation leads to a small hall whose walls are on the diagonal, tapering toward the chimney, an odd arrangement. (See floor plan.) To the left, the 18' x 18'-drawing room displays an abundance of Adamesque wood carving. The window surrounds have elaborate capitals and cornices, while the fireplace mantel is covered with the familiar ellipses. The 18' x 17'-dining room<sup>2</sup> is equally elaborate, but different. The fluted pilasters and diamond and elliptical motifs of its window surrounds are particularly fine. (Photographs 7, 8, 9)

The door in the south elevation opens to a stair hall, as might be expected from a 3-bay front elevation. A stairway with acorn finial on its newel rises against the west wall, also as might be expected. What is unexpected is the 12-over-12 window across which the stair climbs with a closed string. The raised paneling under the stair looks as though it could date from the 18th century. (Photograph 10) Behind the hall is a small study whose paired windows look out onto the porch. These window surrounds have classical capitals, different from the elaborate Adamesque carving in the drawing and dining rooms. (Photograph 11) At the top of the stair, the door surrounds have square corner blocks, a later 19th-century detail (Photograph 12), but the large master bedroom on the south has another Adamesque mantel. Its north wall is canted, repeating the pattern of the first floor. In the wing there is a small fireplace in the Adamesque manner. (Photograph 13)

In the cellar the base of the chimney of the main block is large but not as massive as 18th-century chimney bases. The base of the ell chimney also is large, larger than anticipated from the size of the chimney visible above the roof, but not massive. Roof framing in the attic consists of long purlins, braced, which support common rafters. The chimney brick exposed in the attic is crumbling from water damage. Roof covering is asphalt shingles over wooden shingles, while the shed roof of the ell is covered with metal (tin).

1. Landmarks of New Canaan, New Canaan: New Canaan Historical Society, 1951, p. 29.

2. The slight difference in size of these two rooms is consistent with

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One of the anomalies is the 12-over-12 window near the stairway. The location of the stair in front of the window raises the question of whether the stairway is added, but there is no indication there ever was another stair, and it is in just the right position for the 3-bay south front elevation. The acorn finial on the newel is perhaps simply a light-hearted late-19th-century change, perhaps concomitant with the simpler window casings in the study and the square corner blocks of the doorway surrounds in the second-floor hall. The rationale for building the study, which prior to the 2-story porch was a 3-sided bay, is elusive.

Whether the ell pre-dates the main block is an unanswered question. It may have been the smithy, or part of it may have been the smithy. The juncture of the ell to the main block has an unfinished look, not in keeping with the general elegance of the house. The fact that the ell has a shed roof is another element in the puzzle. It would be interesting to know what is under the metal roof covering. If the tin is original, it would tend to date the ell in its present configuration from the mid-19th century.

The 20th-century porches have been a successful addition. Heated, they provide sunny living space on the southwest corner. The upper floor serves as a children's bedroom.

The house remained the property of the Davenport family until 1905. It is known locally as the Davenport-Green House because Nathan W. Green was the owner from 1919 to 1955.

The siting of the house at a corner location benefits from the well-landscaped grounds. The curving gravel drive to the old barn is a positive feature. The fine architecture of the building combined with the pictorial character of the site make the property one of outstanding quality.

1. Landmarks of New Canaan, New Canaan: New Canaan Historical Society, 1951, p. 29.

2. The early presence of a smithy on the site was suggested by Mary Louise King, author of Portrait of New Canaan, New Canaan: New Canaan Historical Society, 1981, during an interview 27 October 1988.

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the fact that spacing of the fenestration of the east elevation is not quite the same left and right of the door. (Photograph 2)

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Photographs were taken October 3, 1988, by D.F. Ransom and B.E. Vincent.  
Negatives are on file at Connecticut Historical Commission

Photograph 1  
General view northwest

Photograph 12  
Second floor hall doorway  
Detail

Photograph 2  
South and east elevations  
View northwest

Photograph 13  
Wing, second floor, fireplace  
View northwest

Photograph 3  
West porches and south elevation  
View northeast

Photograph 4  
West elevation  
View northeast

Photograph 5  
East and north elevations  
View southeast

Photograph 6  
Barn  
View northwest

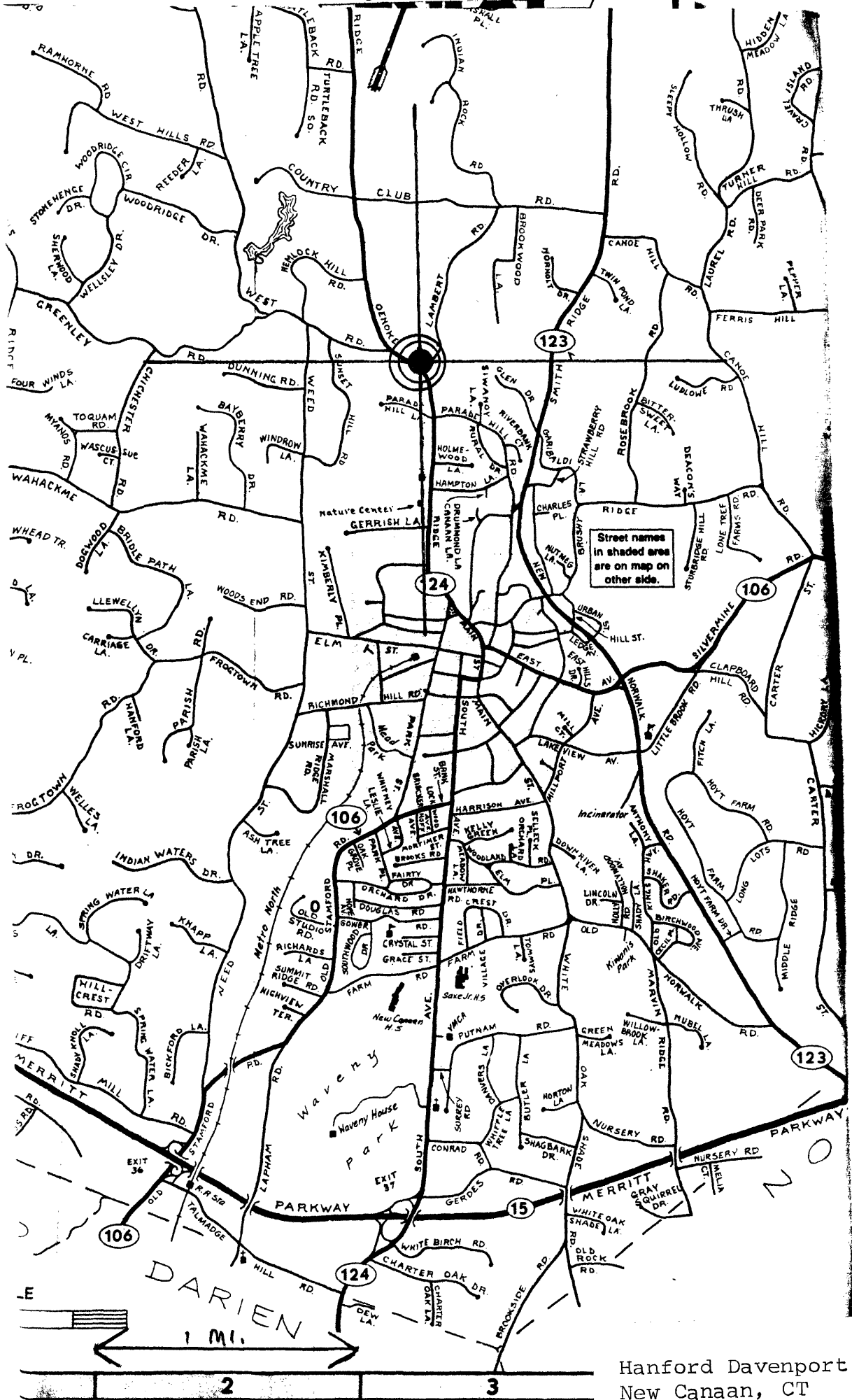
Photograph 7  
Living room  
View southwest

Photograph 8  
Dining room  
View southeast

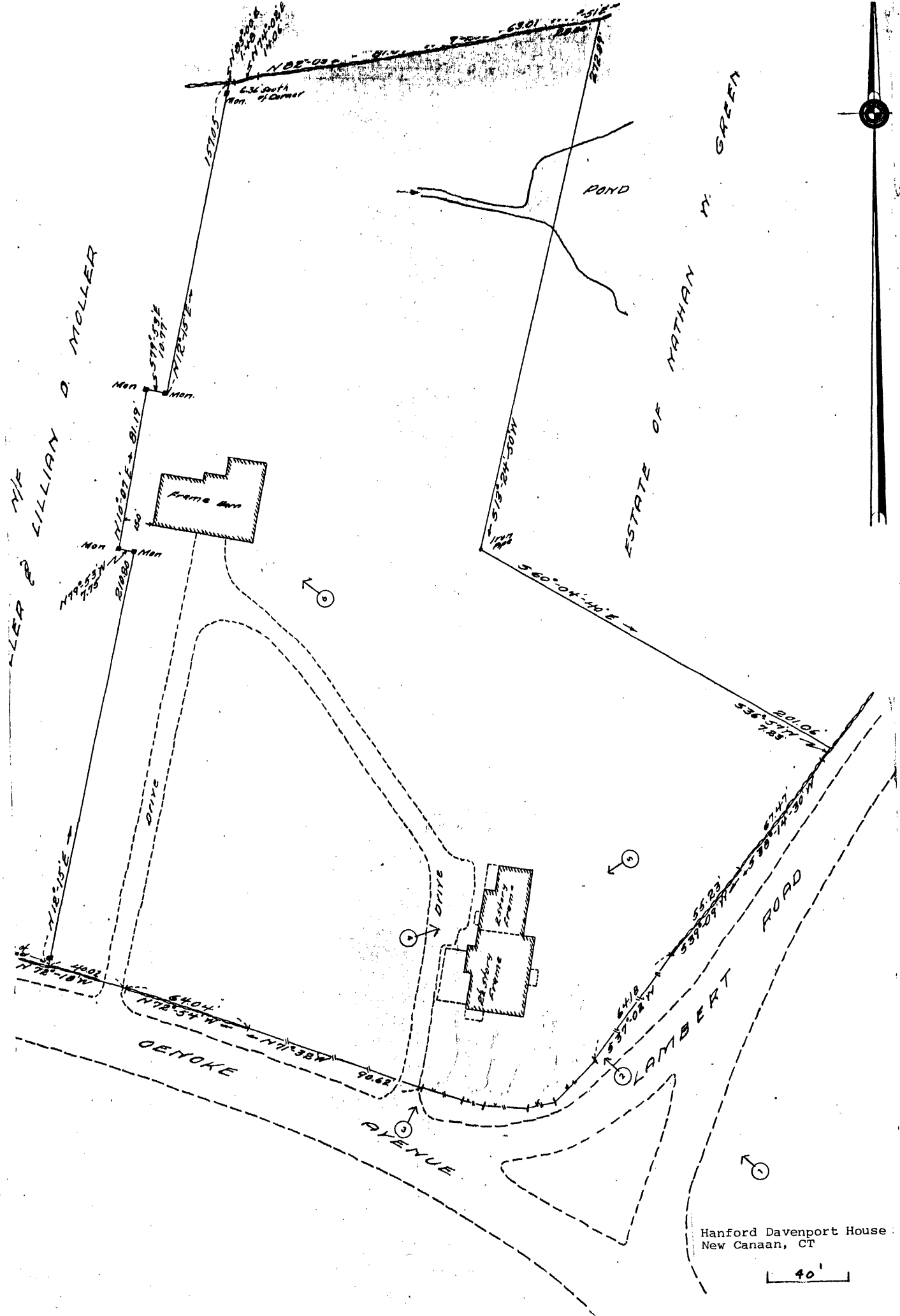
Photograph 9  
Detail of Photograph 8

Photograph 10  
Stairway  
View north

Photograph 11  
Study  
View northwest



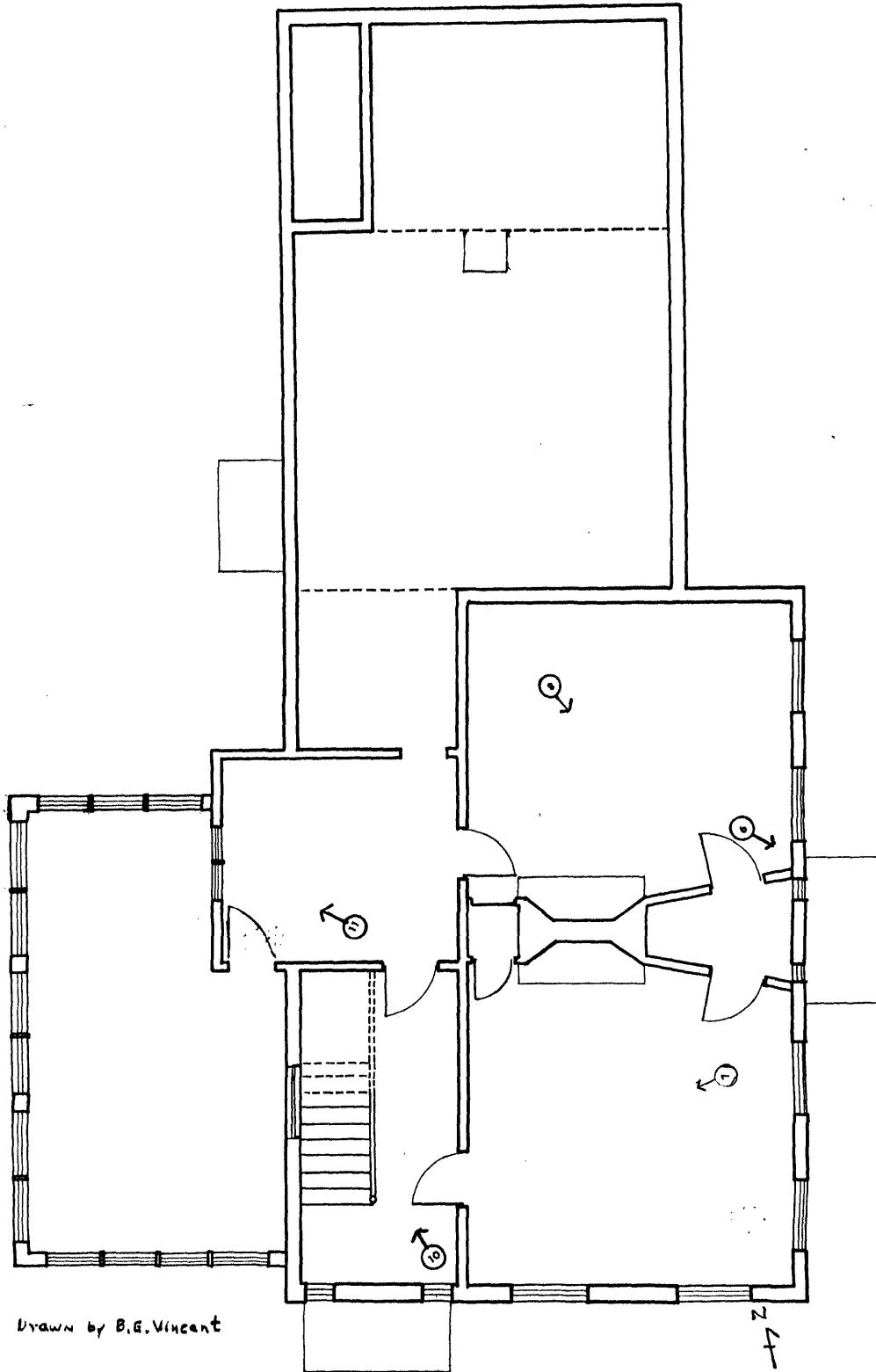
Hanford Davenport House  
New Canaan, CT



Hanford Davenport House  
New Canaan, CT

40'





Drawn by B.G. Vincent

Hanford Davenport House  
New Canaan, CT

10'

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  
Architecture

Period of Significance  
c. 1820 - c. 1920

Significant Dates  
c. 1820

Cultural Affiliation  
NA

Significant Person  
NA

Architect/Builder  
Carver - Hiram Crissey

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Hanford Davenport House is a fine example of the Federal style of architecture, noteworthy for its interior Adamesque carving. The house has developed into the 1920s with several alterations and additions whose sequence and timing are not clear but which are well scaled, with the result that the structure today presents a restrained, formal, and well-proportioned appearance.

Federal-style features of the exterior of the house, which include the coved porticos, side lights and fanlights with iron tracery, molded cornices, and pediments, are well done but of a quality not unusual for the style. It is the interior carving that is above average. The carver was Hiram Crissey (1798-1845), a local man and deacon of the church, known for his great skill in woodworking. Whether Crissey was the builder or just did the carving is not clear. How he happened to acquire his expertise is unknown. Suffice it to say that he did good work. The Annabel House and his own house, both in New Canaan, have comparable interiors by him.

According to one account,<sup>1</sup> the house was built by Hanford Davenport, at the time he married, on his father-in-law's land. Since it was an additional building on an existing parcel, there is no opportunity for confirmation of the event by consulting the land records. There was a prior structure of some sort on the site, that burned, but whether it was a full house or perhaps a smithy<sup>2</sup> (now part of the ell?) is uncertain. The fact that as seen from the east the house has five bays with central chimney does suggest the possibility of a prior 18th-century house, destroyed by fire. Under this theorem, the Federal house was built on the foundations of, and followed the general form of, its Colonial predecessor. But if so, the chimney base probably would be more massive than it is. Also, there is no indication of a prior kitchen fireplace at the back of the central chimney, as commonly found in Colonial structures. The way in which the house developed remains uncertain.

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
DOMESTIC/single dwelling

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Federal

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation granite

walls shingles, wooden

roof shingles, asphalt

other \_\_\_\_\_

### Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Built c. 1820,<sup>1</sup> the Hanford Davenport House is located about one mile north of New Canaan Center on the east side of Oenoke Ridge (Route 124) at the corner of Lambert Road. The house is sited behind a picket fence in spacious well-landscaped grounds. (Photograph 1) The exterior displays characteristic Federal-style features, while the interior has extensive carving in the Adamesque manner. Standing on the site of an earlier building, the main block is 28½' x 40' with a 22' x 30' ell.

There are two front elevations. The 5-bay east elevation, facing Lambert Road (see site plan), is built on massive granite-block foundations with central doorway, central second-floor Palladian window, and central chimney. The two windows on either side at both first and second floors are 12-over-12. Granite steps lead up to the coved portico which protects the door, side lights, and fanlight. A dentil course at the edge of the portico roof works well with the modillion course at the main roof line, which is carried into the raking cornices of the central dormer. A radially glazed semi-elliptical window under key block occupies the tympanum of the dormer. The door on this elevation seldom is used. (Photograph 2)

The second front elevation, facing south, has three bays of the same 12-over-12 windows with a similar portico in the left bay, under a full gable-end pediment. (Photograph 3) The portico and the iron tracery in the side lights and fanlight are more elaborate than on the east elevation. The oversized elliptical window in the pediment has double-hung sash and its muntins are rectangular in section, suggesting that it may not be original. The door in this elevation is the one regularly used.

To the left of this door is a 2-story glazed porch. Its first floor, dating from c. 1920, has the Colonial Revival feature of round posts, while the second floor by its exposed rafter ends displays Arts-and-Crafts influence. The glazing of the porch, seen on the west elevation (Photograph 3), is three groups of three multi-paned windows in the ground floor and six pairs of two above. On this elevation, the rear 22' x 32' ell to the north is visible. It has a 2-story recessed open porch at the corner and a small central chimney. A multi-paned window has been introduced at the first floor, to light the kitchen. (Photograph 4)

In the attic of the north elevation of the main block are two quarter-round radially glazed windows, balancing the large elliptical window at the