

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED FEB 23 1983  
DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Groton Bank Historic District

AND/OR COMMON

Groton Bank/Groton Heights

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

*Roughly bounded by the Thames River, Broad, Cottage, and Latham Sts.*

CITY/TOWN

Groton

0260

NA VICINITY OF

NA NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2nd

STATE

Connecticut

CODE

09

COUNTY

New London

CODE

099E

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED
- N/A

**STATUS**

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

**PRESENT USE**

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Multiple public and private; see Property Owners' List

STREET & NUMBER

"

"

CITY/TOWN

"

N/A VICINITY OF

STATE

"

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Registry of Deeds, Groton Town Hall

STREET & NUMBER

Post Road

CITY/TOWN

Groton

STATE

Connecticut

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE

1967

FEDERAL

STATE

COUNTY

LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress

CITY/TOWN

Washington

D.C.

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Groton Bank National Register Historic District comprises some 130 residential, institutional, and commercial structures ranging in date from the mid-18th century through 1915 and including well-preserved examples of most major 18th- and 19th-century architectural styles. Particularly well-represented are the Greek Revival, Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles, although good examples of the Georgian, Federal, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Shingle and Romanesque styles were also built. The district follows the eastern bank of the Thames River south from Broad Street to Latham Street, extending up the slope of the bank east to Monument Street. It includes both sides of Thames, Broad, Ramsdell and Monument Streets.

The earliest structure at Groton Bank was the Tavern of ferryman Cary Latham (1655). Although the Tavern has been demolished, other early houses, built in the mid-18th century, survive along Thames Street. These include several center chimney Georgian houses, such as the Ensign Avery House (c. 1750), a four bay house with pedimented window surrounds, now located at Fort Griswold State Park (N.R.) but originally sited on Thames Street, and the Parke Avery House (c. 1750, 137 Thames Street, #1). A few early cottages, probably dating after 1781, also survive on Thames Street.

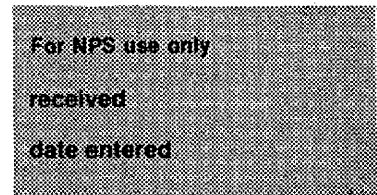
Only a few Federal style houses were built at Groton Bank. Among these are the Major Noyes Barber House (1810), a hip-roofed residence at 88-90 Thames, to which a later projecting pedimented bay has been added, and the Dr. Amos Prentice House (c. 1782, 108 Thames), an early center hall design with a later two-story Greek Revival pedimented portico. The stylistic conservatism of some Groton Bank residences is reflected in the Captain Ebenezer Morgan House (115 Broad), a retardataire hip-roofed, end-chimney Federal/Greek Revival house built in 1851.

Economic activity, which faltered with the effects of the Revolution and War of 1812, picked up with the heyday of the whaling industry after the 1820s. Consequently, many well-detailed examples of the Greek Revival style were built at Groton Bank in the 1830s, '40s and '50s. Most are sidehall plan houses placed gable end on the street, like the William Gray House (1852, 81 Broad Street), a severely classical building with a bold pediment, wide frieze and simple Doric portico. A few more exuberant houses were built in which the geometrically massed Greek Revival form was ornamented with Italianate brackets and verandas with open jig-sawn posts; the Captain Reuben Kelly House (1850, 161 Monument) illustrates this combination well.

At least a few more romantic revival style houses were constructed at Groton Bank, such as the Betsey Perry House (c. 1855, 126 Broad, #15), a whimsical side hall Greek Revival/Italianate house whose deep eaves and jig-sawn pendant bargeboards give it a picturesque chalet look. Another house reflecting the romantic revivals of the mid-century is the Captain John Miner House (c. 1867, 71 Broad), a rare Gothic

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Groton Bank Historic District

Continuation sheet Groton, Connecticut

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<u>Thames Street</u>	<u>Owner of Property</u>	
88-90	C Raymond C. Hester, II 135 Old Colchester Rd., Quaker Hill	Federal, c. 1810
108	C T.A. and H.H. Rice 66 Eastwood Rd., Groton	Georgian, c. 1782
112-114	C Eleanor B. Brennan	Grook Revival, c. 1840
116-118	C Elissa C. Riozzi	Georgian, c. 1750
122	C Steven K. Clark	Italianate, c. 1860
128-132	C Moyna J. Richardson	Gothic/Italianate, c. 1845
132R	C Catherine B. Scheller, Estate of	Workers, c. 1850
142-144	C Copp Associates 154 Thames St., Groton	Georgian/Italianate, c. 1787; c. 1855
154-174	C Joseph A. Copp, et al	Italianate, c. 1847
184	C Margaret E. Wrenn	Stick, c. 1875
188-190	C Herbert R. Kuhn, Jr. Sill Lane, Old Lyme, CT	Greek Revival, c. 1855
198	C Keith L. Rowley	Georgian, c. 1750
202	C Helen Scuris 45 Latham St., Groton	Moderne, c. 1935
208	C E.L. and Mary Labombard 42 Baker Ave., Groton	Italianate, c. 1870
212	C Mabel A. Parks 146 Monument St., Groton	Greek Revival, c. 1840
224	C C.W. and M.A. Gauthier	Queen Anne, c. 1885
230-234	C Robert W. Watrous 36 Morse Ave., Groton	Second Empire, c. 1875
236	C M.H. and C.B. Rice	Queen Anne, c. 1876
242	C Fleet Reserve Association Branch 20	Romanesque, c. 1910
256-258	C L.C. and Laraine Hodges 377 Benham Rd., Groton	Italianate, c. 1875
101	C T.W. and H.L. Berube 17 Laurel Crest Dr., Waterford	Federal, c. 1815 ?
107, 107R	C Ida A. DeNoia 33 Burgess Pl., Groton	Federal cottage, c. 1815
119	C Moyna J. Richardson 128 Thames St., Groton	Queen Anne, c. 1890
125-127	C- NC R.J. and V.M. Ager 100 Eastwood Dr., Groton	125 - Italianate, c. 1850 127 - c. 1970
131	C John W. Presburg	Italianate, c. 1870
137	C Amelia F. Safford	Georgian, 1781
143	C George and A.L. Vail	Georgian cottage, c. 1781
147	C 36 Slocomb Terrace, Groton	Greek Revival, c. 1840
149	C	Greek Revival, c. 1840
151		

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<u>Thames Street</u>		<u>Owner of Property</u>	
155,163	NC	Frank Scheetz, et al Box 591, Route 12, Groton	Italianate commercial c. 1870
157,169			
159,169½			
161,171			
173	C	Local 106, O.P.E.I.U., Inc. Anthony P. Levesque	Italianate, c. 1870 Romanesque, c. 1910
175/7/9			
181	NC	G.F. and Claire Glas 109 Island View Avenue, Mystic	Utilitarian, c. 1950
185	C	Saul J. and Normal Namkin	Greek Revival, c. 1860
189	C	Schania Zelvin 20 Prospect Street, Mystic	Federal, 1817
193	NC	Samuel A. Zelvin	Thames Motel, c. 1965
213	C	Dorothea B. Weiss 145 Washington, Norwich	Romanesque, 1898
217-219	C	O.B. and C.P. Jessee 219 Thames, Groton	Greek Revival, c. 1835
225	C	Vinny Fasseas	Greek Revival, c. 1835
229	C	C., D., K.M. and S. Weiss	Queen Anne, c. 1890
239-241	C	C., D., K.M. and S. Weiss	Romanesque, c. 1910
245	C	Charles, Dorothea, Kevin M. and Samuel Weiss	Queen Anne, c. 1900
247	NC	Alice J. Mabry	Commercial block, c. 1930
249	C	Alice J. Mabry	Queen Anne, c. 1885
253	C	Estate of John P. Lapkowski; Regina B. Lapkowski 459 Hamilton Avenue, Norwich	Queen Anne cottage, c. 1885
257	C	Robert J. and Hazel N. Wekerle 14 Marshall Place, New London	Shingle Style, c. 1890
261-263	C	Russell E. and Bernice K. Case	Shingle Style, c. 1890
265-267	C	Kenneth R. and Beverly L. Mitchum	Georgian, c. 1781
273,279	C	Horace M. and Ellen W. Newburg	Shingle Style, 1902
269	C	Horace M. Newburg	Federal, c. 1823
<u>Broad Street</u>			
16	C	William L. and Elizabeth L. Owens	Colonial Revival, c. 1910
22	C	James R. Edwards	Colonial Revival, c. 1890
34, 30R	C, NC	Mildred Stefanelli	Colonial Revival, c. 1910
50	C	John S. and Carolyn M. Orkney	Second Empire, c. 1875
76	C	Groton Heights Baptist Church (c.1965 addition, non-contributing)	Italianate, 1872
98	C	Francis F. and Margaret O. Horan	Colonial Revival, c. 1900
114	C	Charles W. Newburg, Jr.	Federal cottage, c. 1800
88	C	Wilson Allen House	Second Empire, c. 1871

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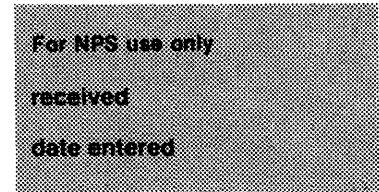
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date entered

<u>Broad Street</u>		<u>Owner of Property</u>	
126	C	Philip H. and Elizabeth S. Tuthill	Italianate, c. 1855
29	C	Judith C. Chester	Greek Revival. c. 1844
35	C	Pedro L. Schellens	Colonial Revival, c. 1925
41	C	William A. and Gladys V. Signs	Gothic Revival, c. 1840
45	C	Isabel Adams (Mrs. Wm. A.) 12 Burgess Place, Groton	Greek Revival, c. 1845
55	C	Annie D. Thompson	Greek Revival, c. 1843
65	C	Lewis P. Bailey	Greek Revival, 1842
71	C	Stephen E. and Mary A. Eaves	Gothic Revival, c. 1867
77	C	Carbon P. and Phyllis E. Dimpsey	Italianate, c. 1850
81	C	Mary Gray Dey Box 1011, New Brunswick, N.J. 08903	Greek Revival, 1852
91	C	Walter M. and Margaret A. Brown	Greek Revival, c. 1844
99	C	Edward H. and Elizabeth J. Miller	Greek Revival, 1850
109	NC	Mary T. Ganacopolos	Garrison Colonial, c. 1960
115	C	Joseph J. and Marjorie L. Terani	Greek Revival, 1851
125	C	Elphege J. and Laurette Collin 146 Allen Street, Groton	Greek Revival, c. 1845
<u>School Street</u>			
60	C	Susan B. Chapman	Gothic/Italianate cottage, c. 1860
68	C	Wallace M., Jr. and Phyllia G. Richardson	Gothic/Italianate cottage, c. 1860
74	C	Camille and Angeline E. Brilliant	Queen Anne, c. 1890
80	C	Harvey C. and Catherine P. Lange	Shingle Style, c. 1890
86	C	Anthony and Nancy A. Demarinis	Queen Anne, c. 1885
96	C	Marie E. MacGillis	Italianate, c. 1860
59	C	Peter and Anna James 7 Tormberg Lane, Groton	Gothic/Italianate cottage, c. 1860
67	C	Elbridge W. and Cherie A. Luther Margaret Lane, Groton	Stick Style, c. 1880
79	C	Thomas and Matilda Logan	Italianate, c. 1875
<u>Monument Street</u>			
96	C	Harriette S. Adams	Queen Anne cottage, c.1890
102	C	L.Norman and Catherine H. Nicholson	Italianate, c. 1876
112	C	Marcia Spakoski	Italianate, c. 1874
118	C	Harriette S. Adams 96 Monument Street, Groton	Greek Revival, c. 1860
128	C	Malcolm M. and Evelyn A. Cordman	Gothic Revival cottage, c. 1860
130	C	Marshall and Elizabeth Burghardt	Italianate, 1872

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<u>Monument Street</u>		<u>Owner of Property</u>	
136	C	Mabel A. Parks 146 Monument Street, Groton	Greek Revival, c. 1855
146	C	Mabel A. Parks	Second Empire, 1873
154	C	George A. and Patricia M. Marguardt	Second Empire, 1873
162	C	First Church of Christ	Craftsman/Gothic, 1902
184	C	Philip W. and Loretta G. Fogg	Queen Anne cottage, c.1890
192	C	Robert J. and Donna H. Randall	Italianate, c. 1866
202	C	First Church of Christ (Parsonage)	Colonial Revival, c. 1910
236	C	Bill Memorial Public Library	Richardsonian Romanesque, 1896; 1909
95	C	Gerald O. Maranda	Italianate, 1851
103	C	Ethelbert Sanders	Greek Revival, 1856
107	C	Eliot Hagar 263 Montauk Avenue, New London	Queen Anne, c. 1890
111	C	Courtland E. and Helen W. Sweet	Greek Revival, c. 1858
119	C	George, Jr. and Mary A. Gregory	Gothic Revival, c. 1860
131	C	Eliot Hagar 263 Montauk Avenue, New London	Italianate, c. 1865
141	C	James L. and Florence N. Mann	Gothic Revival, c. 1860
149	C	Robert O. and Marylou Hauptman 178 Shore Avenue, Groton	Greek Revival, 1854
161	C	First Church of Christ 162 Monument Street, Groton	Greek Revival, c. 1850
163		Phyllis W. Gill	
169	C	First Church of Christ 162 Monument Street, Groton	Queen Anne, c. 1885
241	C	Lavinia K. Robinson	Eclectic; C. 1852 (?) c. 1870, c. 1915

Meridian Street

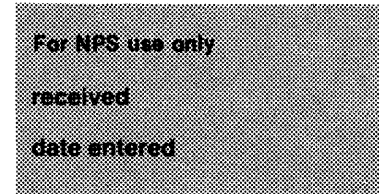
5      C      Thomas H. and Rosemarie Althuis      Queen Anne, c. 1894

Ramsdell Street

18	NC	Orville P. Lamb, Jr.	Cape, c. 1950
24	C	Will Holmes and Nazerah Packer	Queen Anne, c. 1895
30	C	Margaret F. Gillogly	Queen Anne, c. 1890
36	C	Kenneth A. and Peggy S. MaGowen	Colonial Revival, c. 1900
42	C	Murray A. and Barbara L. Frucht	Colonial Revival, c. 1900
46	C	Horace L. and Mildred F. Barnum	Colonial Revival, c. 1900
52-54	C	Lucino L. and Dora L. Farwell	Queen Anne, c. 1895
60	C	Marcia Spakoski	Queen Anne, c. 1899
68	C	Bernice A. Mitchell	Queen Anne, c. 1885

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Ramsdell Street

74	C	Ronald S. Wood	Queen Anne, 1893
80	C	Gilvie H. and Helen M. Huntley	Queen Anne, 1893
92	C	Richard W., Jr. and Marcella G. Emery	Queen Anne, c. 1890
11	C	Lucy E. and Viola M. Doyle	Greek Revival, c. 1840
19	C	Robert D., Jr. and Caroline P. Greene 1197 North Rd., R.D. 1, Ledyard	Queen Anne, c. 1890
21R	C	Wayne G. and Carolyn C. Scott	Queen Anne, c. 1900
45	C	Harry C. and Dorcas W. Brogan	Italianate, c. 1880
51	C	Robert W. and Cynthia B. Allyn	Greek Revival, c. 1860
59		Joseph A. Copp, et al 154 Thames Street, Groton	
67	C	Edward K. and Kathryn A. Schenk	Queen Anne, c. 1890
84	C		Queen Anne, c. 1885

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Report of Historic District Study Committee  
1977 Local  
Planning and Zoning Commission, City of Groton  
Groton, Connecticut

State Register of Historic Places  
Date: 1982 State Survey  
Connecticut Historical Commission  
Hartford, CT



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Revival cottage. A cross-gabled house with a steeply-pitched roof-line, it retains its original jig-sawn bargeboards.

In addition to these more unusual houses, a number of Italianate houses were built in the late 1850s and '60s at Groton Bank. Earlier examples exhibit a four-square form with low hipped roofs crowned by square belvederes. The Colonel Hubbard Morgan House (c. 1860, 96 School, #18) is one such example. The Latham Avery House (c. 1865, 154 Thames, #3, #4, #5) illustrates another version; in that house, the traditional Georgian, five-bay, center-hall plan is updated with wide overhanging, bracketted eaves, polygonal bays, jig-sawn trim and verandas. The Latham Avery House is exceptional in that it retains all of its original finish, as well as a full complement of original outbuildings, intact.

The most monumental Italianate building at Groton Bank is the Groton Heights Baptist Church (1872, 76 Broad, #13) with wide bracketted eaves and asymmetrical square towers flanking the entrance. Later in the century, a few Stick Style and Second Empire houses were built. The James Patterson House (c. 1875, 184 Thames, #9) retains a variety of sawn, molded, incised and gouged wooden trim, including elaborate gable screens. Mansard roofs began to be used at Groton Bank in the 1870s. The Wilson Allyn House (1871, 88 Broad) was originally built as a center entrance Second Empire structure but was later remodelled in the Colonial Revival style; the James Morgan House (1875, 50 Broad, #13) is a well-preserved example of the Second Empire style with a bellcast mansard roof, ornamental dormers, bracketted eaves and polygonal bays. Its mansard-roofed stable survives at the rear.

In the 1880s and '90s, suburban Queen Anne houses were built along Ramsdell, Broad and Monument Streets. The most ambitious of these is the Deacon Thomas Miner House (c. 1894, 5 Meridian, #17) on the corner of Monument Street. It is a well-preserved house with the Queen Anne style's typical complex massing, variety of wall surfaces and materials, and exuberant wooden trim. Simpler Queen Anne houses with polygonal bays, cross-gables and verandas with turned and molded trim are found along Ramsdell Street (#22).

Other types of structures constructed at the end of the 19th century include well-detailed commercial buildings along Thames Street as well as several impressive architect-designed institutional structures. One particularly well-preserved commercial block stands at 213 Thames: a three-story brick building, it has a heavily-corbelled cornice with a center date block reading "1898" (#10, distance). Several other more

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utilitarian three-story brick blocks were built along Thames Street at the turn of the century along with a number of simple, two-story wooden buildings with Queen Anne style storefronts (#10). The Bill Memorial Library (1890, 1909, 236 Monument, #19), designed by Worcester, Massachusetts architect Stephen C. Earle, is one of Groton Bank's most pretentious buildings. Built in the Richardsonian Romanesque style of rock-faced granite with sandstone trim, it is complexly massed with polygonal turrets, gables and porches. The interior is particularly well-preserved with all of its original oak woodwork and furnishings and handsomely-finished gauged brick fireplaces, mosaic tiled floors and elaborate wrought-iron hardware (#20).

From a design standpoint, the First Congregational Church (1902, 162 Monument, architect unknown, #17) is a more successfully integrated design than the Library. It is a handsome Gothic Revival structure with an offset tower and low sloping roof. Constructed of random rubble fieldstone, it features four gargoyles at the tower roof. The interior is well-preserved and includes at least one Tiffany window.

Around the turn of the century, substantial shingled houses with Colonial Revival detailing began to be built. Houses in this style include single-family houses, such as the Charles White House (c. 1895, 98 Broad), as well as one imposing multiple-unit building, the gambrel-roofed Shingle Style/Colonial Revival rowhouse at 269 Thames (1902, #12). By 1915, much of Groton Bank had been developed and few buildings were constructed after that time. In many instances, houses have been re-sided and some have had other alterations, such as porch enclosures. One of the few contributing buildings built after 1915 is an ambitious Colonial Revival house with Georgian detailing (c. 1925, 45 Ramsdell).

There are very few non-contributing structures within the district. The most seriously disruptive structure within the district is an addition to the Groton Heights Baptist Church appended to the original Italianate church building (now a gym) c. 1965. Constructed of brick, and hence unsympathetic to the wooden original building, the new church (non-contributing) is designed in a low, spare, angular neo-Colonial style wholly out of keeping with the massing and design of the Italianate church of 1872. The only structure intruding on the district (but which is not included within the boundaries) is a motel on Thames Street, a two-story concrete block building (c. 1960) set perpendicular to the street. Despite these buildings, Groton Bank remains a cohesive and varied neighborhood with a solid core of well-preserved 18th-, 19th- and early 20th-century buildings.

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Boundary Justification:

The boundaries of the Groton Bank NR Historic District are based on the 1868 atlas (New London County Atlas; Beers, Ellis and Soule) which identifies the core of development at that time as concentrated along Thames, Broad (Old King's Road) and Monument (Prospect) Streets. The 1868 date reflects the end of the period of highest economic activity in the area, the period of c. 1820-60 when whaling and maritime-related industry was at its peak. The map shows the greatest concentration of well-developed Greek Revival and Italianate houses which are the district's most cohesive architectural grouping and which were built within the time span c. 1820-60. This area also identifies the section historically related to the neighborhood's 17th-century settlement around the ferry terminus.

Later houses falling within the U-shaped area defined on the 1868 map are included within the district as contributing structures because they are for the most part good quality examples of later 19th-century residential architecture and perpetuate the area's identity as a quality residential neighborhood: in other words, streets which were in 1868 the focus of high-quality suburban development remained so through the turn of the 20th-century. Later residential development on School, Pleasant and Fort (Fort Hill) Streets includes a higher proportion of later, more modest and less well-developed Colonial Revival, Bungalowoid and Prairie Style single and two-family houses. Similar construction characterizes the rest of the area north and south of the district. Inclusion of such development near the core would theoretically necessitate including the entire area bounded by Mitchell, Baker and Bridge Streets (see 1961 Base Map), thereby weakening the integrity of the core.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES                      N/A                      BUILDER/ARCHITECT                      N/A

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Groton Bank is a well-preserved neighborhood of 18th- and 19th-century residential and commercial buildings located along the bank of the Thames River. Historically it is a community closely related to the maritime activities which have supported the southeastern Connecticut region since the 17th century: though secondary to the region's pre-eminent seaports (New London and Stonington), Groton Bank has been a center for shipbuilding since the end of the 17th century while, in the 19th century, many Groton residents were engaged in the fishing and whaling industries (Criterion A). The area is also significant as the site of Groton's earliest settlement and of colonial Fort Griswold (N.R.), besieged by the British, September 6, 1781, in Connecticut's most celebrated Revolutionary War skirmish (Criterion A). Architecturally, Groton Bank is significant for its well-preserved grouping of structures, which include characteristic 18th- and 19th-century vernacular buildings along with representative Federal, Greek Revival, Italianate, Stick, Queen Anne and Colonial Revival style institutional, commercial and residential buildings (Criterion C).

Groton Bank is one of southeastern Connecticut's earliest settlements. In 1655, only ten years after the founding of New London, Cary Latham established a ferry across the Thames, linking New London with southeastern Connecticut; Latham built a tavern on the eastern bank around which the settlement of Groton Bank, then a part of New London, grew. New London's geographical advantages have influenced Groton's growth from the beginning: in addition to possessing Connecticut's best harbor, its location at the junction of the Thames and Long Island Sound made New London a critical link in coastal trade with the hinterland. In connection with these natural advantages, several shipyards were founded along the riverbank at Groton Bank late in the 17th century, spurring local development. (It should be noted that the riverbank area probably retains potentially significant archaeological evidence of 17th-century shipyards.) Although the region grew slowly, Groton Bank continued to benefit from the strengths of its neighbor, New London, sharing in New London's maritime and trading prosperity and, in 1702, the settlement at Groton had grown sufficiently for its residents to be granted permission to separate from the First Church of New London. In the classic pattern of New England town settlement, a meetinghouse was constructed (on Thames Street) and three years later, Groton became incorporated as a separate town.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Beers, Ellis and Soule, New London County Atlas, 1868.  
 Federal Writers' Project, Connecticut: A Guide to Its Roads, Lore and People (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1938).  
 \_\_\_\_\_, Report of the Historic District Study Committee, Groton, 1977.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 50

QUADRANGLE NAME New London

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,8 | 7,4,4 | 3,6,0 | 4,5 | 8,2 | 6,8,0

B 1,8 | 7,4,4 | 3,4,0 | 4,5 | 8,2 | 0,2,0

C 1,8 | 7,4,4 | 1,6,0 | 4,5 | 8,2 | 0,0,0

D 1,8 | 7,4,3 | 9,8,0 | 4,5 | 8,2 | 3,2,0

E 1,8 | 7,4,3 | 9,6,0 | 4,5 | 8,1 | 9,8,0

F 1,8 | 7,4,3 | 9,0,0 | 4,5 | 8,1 | 9,8,0

G 1,8 | 7,4,3 | 8,0,0 | 4,5 | 8,2 | 2,8,0

H 1,8 | 7,4,3 | 8,4,0 | 4,5 | 8,2 | 6,4,0

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Outlined in black on Base Map (1961, Groton Planning Department, 1:400).

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Sarah J. Zimmerman, Consultant, edited by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

ORGANIZATION

Connecticut Historical Commission

DATE

January 1981

STREET & NUMBER

59 South Prospect Street

TELEPHONE

203 56633005

CITY OR TOWN

Hartford

STATE

Connecticut

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



TITLE Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

DATE February 16, 1983

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Entered in the  
National Register

DATE

3/24/83

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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Thames Street, running alongside the River, developed as the residential, commercial and industrial center of the community and remained so through the 18th century. Broad Street (the "Road to Stonington") formed the northern boundary of activity. The region's economy and population continued to grow during the 18th century and New London remained one of Connecticut's largest and most important cities. Commensurate with the region's fortunes, Groton Bank grew apace. As the topography of the Bank was too steep to support agricultural cultivation, the settlement's economy continued to be based on maritime and commercial activity. In other parts of Groton, to the east, farms were established and the small crossroads villages still evident today grew but Thames Street remained the town's institutional and commercial focus with the meeting-house and stores located there. Several modest mid- to late 18th-century central and paired chimney houses and cottages still stand on Thames Street and testify, in their closeness to each other and to the street, to the densely-settled character of 18th-century Thames Street, a quality it retains today; these include the Parke Avery House (c. 1750, 137 Thames), the Anna Warner Bailey House (1782, 108 Thames) and the gambrel-roofed house at 116-118 Thames Street (c. 1750).

During the Revolutionary War, privateering became a profitable enterprise for the region's mariners. In anticipation of British reprisals, forts were constructed at New London and Groton: only Fort Griswold, above Groton Bank, was completed in September, 1781, when Benedict Arnold and a force of British Regulars attacked New London hoping to distract Washington, then marching south to Yorktown. The ensuing battle at Fort Griswold, in which Colonel William Ledyard and many Groton Bank men were killed, occupies an important place in Connecticut's military history; a granite obelisk, raised in 1830, commemorates the event. The earthen fortifications are preserved at Fort Griswold State Park (N.R.) which stands just outside the district boundaries.

Before they withdrew, the British burned much of the settlement at Groton Bank. Recovery from that disaster seems to have been slow since extensive reconstruction was not immediate. In the rebuilding, center chimney houses like 198 Thames Street continued to be constructed along with a few center hall houses (142 Thames) but such late 18th-century houses are rare, as are Federal style houses (e.g. the hip-roofed Noyes Barber House, 1810, 90 Thames). Regionally, the effects of the Revolution curtailed growth. It was not until the establishment of the whaling industry after 1784 that prosperity slowly returned. As it traditionally had, New London's success (it was the third largest whaling port in New England) brought similar good fortune to Groton Bank. In 1838, some 300 Groton men were engaged at sea and many Groton

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Bank mariners distinguished themselves by their courage and ambition.<sup>1</sup> In 1865, Captain Ebenezer Morgan in his ship "Pioneer" brought home a \$150,000 cargo of whale oil and bone, thereby realizing a 300% profit on the voyage; Captain James Buddington salvaged the ice-bound British<sub>2</sub> frigate "Resolute" in 1855, returning her safely to New London harbor.<sup>2</sup> Another Groton skipper, Captain Joseph Holmes, doubled Cape Horn 83 times, supposedly more times than any man afloat.<sup>3</sup> The good fortune of these seacaptains is evidenced in the many ambitious Greek Revival and Italianate houses built at Groton Bank in the 1830s and '40s. The brick sidehall Greek Revival house of Captain Waterman Buddington (1844, 91 Broad Street), a whaling captain who also served in the Connecticut legislature, is one of the most imposing of these; at least a half dozen other Greek Revival, Italianate or belated Federal style houses are associated with whaling captains while similar houses were being built by local tradesmen and craftsmen whose fortunes prospered with the burgeoning whaling industry.

Groton Bank retained an important position in the social and economic hierarchy of Groton's several dispersed communities through the 19th century. During the latter half of the 19th century, the upper slopes of the Bank became the town's foremost residential section with the substantial and well-detailed Stick, Queen Anne, Shingle Style and Colonial Revival houses of Groton's leading citizens located along Thames, Broad, Ramsdell and Monument Streets. Several impressive institutional structures constructed at the end of the 19th century further demonstrate the neighborhood's prominence within the town. The Richardsonian Romanesque Bill Memorial Library (1890), the work of Worcester architect, Stephen C. Earle, is an unusual local example of the style. Although its proportions and massing are somewhat less than ideal, the Library is a representative example demonstrating the popularity of the style. The design choice was undoubtedly conditioned by the existence of two Richardsonian buildings in New London (Union Station, 1885, H.H. Richardson; Public Library, c. 1888, Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge) and as such is an interesting instance of Groton's continued dependence on New London. Other important institutional buildings include the fieldstone Gothic Revival First Congregational Church (architect unknown, 1902) and the Italianate Groton Heights Baptist Church (1872). The move of the First Church from Thames Street to Monument Street marks the arrival of the upper slopes of the bank as a fashionable residential area.

As the upper slopes became increasingly suburban, Thames Street acquired a dense, almost urban demeanor with two- and three-story Queen Anne shops and Romanesque commercial blocks hard by substantial Greek

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Revival and Italianate houses and more recently-constructed Stick Style, Queen Anne and Shingle Style single and multiple-family dwellings. Well into the 20th century, Thames Street remained an important commercial district with grocery stores, laundries, butcher shops, tobacconists and others located along the way.

Today, Groton Bank is the most densely-settled, well-preserved and architecturally-diverse 18th- and 19th-century neighborhood in Groton. It is the tightly knit character of this early riverside village with its well-detailed suburban dwellings located above the compact and varied streetscape of Thames Street that the Groton Bank National Register Historic District recognizes.

1. Federal Writers' Project, CONNECTICUT: A GUIDE TO ITS ROADS, LORE, AND PEOPLE (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1938), p. 156.
2. Ibid., p. 156.
3. Ibid., p. 156.