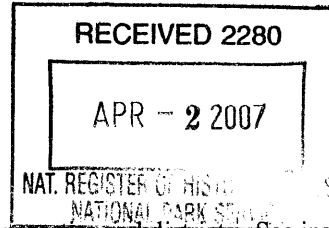


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



**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 Parmelee House

other names/site \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Location**


street & number 4 Beckwith Road N/A not for publication

city or town Killingworth vicinity N/A

state Connecticut code CT county Middlesex code 007 zip code 06419

**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.)

 \_\_\_\_\_ 3-29-07  
Signature of certifying official Date  
Karen Se nich, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, 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

Parmelee House  
Name of Property

Middlesex County, 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): \_\_\_\_\_

for  
Signature of the Keeper Edson H. Beall Date of Action 5.15.07

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

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

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources)

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> sites
<u>3</u>	<u>1</u> structures
	<u>1</u> objects
	<u>1</u> Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural outbuilding

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)  
DOMESTIC/single dwelling/secondary structure

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)  
COLONIAL/Postmedieval English

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)  
foundation stone  
walls weatherboard  
roof asphalt shingle  
other brick

**Narrative Description**

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

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Parmelee House, Killingworth, Middlesex County, CT**

**Section 7 Page 1**

**Description**

The Parmelee House, a vernacular Colonial dating from about 1770, is located on Beckwith Road just about 300 feet south of the Killingworth-Durham Road (State Route 148). Built into the side of a hill on the east side of this partially paved road, the building faces almost due west (Photograph 1). Dry-laid stone walls run along the road in front of the house and along the north and east property lines. Except for clearings around the house and barn, much of this six-acre rural property has reverted to woodland (See Exhibit A for the site plan). The surrounding area, which remains quite rural and sparsely populated even today, includes the Chatfield Hollow State Park to the southwest and a section of the Cockaponset State Forest to the southeast.

The Parmelee House has a five-bay, gable-roofed main block (38' x 26') with modern intersecting gabled additions and porches at the rear (Exhibit B; Photographs 2, 3, 4). Because of the terrain, the original main block is two stories at the front and only one story above grade along the rear elevation, which has a full-height stone foundation wall. There are stepped down foundation returns at both ends, and a high retaining wall that extends out from the south elevation. The latter wall forms a terrace southeast of the house, now the location of a non-contributing, in-ground swimming pool. Contributing resources include a c.1880 barn behind the house, which sits on a terrace set off by a low stone wall (Photograph 5), and a stone-lined well located between the house and the barn.

The main entrance to the house, which is centered in the façade at grade, has a slightly recessed double-leaf door, surmounted by an eight-pane transom (Photograph 6). A small porch shelters a side entrance near the rear (northeast) corner. Set into the partial foundation wall there, it provides access to stairs to both levels. The upper levels, which have the form and fenestration pattern of a Colonial Cape, display the typical small fixed eave windows characteristic of that style only in the south elevation. Similar windows in the peaks have been replaced by slightly larger multi-pane windows, which match gable windows in the rear additions. The pronounced facade overhang is accentuated by the wide trim board; the latter detail also extends across the end elevations. Plain boards also frame doors and the six-over-six, double-hung sash windows and define the outside corners and sills of the main block. Wooden brackets detail the fascia boards under the eaves, features that may have been added during the twentieth-century renovations.

In what would be the cellar of a more typical Colonial, rooms on either side of an entry hall are accessed by four-panel passage doors. For purposes of this nomination, these rooms, which, according to local lore, may once have served as a tavern, are designated by direction. The south front room, now a bedroom, has a cooking hearth with a stone beehive oven on the right (Photograph 7). Granite cheeks and lintels frame the almost square firebox (37" x 36" x 19") and the opening to the oven. The plain surround consists of beaded-edge boards and a high mantel board. Support for the fireplace hearth in the room above is similar to the type commonly found in colonial cellars, in which a secondary beam carries plank outriggers originating at the chimney girt. But here the supporting planks extend upward from an extra beam mortared into the exposed chimney breast and rest on the chimney girt, which is located about two feet into the room. Although the north front room has no fireplace, it has a similar arrangement for hearth support, and an unusually wide board-and-batten door (44") on the west (rear) wall. Exceptionally heavy timbers that carry the second floor are exposed in both front rooms: 8" x 8" joists run lengthwise (35" o.c.) and are tenoned into square mortises in the 8" x 10" girts and plates.

The arrangement of the rooms at the second level is more typical of the first-floor plan of a conventional colonial house: the keeping room at the rear and the parlor and hall on either side of the chimney stack. The keeping room fireplace has a paneled chimney breast and a shallower Rumford-type fireplace, also with granite checks and lintel (Photograph 8). Here, however, the beehive oven, which is concealed behind a paneled door, was constructed of brick. The back wall of this

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Parmelee House, Killingworth, Middlesex County, CT**

**Section 7 Page 2**

room now opens down into a large living room with another fireplace. The floor of this newer living space is almost two feet lower than that of the keeping room. The front rooms, which have also have Rumford fireboxes with granite cheeks and lintels, have slightly more formal fireplace surrounds with edge moldings (Photographs 9, 10). In the original parlor on the north side, the frieze board is elaborated with applied moldings in a diamond pattern reminiscent of the Federal period. Corner posts and attic floor joists there are exposed. Like the joists in the keeping room, these hewn timbers run across the width of the house. In the hall (south front room) the framing is concealed by the plastered ceiling and there is a cupboard above the mantel on the left side.

In the attic, rooms on each end of the house are connected by a north-south hallway, with an exposed stone chimney on the west wall (Photographs 11, 12). Wide chestnut floor boards are fastened with hand-headed slit nails throughout. The exposed framing members, which are hand hewn, are slightly lighter at this level, but joists and collar beams still measure about 5"x 6" and posts about 6"x 6." Principal rafters (31" o.c.) are mortised into a ridge beam, indicating that the roof may have been replaced sometime after 1830. Prior to that time, common and principal rafters were generally half lapped together at the ridge.

**Parmelee House**

Name of Property

**Middlesex County, 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.)

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- 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 \_\_\_\_\_

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Parmelee House, Killingworth, Middlesex County, CT**

**Section 8 Page 1**

**Statement of Significance**

Through its association with one of the founding families of Killingworth, the Parmelee House reflects the historical development pattern of much of rural Connecticut (Criterion A). The generally well-preserved Parmelee House has considerable architectural significance as a rare type of domestic colonial architecture (Criterion C). Built into a sloping site, utilizing a form and framing system that appear to be based on agricultural construction precedents, this vernacular dwelling may once have served as an outbuilding.

**Historical Background and Significance**

Killingworth, which originally included the Town of Clinton, was established in 1667. Settlement began near a natural harbor on Long Island Sound, in what is now the historic town center of Clinton. John Parmele [sic], the progenitor of the family associated with the house, was one of the first proprietors. By 1716 population pressures forced the division and settlement of the inland valleys. Nathaniel Parmelee, an early settler in the back country, variously known as the Pine Orchard or Union District, was also instrumental in the founding of a second Congregational Church society or parish there in 1730. Although there was some agitation for separate towns by the end of the century, the community was not divided until 1838. The North Parish retained the town records and the original name of Killingworth, and the older southern society was renamed Clinton.

The chain of title for the Parmelee House illuminates the social and economic conditions that prevailed in rural Connecticut from the post Revolutionary period well into the twentieth century. With rocky soil and little land suitable for cultivation, subsistence farming was the norm. Generations of Parmelee sons left the area; the nominated property changed hands many times, and for a period of more than 30 years was owned by neighboring farmers. Killingworth, which was particularly affected by population losses from out migration, as well as declining birth and marriage rates in the later nineteenth century, dropped from a high of almost 2500 in 1830 to a low of 582 in 1890. By the early 1900s farms left in the hands of widows or unmarried daughters often were sold to become seasonal retreats for urban dwellers.

The first recorded mention of the building as a dwelling occurred in 1787, when Ezra Parmelee sold the property to Abel Nettleton with a house and barn "lately occupied by my son Oliver" (Killingworth Land Records [KLR]13:47) When Ezra had purchased the property in 1770, part of the former homestead of Nathaniel Watrous, no dwelling was mentioned. Instead it was described as "8 ½ acres with buildings fruit trees and fences" (KLR 10:275). Nettleton only held the property for a year before selling it back to another member of the Parmelee family, along with several other tracts (KLR 13:146). The buyer was Elias Parmelee (b. 1752), another of Ezra's sons. Like his brother Oliver, Elias apparently left town, for he sold all his Killingworth holdings (the nominated property and five other parcels) to Lewis Clark in 1804 (KLR 17:17). Clark himself removed to Ohio in 1823 after mortgaging the property (now 100 acres) with the New Haven Bank (KLR 22:296). Following a bank foreclosure in 1825, the farm "lately owned by Lewis Clark," was sold to Ardon Hill with a mortgage of \$850, which he paid off in 1838. The farm remained in the Hill family for 34 years. In 1854 the 20 acres with the house was sold to his son, Alden Hill, for \$300, who also signed an agreement to provide his parents with "good and comfortable support...for the rest of their natural lives" (KLR 29:646).

Leonard Parmelee, the son of Elias, who was born in 1806, appears in the federal census of this neighborhood by mid-century. He was the owner of nearby grist mill in 1851 and a small farm south of the nominated property worth \$1000 in 1860. His household then included his wife Elizabeth, the daughter of his neighbor Abner Lane, a shoemaker, and two

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Parmelee House, Killingworth, Middlesex County, CT**

**Section 8 Page 2**

children, Simon Ambrose, 21, and Ardeless,<sup>1</sup> a daughter, 17, and a hired hand. Leonard bought the Hill acreage in 1861 (KLR 30:320). In 1866 Simon Ambrose, after years of service as a laborer on his father's farm, was rewarded for being a "dutiful son," receiving the Hill property in a deed of gift at the time of his marriage. Together with some additional land, the gift totaled 34 acres, the property was valued at \$1000 in 1870. In the meantime, his father's fortunes have much improved; his real estate now was valued at \$5000 and personal property at \$3665. When Leonard died about 1880, his homestead was devised to his unmarried daughter. Simon Ambrose and his wife, Ellen, had no children. When he died in 1912, his widow inherited the 34 acres with the house, where she lived with Elma Tooley. A spinster neighbor who has once been her servant, Tooley was a co-grantor when the property was sold in 1928 (KLR 44:73).

The same 34 acres changed hands several times in the next 30 years. The house was used as a summer cottage by the Saunders and Cooke families, both from New York City. The Cookes installed wiring and plumbing sometime before 1946, which was mentioned in the deed of sale to the Chapmans of Guilford in 1952 (KLR 74:111). In 1961 the property was subdivided; the original eight acres with the Parmelee House was sold as a separate parcel to the Griffiths of Rhode Island (KLR 54:32). The present owners, who purchased the property in 1983, have since sold off two of the acres on the south side.

**Architectural Significance**

From the roadway, the Parmelee House appears to be a five-bay, center-chimney Colonial adapted to the slope of its site. Such a relatively conventional facade, however, is at odds with its atypical floor plan and some of its construction features. Reversing the traditional colonial floor plan, the cellar is utilized as living space and the second level contains the parlors and keeping room. While this spatial arrangement is largely dictated by the site and may be typical of a "bank house," the physical evidence, unusually massive and rough hewn framing and the placement of major building members, is more consistent with an agricultural outbuilding, quite possibly a three-bent, bank barn.

The location of the intermediate girts provides the first clue. Instead of running alongside (or built directly into) the masonry of the chimney stack, the common method of colonial house framing, these timbers are located at some distance out from the stack. This odd location, together with the unusual arrangement for the support of the second-floor hearths, may indicate that the chimney stack was built sometime after the building was completed.

Additional evidence for possible barn construction is found in the location and size of the floor joists for the second level. Instead of the customary small joists let into gables in a central longitudinal beam, these timbers act more like beams. Running lengthwise with building, they appear heavy enough to support the main floor of a barn. Often called the threshing floor and constructed to carry a live load of wagons and cattle, it would have been accessed from barn doors on the uphill side of the structure. Furthermore, the joist tenons, which are square in section and apparently not pegged, are more characteristic of barn framing. A minor feature, the extreme width of several passage doors on the lower level, is also compelling, but not definitive. Another oddity is the façade overhang, a late manifestation of this feature, rarely found in houses built after 1770. Unless the building was once raised another full story, a possibility suggested by the Cape-like appearance of upper levels, a hewn overhang is the most likely method of construction.

Although all the fireplaces display similar features, which are generally consistent with the later eighteenth century, those on the second level are more definitely the Rumford type, indicating that they date from after the Revolution. There are other differences with the fireplace on the lower level, namely the use of stone instead of brick in the beehive oven and

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<sup>1</sup> Her name suggests a familial connection with the Ardon Hill family, but the relationship, if any, has not been established.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Parmalee House, Killingworth, Middlesex County, CT**

**Section 8 Page 3**

the slightly different proportions of the firebox, which may indicate that it was constructed earlier and once served as the only cooking hearth of a smaller building.

The conversion of an outbuilding to a house may once have been common practice, especially in the poorer rural areas of Connecticut, but there are few documented examples. The Parmalee House is a good candidate for a historic structures report, which could provide additional evidence in support of this theory and provide guidelines for future architectural analysis and evaluation of similar buildings. Although much of the building's framing is hidden from view, selective, non-destructive examination of key areas may provide some answers. For example, a comparative chemical and/or physical analysis of the chimney mortar and/or the plaster at the various levels might be fruitful. Another area to be investigated might be the unusual staircase in northeast corner of the main block. Inspection of the framing under the stairs may reveal structural changes over time, as well as the approximate date for the rear entrance. An examination of the stone work and comparative mortar analysis of foundation walls here and under the rest of the building, may indicate that this secondary entrance was relocated here sometime after the building was used as a dwelling.



**Parmelee House**

Name of Property

**Middlesex County, CT**

County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 6 + .

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	18	701780	4584020	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	
2				4			

\_\_\_\_. 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:**

name/title Jan Cunningham, National Register Consultant

organization Cunningham Preservation Associates, LLC date 8/20/06 (Rev. 12/09/06)

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: George D. & Janet S. Shapiro-Weiss

street & number: 4 Beckwith Road telephone: (860) 631 1333

city or town: Killingworth state CT zip code 06419

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Parmelee House, Killingworth, Middlesex County, CT**

**Section 9/10 Page 1**

**9. Major Bibliographic References**

Carbough, Marsha Wilson, comp; Lorraine Cook White, ed. *The Barbour Collection of Connecticut Town Vital Records*, vol. 21. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc, 1999.

Federal Census MSS, 1800, 1810, 1820, 1830, 1840, 1850, 1860, 1870, 1900.

*(The) History of Middlesex County, Connecticut with Biographical Sketches of Its Prominent Men.* New York: J. B. Beers & Company, 1884.

Hull, Robert E. *The Hull Family.* Baltimore: Gateway Press, 1994.

Kelsey, Carl Leland. "Two Hundred Years in a Rural Town: History of the Union District in the Town of Killingworth." Book 2.

Killingworth Probate and Land Records.

Pierce, Henry. *Colonial Killingworth: A History of Clinton and Killingworth.* Clinton, CT: Clinton Historical Society, 1976.

Salisbury, Edward Eldridge. Notes on the Family of Parmelee. Heritage Quest ([heritagequestonline.com](http://heritagequestonline.com)).

**10. Geographical Data**

**Verbal Boundary Description:** The boundaries of the nominated property are described in the Killingworth Land Records, Town Clerk's Office, volume 81, page 636.

**Boundary Justification:** The boundaries of the nominated property encompass the buildings and most of the original lot historically associated with the Parmelee family.

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National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Parmelee House, Killingworth, Middlesex County, CT**

**Section Photo Page 1**

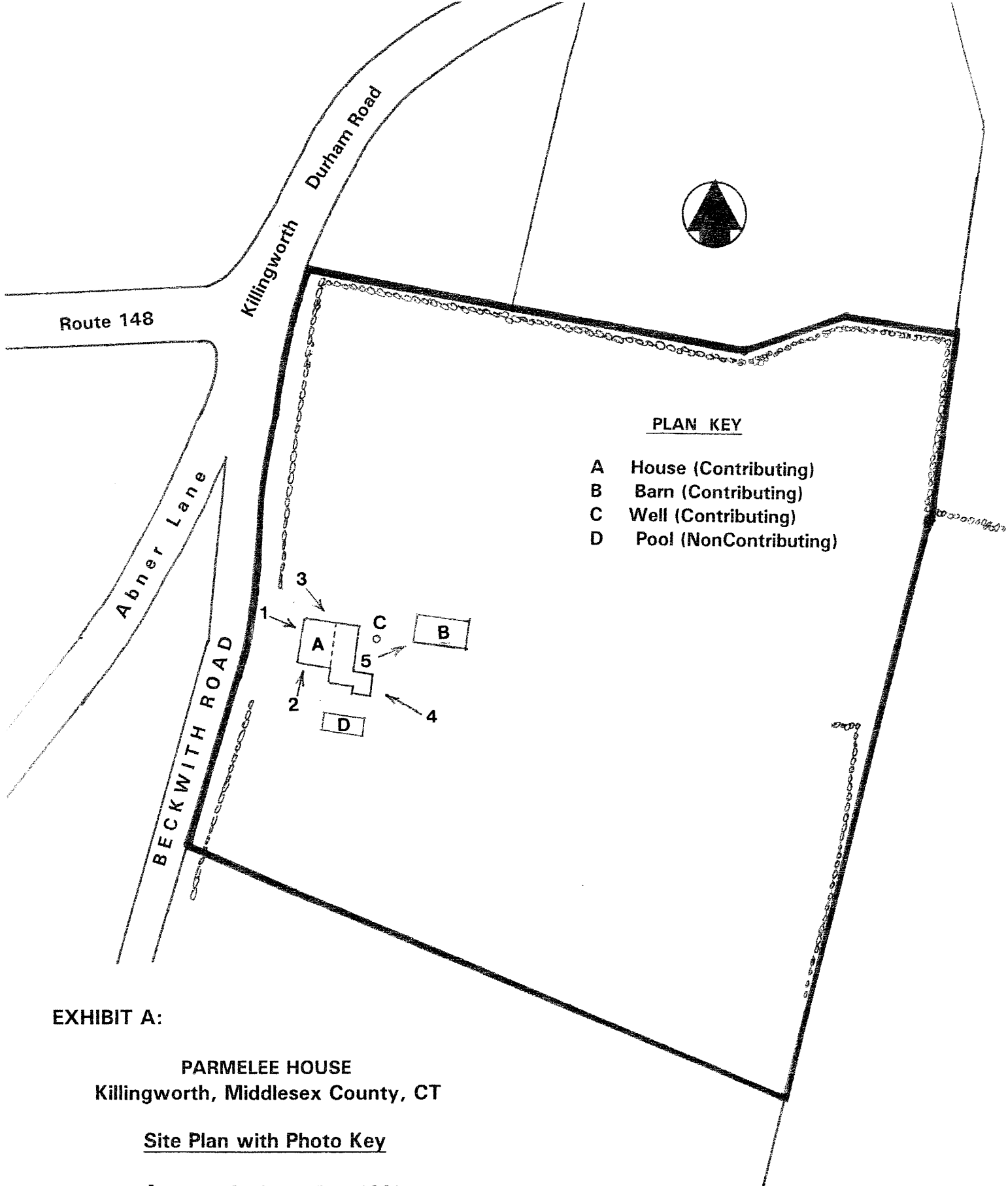
**List of Photographs**

Photographer: Cunningham Preservation Associates, LLC

Date: October 2005

Negatives on file: SHPO, CCC & T

1. Parmelee House, façade & north elevation, camera facing SE
2. Parmelee House, south elevation, camera facing N
3. Parmelee House, north elevation, camera facing SE
4. Parmelee House, south and rear elevations, camera facing NW
5. Parmelee House, barn, camera facing NE
6. Parmelee House, interior view of front door, camera facing SW
7. Parmelee House, fireplace, south front room, 1<sup>st</sup> level, camera facing N
8. Parmelee House, keeping room fireplace, 2<sup>nd</sup> level, camera facing NW
9. Parmelee House, fireplace wall, 2<sup>nd</sup> level, south front room, camera facing NW
10. Parmelee House, fireplace wall, 2<sup>nd</sup> level, north front room, camera facing SE
11. Parmelee House, hallway, attic level, camera facing S
12. Parmelee House, south room, attic level, camera facing SW



**EXHIBIT A:**

**PARMELEE HOUSE**  
**Killingworth, Middlesex County, CT**

**Site Plan with Photo Key**

**Approx. Scale: 1" = 100'**

**Bold Line: Boundary of Nominated Property**

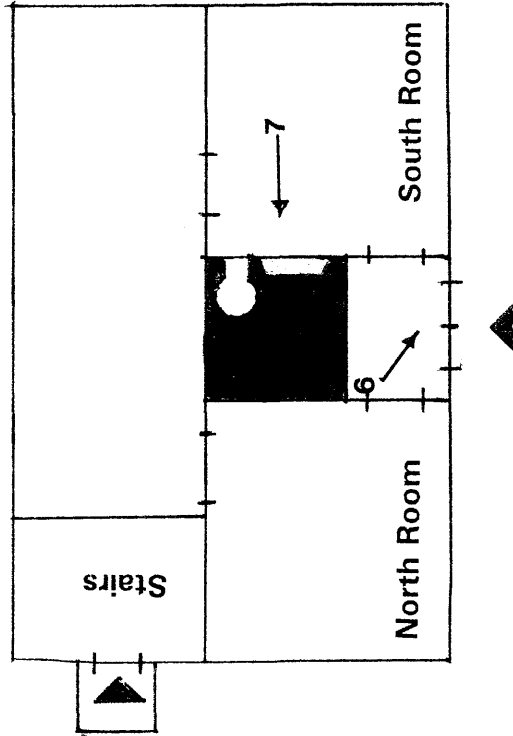
**EXHIBIT B:**

**PARMELEE HOUSE**  
Killingworth, Middlesex County, CT

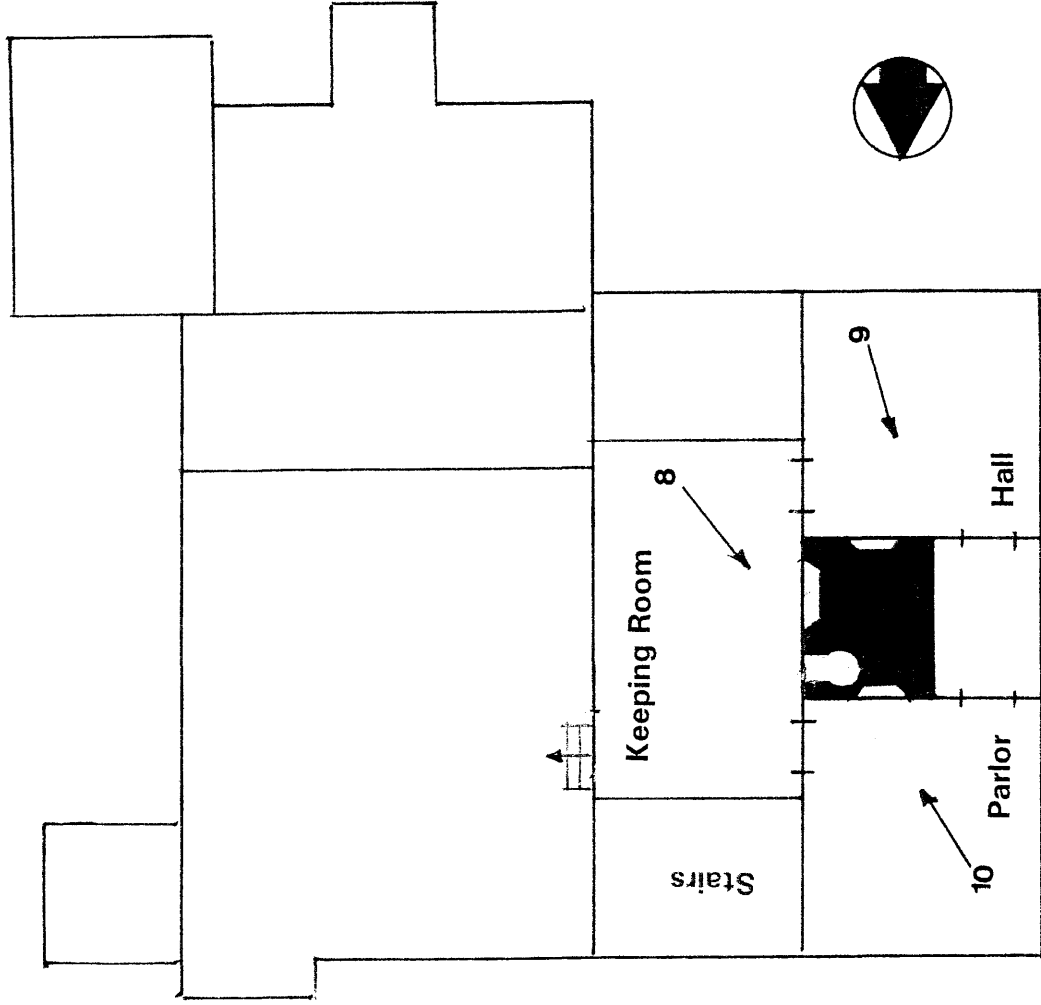
Schematic Floor Plans with Photo Key

Approx. Scale: 3/32" = 1'

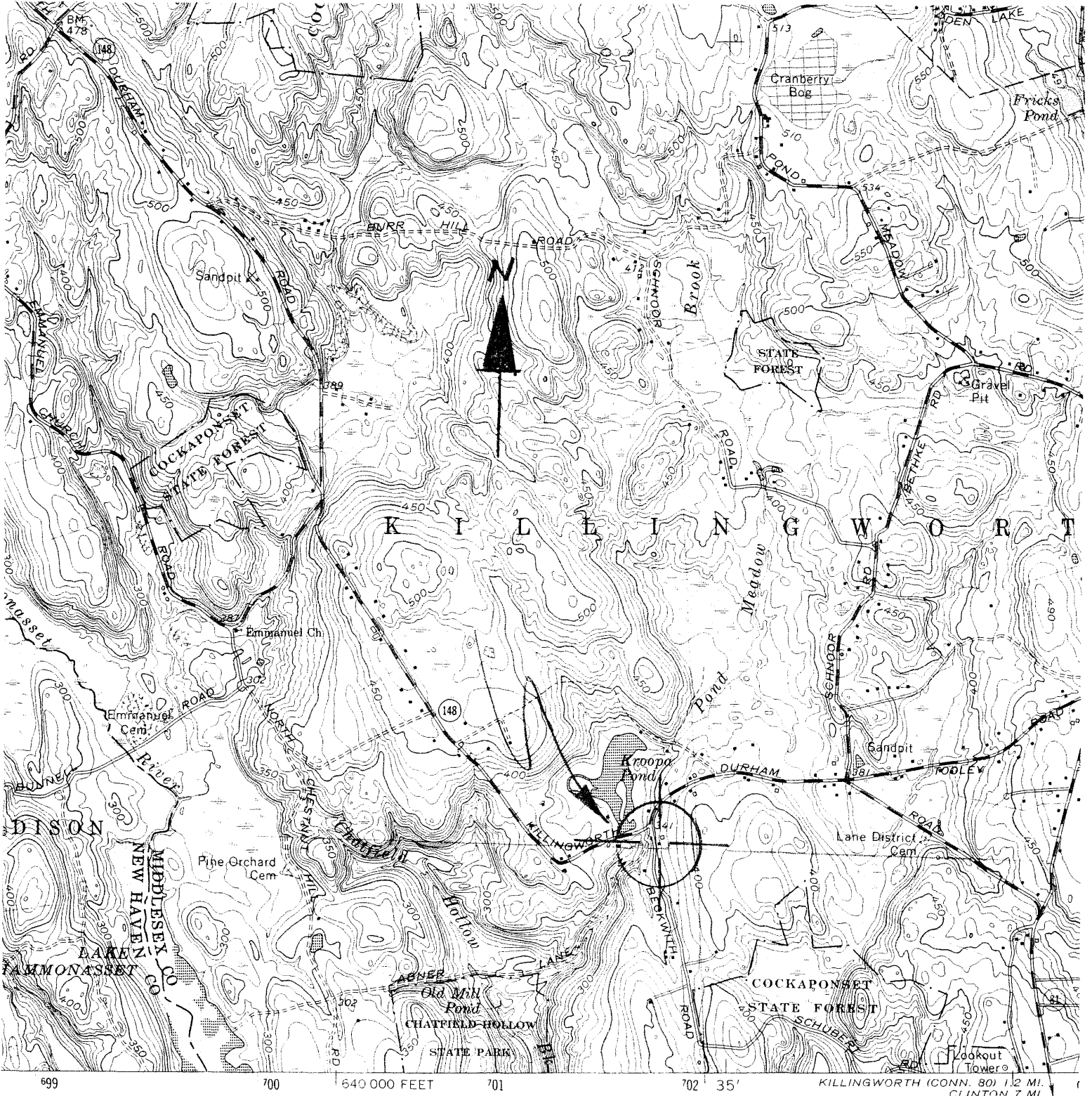
Cunningham Preservation Associates 8/06



Main Block - Lower Level

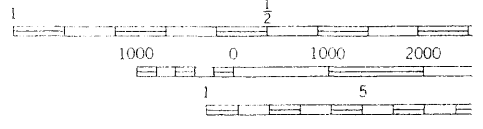
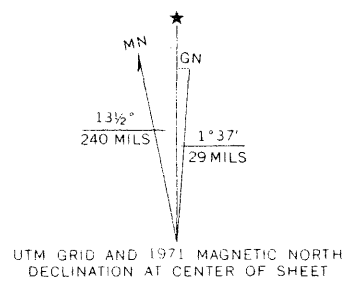


Main Block with Additions - Second Level



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 cticut Highway Department from aerial photographs

**Parmelee House**  
**Killingworth**  
**Middlesex County, CT**  
**UTM: 18 701780 4584020**  
**Haddam Quadrangle**



CONTOUR  
 DATUM 1  
 DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDING  
 SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS  
 THE MEAN RANGE OF

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH  
 FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGIC  
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC