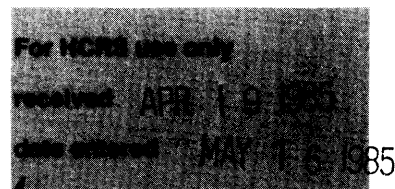


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 EDWARD FRISBIE HOMESTEAD

and/or common Captain Joseph Frisbie Homestead

2. Location

street & number 240 Stony Creek Road _____ not for publication

city, town Branford _____ vicinity of Stony Creek congressional district

state Connecticut code 09 county New Haven code 009

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Martin and Martha Achilles

street & number 240 Stony Creek Road

city, town Branford _____ vicinity of Stony Creek state Connecticut

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Town Clerk's Office, Branford Town Hall

street & number Main Street

city, town Branford _____ state Connecticut

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title State Register of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? _____ yes no

date 1975 _____ federal state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records Connecticut State Historical Commission
59 South Prospect Street

city, town Hartford _____ state Connecticut

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Edward Frisbie Homestead is a two-and-a-half-story gable-roofed central-chimney Federal period residence. It stands on a 3.6 acre lot at the intersection of Leetes Island Road and Connecticut Route 146 in the village of Stony Creek in eastern part of the town of Branford. Protected from traffic by two fine stands of old sugar maples, the Frisbie Homestead's bucolic atmosphere remains undisturbed by its proximity to the two major roads leading to the village. (photographs 1, 2, and 3).

EXTERIOR: The main block of the Frisbie Homestead is framed with post and beam elements and sheathed with clapboards. The facade of the building is arranged in five bays. The main entry is framed with recessed-panel pilasters topped by a flat two-part entablature. This entry contains a door with six recessed panels. The square cornice on the facade is ornamented with dentil courses at the top and bottom. Attached to the south gable end of the main block and set back to create a uniform rear elevation stands the kitchen ell (photographs 1 and 2). Continuing the line of the facade of the kitchen ell is a shed which shelters the stone-lined well that served the dwelling. This shed is open on its west side, its opening surmounted by an arched top. Both the kitchen ell and the shed stand on granite rubble foundations with crawlspaces underneath, are framed with post and beam elements, and are sheathed with clapboards.

INTERIOR WOODWORK: The most outstanding feature of this house is its interior woodwork. The windows and doors of the northwest parlor are framed with beaded pilasters with carved corner blocks high relief (photograph 5). The lintels and sills of the windows are ornamented with chains of incised semi-circles which stand above a wainscot composed of recessed panels (photograph 4). The mantel in this parlor is particularly noteworthy: the hearth is flanked by fluted demi-columns with Ionic capitals; these support a full entablature of a modified Corinthian Order, containing carved fret and ovolo courses. The major carved motifs on this mantel are medallions joined by ribbons (photographs 6 and 7).

The southwest parlor, although simpler, is also noteworthy (photograph 12). Its sandstone hearth is flanked by fluted-square pilasters with caps and bases. They support a full entablature ornamented by a central block with three incised sunburst motifs (photographs 8 and 9). These carvings are executed with a flatness characteristic of Connecticut vernacular wood and stone carving. The wainscot on the lower portions of

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National Park Service

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Branford, Connecticut

Item number 7

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the walls follows the pattern of the northwest parlor, but lacks the carved corner blocks, sills, and lintels. This room contains a corner cabinet which stood originally in the kitchen.

The woodwork in the large rear chamber is simpler than that of the parlors. Its wainscot consists of wide horizontal planks with beading at the top and a shoe-molding at the bottom (photograph 10). Here, as in the front parlors, the vertical structural members of the house are sheathed with corner-beaded boards. The centrally-placed hearth is surrounded by simply-molded woodwork with cabinets at above it and it its sides (photograph 10). The woodwork on the second story consists of beaded moldings around the windows and doors and simple floor and chair rails.

MASONRY: The main block stands on a granite rubble foundation. It was pointed with mortar in the 1930s. The base supporting the central chimney shows the character of the original masonry, consisting of granite rubble packed with tidal mud mixed with oyster and clam shells. The fireplaces throughout the house are constructed in the traditional Connecticut style, with single slabs of sandstone as lintels, sides and hearthstones, with brick firebacks.

DOORS, WINDOWS, FLOORING, PLASTER: Most of the window glass, sash, and doors are original to the house. The doors contain six flush panels with leaf hinges and latch handles, all of brass. The floors are original throughout, consisting of face-nailed pine planks varying in width between 6" to 8" on the first story and 10" to 14" on the second story and in the attic. Plaster is original throughout, except for a small section of wall on the first story and the gable ends of the attic.

ALTERATIONS: Exterior changes to the main block have been minor. An entry has been added to the east elevation containing a door of mid nineteenth century origins. Entries and windows have been protected with aluminum combination storm sashes. Interior changes to the main block have likewise been minor: the "borning room" has been converted to a modern bathroom, but has retained its original wide-plank walls. The "buttery" was removed during renovations in the 1930s. The second story of the main block remains unaltered, except for the conversion of the small chamber in the southeast corner to a bathroom in the 1930s.

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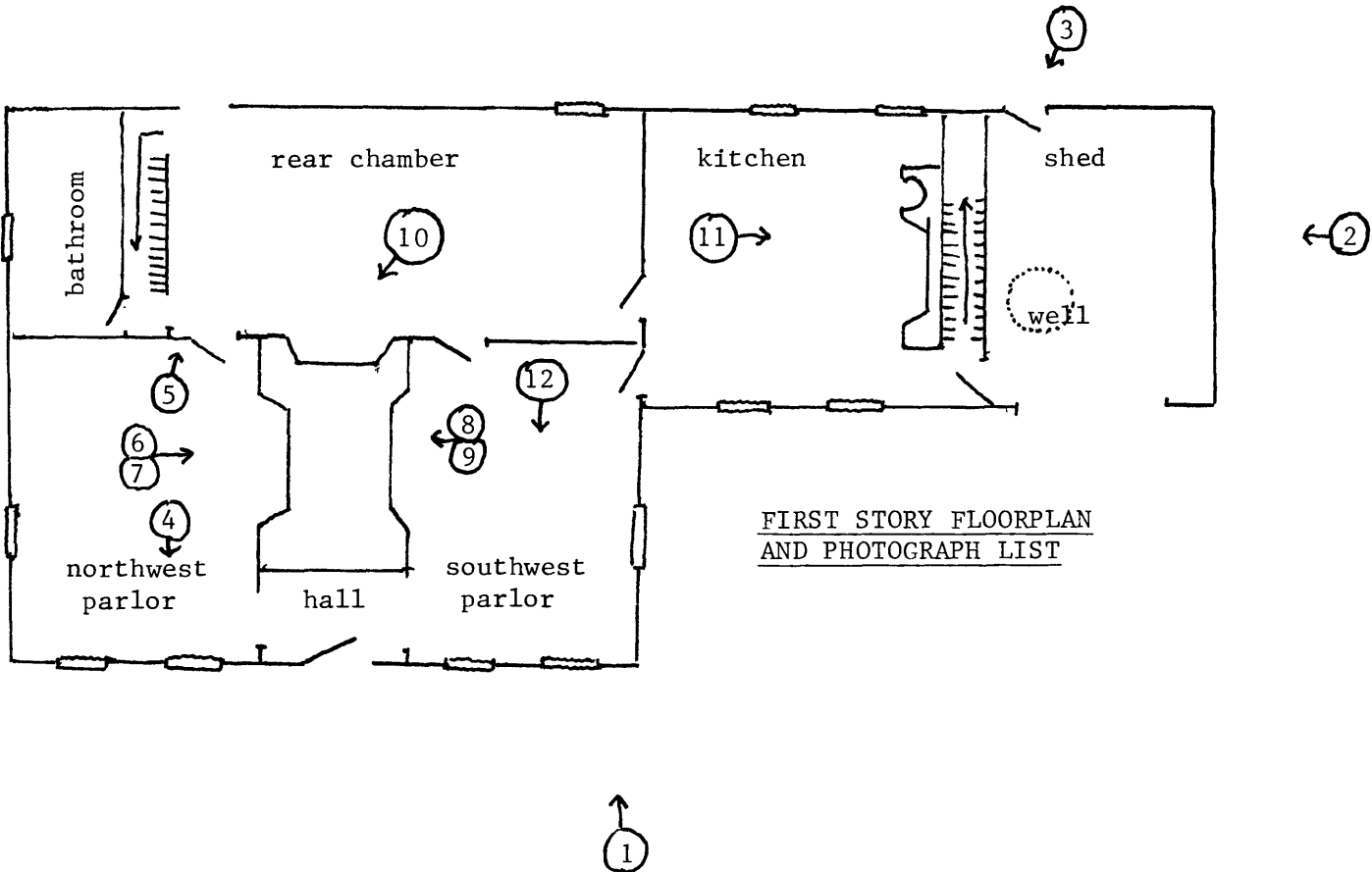
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The kitchen ell contains some alterations. Its original rear fenestration was replaced in the 1930s by a four-part set of casement windows. Modern cabinet work obscures the woodwork on the east and north sides of the room. On the second story, insulation and sheetrock have been placed between the rafters and two skylights have been added to its east side.

BARN: A small one-and-a-half-story barn stands to the south of the dwelling. Although constructed with post and beam elements, sheathed with vertical flush planks, and standing on the site of an earlier barn, it appears to date from the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. A barnyard, bounded with stone walls, stands to the south and west sides of the barn.



FIRST STORY FLOORPLAN
AND PHOTOGRAPH LIST

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input 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 checked="" 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		

Criteria A and C

Specific dates c. 1790 **Builder/Architect** unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The integrity of its setting and the minimal changes to its interior and exterior appointments over the past two centuries render the Edward Frisbie Homestead an important artifact for understanding the early history of the community. It is of particular significance because of its connections to the activities of persons important in the agricultural, maritime, political, and ecclesiastical life of the town of Branford and the village of Stony Creek (Criterion B). Further, the quality and integrity of the interior woodwork of the house represent the highest level of late eighteenth century Connecticut craftsmanship (Criterion C). Finally, its strategic location at the juncture of the two main roads leading into Stony Creek, a village noted as one of Connecticut's most picturesque, makes it an important visual reference in terms of the appearance and historical associations of this section of Branford.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: The Edward Frisbie Homestead is historically connected to the dominant agricultural, maritime, and industrial activities of Stony Creek in the period 1790-1930.

The present residence was built c. 1790 on a two acre lot purchased by Edward Frisbie (1754-1821) from his father, Ebenezer (1714-1790).¹ The Frisbies were one of Branford's founding families. Its progenitor, Edward Frisbie (1620?-1690), was one of the 42 individuals who petitioned the government of the New Haven Colony for a land grant in Totoket in 1644.² And they were one of the six families granted land by the town of Branford in 1671, when it made its fifth division of its common lands.³

The Frisbies, like most of the early inhabitants of Stony Creek, were salt-water farmers of a type more characteristic of northern New England than of Connecticut. Because of the poor agricultural potential of the soils in the Fifth Division, its residents early developed a diversified way of life involving small-scale agriculture, aquaculture (primarily oystering), and trade.⁴ The most prosperous period of this essentially subsistence lifestyle coincided with the imposition of trade restrictions by the British and, later, the American Revolutionary governments -- at which time Stony Creek became noted as a center of smuggling and, during the Revolution, of Tory sentiment.⁵ The harvest of this rich meadow of commerce appears to have permitted Edward Frisbie (1754-1821) to build

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 3.6 acres

Quadrangle name Branford

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	8	8	7	7	0	0	0	7	1	2	0	0	0	0
Zone	Easting						Northing							

B

Zone	Easting						Northing							

C

Zone	Easting						Northing							

D

Zone	Easting						Northing							

E

Zone	Easting						Northing							

F

Zone	Easting						Northing							

G

Zone	Easting						Northing							

H

Zone	Easting						Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries N/A

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Peter Dobkin Hall ; edited by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

organization date 12-28-1984

street & number P.O. Box 3072 telephone 203-481-2792

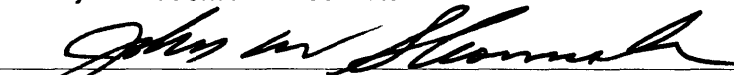
city or town Branford state Connecticut 06405

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.

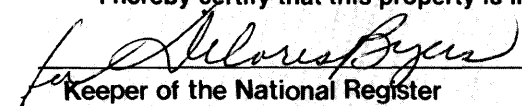
State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title Director, Connecticut Historical Commission date 4/16/85

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the National Register


Keeper of the National Register

date 5-16-85

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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this residence which, in comparison to the other Stony Creek structures of the period, is surprisingly elegant.

The Frisbies were leaders in the political, ecclesiastical, and economic life of Branford and Stony Creek village. They were among the founding families of the town and among the first to settle in the Fifth Division. Ebenezer Frisbie, whose son built the Homestead, was one of the leaders in the Branford Controversy of the 1740s, in which conservative members of the Congregational Church attempted to unseat the Rev. Philemon Robbins for his New Light activities.⁶ Both father and son were among the founders of Trinity Church (Episcopal) in 1784. Both signed the petition requesting the establishment of a school in Stony Creek in 1788. Both Edward and his son, George, who inherited the Homestead in 1821, were among the founders of the Damascus Cemetery, Stony Creek's earliest burial place.⁷

The Frisbies were active in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as ship builders, fishermen, and traders.⁸ The fact that they were leading Episcopalians and non-combatants in the Revolution suggests that they profited from illegal trading enterprises. The inventory of Captain Joseph Frisbie (1808-1869), who acquired the house from his brother, George, in 1850, reveals the nature of the last flowering of successful salt water farming.⁹ His maritime and mercantile activities are suggested by the presence of measures, scales, and weights, as well as an extraordinary number of bottles and barrels; his fishing interests are suggested by his ownership of gear used in clamming and oystering; and his agricultural activities are underlined by his ownership of large numbers of farming implements, including 10 scythes, as well as extensive real estate holdings. These included 188 acres in various parts of Branford, two acres of oyster ground, the Homestead and two barns, and a one-and-a-half acre island in Stony Creek Harbor (the present Jepson's Island).

Unable to adapt to the industrialization of Stony Creek that followed the opening of the railroad and the granite quarries in the 1850s, the Frisbies sold the house in 1870 to Captain Henry Hall, one of the pioneers of the commercial oyster trade.¹⁰ In 1874, he sold it to James King, a farmer who supplemented his income by leasing the northern portion of the property as a granite quarry.¹¹ This quarry was worked extensively before the great strike and lockout of 1892, the works boasting a railroad which carried the stone from the King property to barges moored

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in the creek on the west side of Stony Creek Road. Although the quarry was abandoned before the turn of the century, the farm remained in operation until the death of James King's daughter, Mary, in 1931.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE: The Edward Frisbie Homestead is the best preserved eighteenth-century house in Stony Creek.¹² It has undergone only minor interior and exterior alterations. Its interior woodwork is especially notable, containing not only a carved mantel of outstanding workmanship in the classical style (which appears to be the work of the same New Haven craftsman who produced the mantels shown in Plate XXXVI of Kelly's Domestic Architecture of Connecticut), but also an vernacular mantel which is an outstanding example eighteenth century woodcarving.

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NOTES

1. Branford Land Records XI: 294 (1789)
2. Rev. Elijah C. Baldwin, "Branford Annals" in New Haven Colony Historical Society Proceedings III: 253 (1882).
3. Branford Land Records II: 394 (1671).
4. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Survey of New Haven, County, Connecticut (n.p., 1982), maps 69, 70, 77, 78.
5. Richard Buel, Dear Liberty: Connecticut's Mobilization for the Revolutionary War (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1981), 271.
6. Baldwin, op. cit., III: 256.
7. Branford Land Records, XVII: 431 (1814).
8. On the Frisbies as mariners, see John C. Carr, Old Branford (Branford: Branford Tricentennial Committee, 1935), 41.
9. Branford Probate Records, V: 113-116 (1868).
10. Branford Land Records, XXXIII: 50 (1870).
11. Ibid., XXXIV: 106 (1874).
12. Wayne E. Jacobson, The Stony Creek Map and Scrap Book (Stony Creek: Church of Christ, 1981), 9. The datings for Stony Creek Houses provided by Jacobson are from a WPA study of Branford's houses. All place earlier dates on the village's historic structures than either their physical appearance or documentary evidence justifies. Only one, the Howd Homestead on Thimble Islands Road, would appear to predate 1760, though the WPA dating of 1729 is certainly too early. Only one of Stony Creek's Colonial era houses, the 1775 John Rogers House on Leetes Island Road, has been thoroughly title searched.

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The Edward Frisbie Homestead was constructed c. 1790 on a two-acre homelot bounded to the south and northeast by highways and to the northwest by land owned by Daniel Palmer [Branford Deeds XI: 294 (1789)]. This lot was added to by the Frisbie family until, by 1870, it contained 8 acres. This tract was sold by Elizur S. Frisbie to Henry A. Hall in 1870 [Branford Deeds XXXIII: 50 (1870)]. In 1874, the 8 acre tract with a house and two barns was sold by Henry A. Hall to James King [Branford Deeds XXXIV: 106 (1874)]. In 1932, the King Estate sold the property to Bert G. Anderson (Branford Deeds XCIII: 87 (1932)]. The eight acre tract remained intact until 1968, when the Anderson estate sold 3.6 acres, including the dwelling and barn, to Martin and Martha Achilles [Branford Deeds CXXX: 394, 399 (1968)].

This 3.6 acre lot is bounded to the west by Connecticut Route 146 (Stony Creek Road) [393'], to the north by lands belonging to Gale Losch [233'] and Peter and Karyl Lee Hall [215'], and to the south by lands belonging to the Southern New England Telephone Company [140'] (Branford Deeds CCXXX: 394, 399). This is the site to be included in the nomination.