

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Connecticut
COUNTY: New Haven
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE AUG 13 1974

1. NAME

COMMON:
Eli Whitney Gun Factory Site

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
915-940 Whitney Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:
Hamden

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
#3- Robert N. Giaimo

STATE:
Connecticut

CODE:
09

COUNTY:
New Haven

CODE:
009

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) utility

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
New Haven Water Company

STREET AND NUMBER:
100 Crown Street

CITY OR TOWN:
New Haven

STATE:
Connecticut

CODE:
09

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Hall of Records

STREET AND NUMBER:
200 Orange Street

CITY OR TOWN:
New Haven

STATE:
Connecticut

CODE:
09

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Engineering Record

DATE OF SURVEY:
1974

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE:
DC

CODE:
08

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

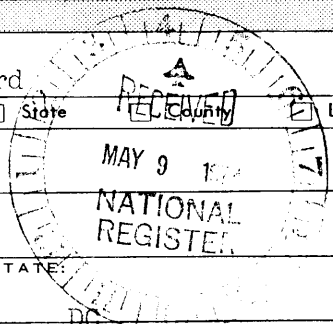
STATE: Connecticut

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DATE: _____

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The boundaries of the Eli Whitney Gun Factory Site have been drawn intentionally broad to encompass the perimeters of the factory and to provide protection for artifacts which may be discovered during later investigations. The boundary commences at a point (A) on the east side of Whitney Avenue opposite the south line of Armory Street, then proceeds west along the south line of Armory Street a distance of 225' to point (B). The boundary then proceeds south at right angles a distance of 275' to point (C), then east at right angles a distance of 775' to point (D). The boundary proceeds north at right angles a distance of 550' to point (E), then west at right angles across the head of Lake Whitney a distance of 575' to point (F), then at right angles to (A), the point of beginning.

There are ten major buildings and foundations on the Eli Whitney Gun Factory Site. Three buildings and two foundations directly relate to Eli Whitney's occupation. Other buildings were erected after the closing of the gun works. Although most of the twenty-building Whitney factory has been destroyed, there is much remaining evidence of the factory plan, and there is a great potential for archaeological investigation.¹ The Eli Whitney Gun Factory occupied approximately six acres of land on a tract bisected by Whitney Avenue. The site is about two-miles north of the New Haven green(business center)and is situated in a valley formed by the Mill River. East Rock, a high promontory to the east, overlooks the site.

The three original Whitney buildings include a "single-men's boarding house"(ca. 1800), at the southwest corner of Whitney Avenue and Armory Street, a frame "factory barn"(1816)to the south, and a stone "carpentry shop"(ca. 1800) across the Mill River from Whitney Avenue. In addition to the standing Whitney buildings, the fieldstone foundations of Whitney's forge(ca. 1800)remain between the carpentry shop and the river. The foundation of another Whitney building has been incorporated into the fabric of a frame office building built in 1888 by a later occupant. The foundation of the main assembly building(ca. 1800)has been excavated from under the rubble of a later brick factory, since destroyed. Other Whitney foundations will no doubt be located during the archaeological investigations to commence in 1974.

The single-men's boarding house is a rectangular-plan, two-story, frame house set upon a foundation of cut-stone. The asphalt-shingled, medium-pitch gable roof is oriented perpendicularly to the main facade. The main facade is four bays wide, with main access contained in the south end bay. Fenestration is double-hung sash type throughout, and dates from the late 19th-century. However, two attic windows in the

1. Elements of the original races and bridge supports also remain. Archaeological investigation in the spring of 1972 indicated that there is a variety of evidence intact below the two-foot level at the site of the assembly and finishing buildings.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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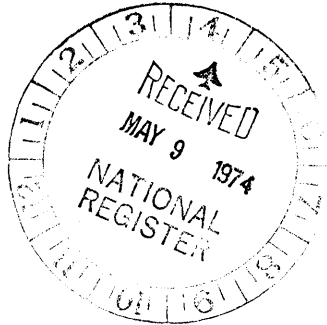
(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Connecticut	
COUNTY New Haven	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	AUG 13 1974

(Number all entries)

#6 Eli Whitney Gun Factory Site

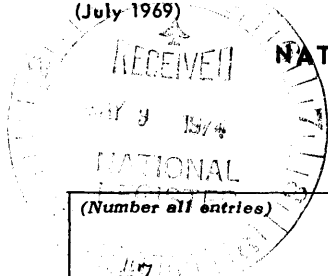
Connecticut Historic Structures and Landmarks Survey
1973 State
Connecticut Historical Commission
59 S. Prospect Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Connecticut	
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New Haven	
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	AUG 13 1974



(Number all entries)

#7

Eli Whitney Gun Factory Site

main facade are six-over-six light and are of an earlier, probably original, design. A plain wood box cornice and raking cornice appears on the main and rear elevations. Treatment of the entrance portal is slightly Greek Revivalized and probably dates from the early 19th-century. The attic gable is clapboard-sided, but the remainder of the elevations have been sided in a synthetic material.

The factory barn is an elongated, rectangular-plan, frame structure having a perpendicular wing appended to the rear elevation. The rear wall of the wing is constructed on fieldstone laid up in irregular courses, and the barn is set upon a high foundation of similar material. The clapboard siding on the barn is arranged horizontally on the main(east)and rear elevations, and vertically on the sides. The medium pitch gable roof is sheathed in asphalt shingles. Treatment of the main facade resembles the design of many of Whitney's other factory buildings, according to old views. The main facade is divided into three bays, each containing a large service entrance surmounted by a wood moulding shaped as if to accommodate a fanlight. Wood pilasters extend from the base of each moulding to the ground level, providing a frame for each entrance. A small square sash window appears above each entrance portal below the cornice. A plain wood cornice and raking cornice appear on the main elevation. A palladian window is centered in the attic story. The side elevations are divided into three bays, each containing a window in each story and basement. On the north side, a projecting entranceway constructed on fieldstone occupies the ground floor of the central bay, providing access to the cellar. This entranceway has a gable roof and wood moulded raking cornice with partial cornice return.

The carpentry shop is a small, rectangular plan, 1 1/2 story fieldstone building having a medium pitch gable roof with clapboard-sided gable ends. The walls are laid up in irregular courses. The main(south)facade is divided into three bays, with a central doorway and two flanking, double-hung, sash windows. Secondary access is placed near the front of each side elevation. It is known that an appendage to this building was removed in subsequent years. This building has been re-tuckpointed in later years, but the roof structure is not original.

There are three structures on the site which do not relate to the period of occupation by Eli Whitney's gun factory. The Winchester office building, a frame structure built in 1888, was erected on a portion of a fieldstone foundation of one of Whitney's original shops. A second non-conforming building is the brick factory of Heany Industries, built about 1890. A third is the cinder-block "turbine-house"(ca. 1955) which is situated upon the site of Whitney's original turbine house. It is not recommended, however, that these buildings be removed during the investigative or interpretive phases of the development of the Whitney factory site.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

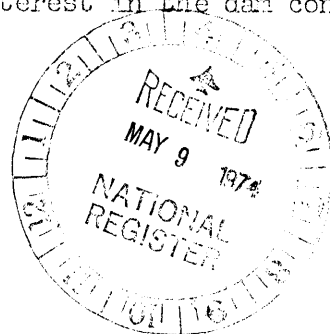
- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Eli Whitney Gun Factory Site is the location of a firearms works established in 1798 by Eli Whitney (1765-1825) at which he introduced a manufacturing concept which came to be known as the "American System of Manufacturing". Whitney's concept involved a systematic specialization of each function of production within the factory, and the manufacture of standardized, mass-produced goods. As such, Whitney is credited as one of the first manufacturers to replace skilled craftsmen with specialized power machines. Although much of the Whitney buildings have been destroyed, there are a significant number of artifacts "in-situ", as demonstrated by a series of test-digs conducted in 1972. Yale University intends to sponsor a major historical-archaeology project in 1974 which will be followed by the stabilization of the ruins and the erection of interpretive devices. The New Haven Colony Historical Society and the Historic American Engineering Record are cooperating.

Although Whitney's authorship of the concept of mass-production has been questioned, it is certain that Whitney articulated the "American system" at least ten years before the idea was proposed by any other American manufacturer. Whitney's original contract terminated in 1809, but production of firearms continued at the site into the 19th-century. In 1860, the original Whitney assembly works was destroyed and a larger factory building erected on the site. The 1860 building has subsequently been removed, facilitating the investigation of the remains of Whitney's original factory. In the late 19th-century, the Whitney property was purchased by the Winchester Arms conglomerate which continued to use some of Whitney's facilities for the production of firearms. Winchester sold a portion of the property for other industrial uses, and, most recently, the New Haven Water Company has acquired the site because of its interest in the dam containing Lake Whitney.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Fuller, C.H., The Whitney Firearms. Huntington, W.Va., 1946.
2. Green, C.H. Eli Whitney and the Birth of American Technology. Boston, 1956.
3. Macdonald, R.R., Eli Whitney and the Development of American Technology, Discovery, Vol VIII, (Spring, 1973), pp. 83-92.
4. Mirsky, J., and Nevins, A., The World of Eli Whitney. New York: 1952.
5. Olmstead, A., Memoir of Eli Whitney. New Haven, 1846.
6. The Papers of Eli Whitney, Yale University Library, New Haven, Conn.

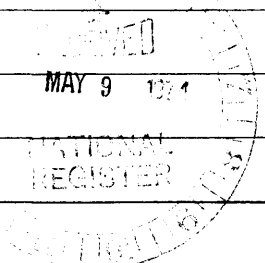
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	41 ° 20 ' 14 "	72 ° 54 ' 47 "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	41 ° 20 ' 14 "	72 ° 54 ' 36 "				
SE	41 ° 20 ' 08 "	72 ° 54 ' 36 "				
SW	41 ° 20 ' 08 "	72 ° 54 ' 47 "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than ten

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Stephen J. Raiche, Historic Sites Researcher

ORGANIZATION: Connecticut Historical Commission

DATE: 12/26/73

STREET AND NUMBER:
59 S. Prospect Street

CITY OR TOWN: Hartford

STATE: Connecticut

CODE: 09

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: Harlan Griswold
Harlan Griswold, Acting State Historic Preservation Office

Title: _____

Date: May 6, 1974

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

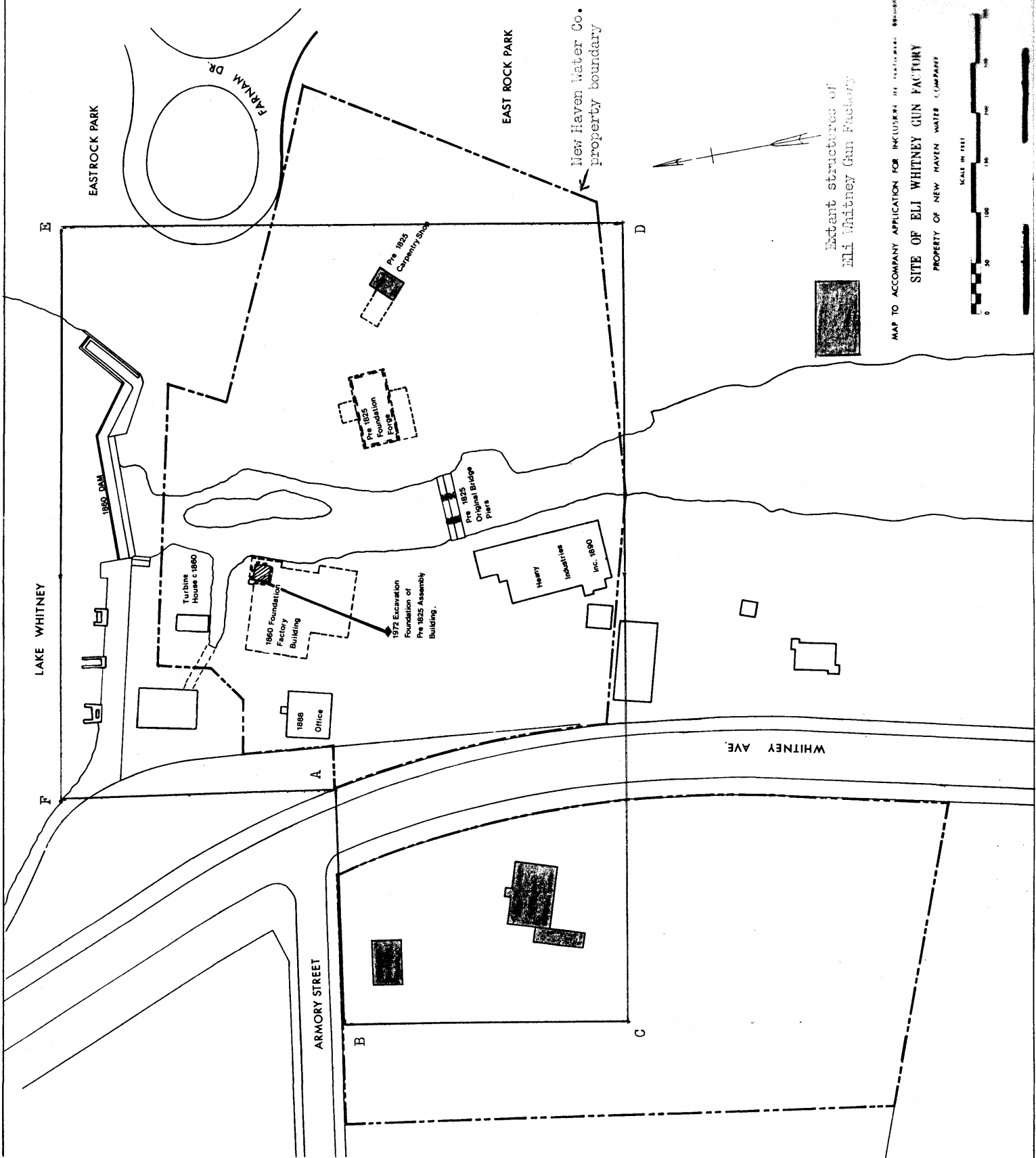
A. H. [Signature]
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 5/13/74

ATTEST:
[Signature]
Keeper of The National Register

Date: 5.12.74

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



Extent structures of
Eli Whitney Gun Factory

MAP TO ACCOMPANY APPLICATION FOR INCLUSION IN NATIONAL REGISTER
SITE OF ELI WHITNEY GUN FACTORY
PROPERTY OF NEW HAVEN WATER COMPANY

