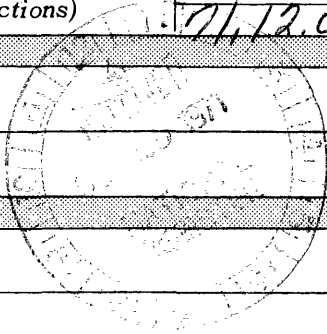


PH0020851

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Connecticut	
COUNTY: Fairfield	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 71.12.09.0018	DATE 12/29/11



**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Bronson Windmill

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
3015 Bronson Road

CITY OR TOWN:  
Fairfield

STATE Connecticut	CODE 09	COUNTY: Fairfield	CODE 001
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**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input 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 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) not in use
Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No			

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Fairfield Country Day School

STREET AND NUMBER:  
2970 Bronson Road

CITY OR TOWN:  
Fairfield

STATE: Connecticut	CODE 09
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**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Fairfield Town Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:  
611 Old Post Road

CITY OR TOWN:  
Fairfield

STATE: Connecticut	CODE 09
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**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Fairfield Historic District Commission Survey

DATE OF SURVEY:  
[ ] Federal [ ] State [ ] County [x] Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
HAER has photos: 1971

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Fairfield Town Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:  
611 Old Post Road

CITY OR TOWN:  
Fairfield

STATE: Connecticut	CODE 09
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Connecticut

COUNTY: Fairfield

ENTRY NUMBER: 71.12.09.0018

DATE: 12/29/11

FOR NPS USE ONLY

**7. DESCRIPTION**

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

**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

The windmill stands on the former Frederic Bronson property, "Verna Farm." It was erected in (1893-94) by a company carrying the following letterhead: "The Corcoran Storm-Defying Windmills. Pumps and Water Supply Materials. Windmills for Export. No. 11 John Street, New York. Factory, Jersey City, N.J." The Bronson windmill with its large wooden tank in the 80-foot tower and underground cistern, was the principal water source for the large dairy farm and great mansion designed by Richard Morris Hunt in 1891. The shingle windmill with its ogee-shaped roof may well be the finest remaining example of this unique type of American agricultural engineering. No changes of any kind have been made to the building.

*Engineering Record*

The Historic American Buildings Survey in May, 1971, made measured drawings and photographs.

A letter of specifications to Mr. Bronson from Andrew J. Corcoran, dated November 9, 1891, shows that the tower was constructed of "good quality Georgia pine" to a height above ground line of "not less than seventy five feet." The octagonal plan occupies a square of 17 feet at the ground. Eight deadmen or anchors of locust wood were buried six feet deep and joined by heavy iron rods to cast iron fittings at the eight corners of the tower base. This bracing of the structure is now only partially effective since the whole has settled over the years and the fastenings to the main posts have lost their original bearing. Framing of the tower is given in great detail in the letter cited. It is work of high quality, using heavy timbers thoroughly braced and carefully spliced where necessary with ironwork of similar grade. The excellence of construction is attested to by the comparatively small amount of deterioration evident to a casual inspection of the upper framing, even though breaks in the sheathing and uncovered window openings have admitted the weather for an indefinite span of years. More serious deterioration, however, is apparent near ground level, where it is to be expected and where the sills and the ends of main posts will probably require considerable repair. The aforementioned settling of the tower is evidence of this.

Horizontal sheathing covers the framing up to the eaves and is then finished with shingles of uniform width in "fish scale" pattern - the butts saved in a curve or arc. Squared shingles are applied to the roof. Above this is a circular gallery with railing, now semi-ruinous, from which rises the four-sided tapering timberwork with an octagonal gallery or platform midway, thoroughly cross-braced, which supports the axle, crank, and metalwork of the wheel and the tail or rudder which formerly caught the power of the wind. The wooden blades framed in sections have been stored in generally good condition in the lower floor of the tower. Nearly all of the wooden tail slats have disappeared, but enough may remain to guide a restoration. A windlass with its connecting wire, for feathering or turning the wheel away from the wind to stop operation of the mill, remains at one of the lower floors within the tower, as does the greater part of the pumping machinery at ground level and the pitman rods for linkage to the crank on the wheel axle.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**6. 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) 1893-94

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture  | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____  |
| <input checked="" 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 Bronson windmill is the last in Fairfield, Connecticut, of many former majestic windmills which once were a familiar sight on the horizon and an important source of water. These unique symbols of our forebears' achievements are a trust we must preserve for future generations. The study of the drilling of this "first deepdriven well in the area" and the building of the 80-foot shingle-covered tower with its tank, underground cistern, and pumping machinery could be a fascinating and useful study in agriculture, conservation, and engineering.

Verna was the 18th century home site of Timothy Dwight, who became president of Yale College in 1795. The following year the property was bought by Dr. Isaac Bronson. It was the grandson of Isaac Bronson, Frederic Bronson II, financier, who rebuilt Verna, which became a new three-story mansion with extensive grounds and a farm with an excellent and renowned herd of Jersey cattle. The estate was large - two to three hundred acres - and needed more water than could be obtained from rainfall. The first deep-drilled well in the area was dug here and the windmill was erected in 1893-94. It was built on the same large scale as that of the house and was much noticed.

The mill is one of the few local vestiges of the engineering of the 19th century. Letters detailing the method of construction as well as all the measurements of the parts are available for the restoration of the structure, which is expected to begin before snowfall of this year.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Banks, Elizabeth V.M., This is Fairfield. Walker-Buckcliff Co. New Haven, 1969.  
 acury, Elizabeth Banks, Here About the Hill. City Printing Co., North Haven, 1968.

**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	° ' "	° ' "				
NE	° ' "	° ' "	41	10	21	73 17 32
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 40' X 100' 1/10 acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: William B. Sly III - Headmaster

ORGANIZATION: Fairfield Country Day School DATE: June, Oct. 1971

STREET AND NUMBER: 2970 Bronson Road

CITY OR TOWN: Fairfield 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: William B. Sly III  
 Title: State Liaison Officer  
 Date: 20 October, 1971

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

Ernest A. Connelly  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
 DEC 29 1971

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 ATTEST: William B. Sly III  
 Keeper of The National Register  
 Date: DEC 14 1971

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

TOWN OF FAIRFIELD  
CONNECTICUT

BRONSON WINDMILL

Latitude -  $41^{\circ}10'24''$   
Longitude -  $73^{\circ}17'32''$

BRONSON

LONG ISLAND SOUND

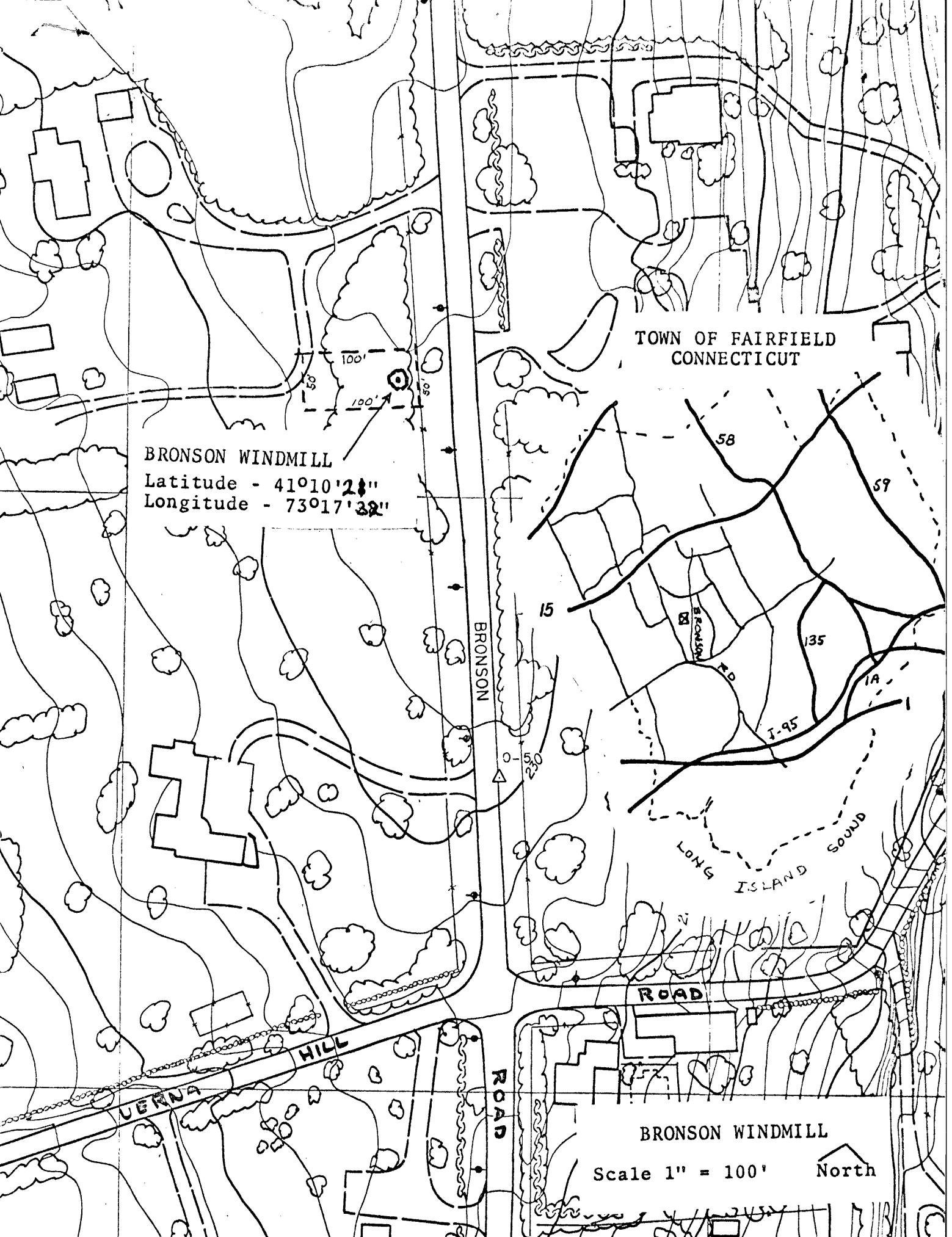
VERNA HILL ROAD

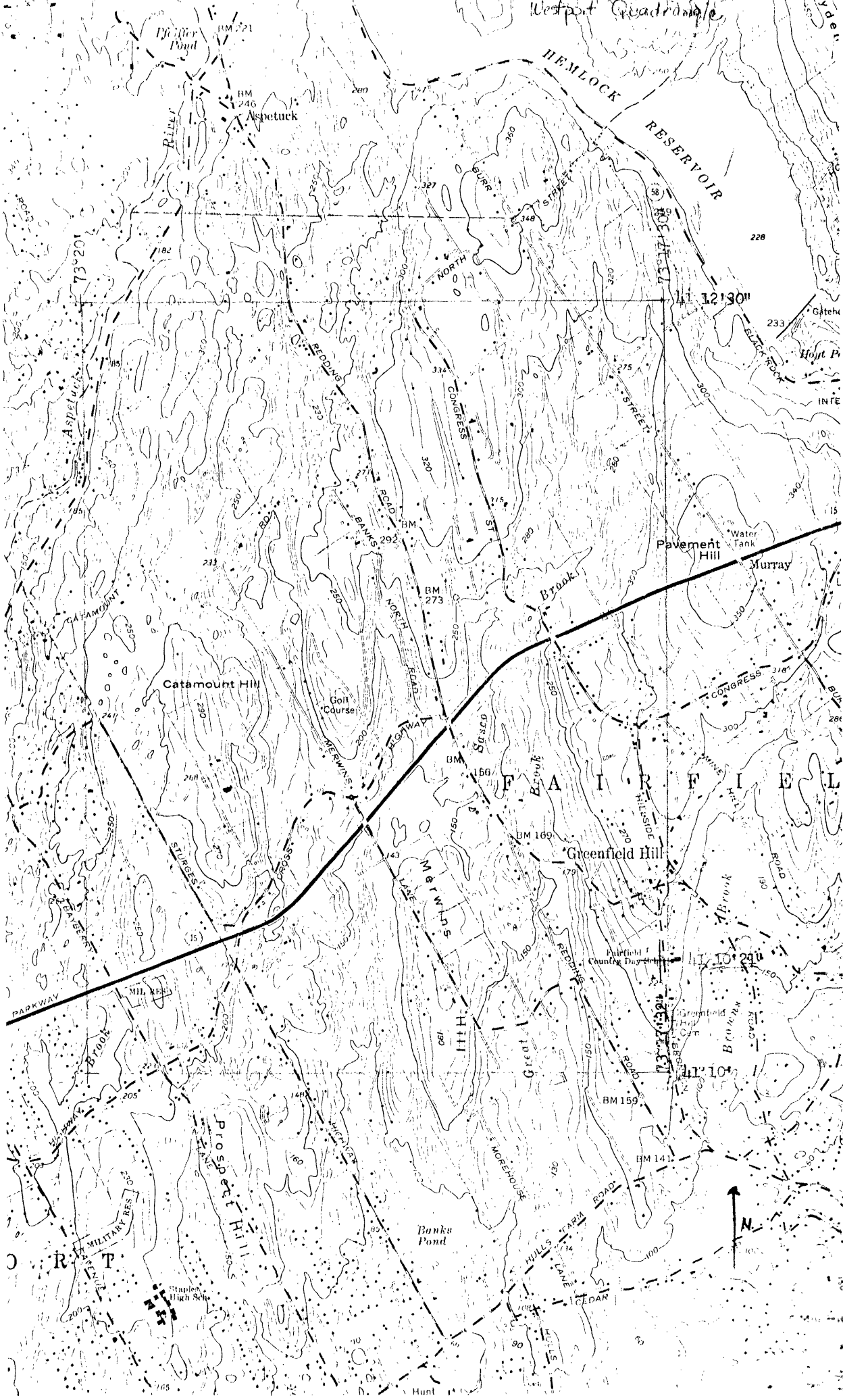
ROAD

BRONSON WINDMILL

Scale 1" = 100'

North





Westport Quadrangle

HEMLOCK RESERVOIR

Aspetuck  
River  
BM 246  
BM 221

Aspetuck  
73°20'

121°30'

Catamount Hill

Pavement Hill  
Water Tank  
Murray

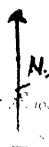
GREENFIELD HILLS

Greenfield Hill

Greenfield  
County Day School

Prospect Hill  
Staples High Sch.

Banks Pond



MILITARY RES.

HILLS TANK ROAD  
CLEAR