

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	
JAN 24 1979	
DATE ENTERED	APR 6 1979

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 The Elisha Pitkin House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
173 High Woods Drive

CITY, TOWN
Guilford

STATE
Connecticut

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION
VICINITY OF
3rd Robert Giaimo

CODE
COUNTY
New Haven CODE
9

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 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
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Joseph and Marilyn Russo

STREET & NUMBER
173 High Woods Drive

CITY, TOWN
Guilford

STATE
Connecticut

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Town Clerk's Office

STREET & NUMBER
Park Street

CITY, TOWN
Guilford

STATE
Connecticut

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
"Census of Old Buildings in Connecticut" W.P.A. Federal Writer's Project

DATE
1941

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS State Library of Connecticut 231 Capitol Avenue

CITY, TOWN
Hartford

STATE
CT

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE <u>1955</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED	Criteria: Exceptions B, E	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Elisha Pitkin House is a 1764 gambrel-roofed house, presently located just north of Route 95 in Guilford, Connecticut. The house is five bays wide and two stories tall; two chimneys flank the impressive double-leaved door with its massive entablature. A one and a half story ell extends to the rear of the house. This is a portion of the seventeenth century house of Joseph Pitkin, father of the builder of the main house, Elisha Pitkin. In 1955, the house was removed from its original location in East Hartford, where it was threatened with demolition, and relocated on its present site. For some years prior to the move, the structure had been vacant and suffered some structural damage. At the time of the move, unsound elements were replaced and structural integrity restored. The configuration of the house was not altered however and care was taken to employ as much of the original fabric as possible.

The clapboarded facade contains nine windows and is dominated by an elaborate double leaved door with four lights. Fluted pilasters with rosettes in the necking flank the doors, which retain their original hardware. A broad moulded entablature with a central console surmounts the entrance. To the left of the facade, a roof sweep attached just below the second story windows and supported by posts forms a piazza. This appears in photos taken early in this century but does not seem to have been part of either the 1764 or the 1690 houses. To the right of the facade stands a two car garage connected to the house via a one-story mud-room, both added c. 1965. This addition required the removal of the rear window on the first floor of the end wall, which originally contained six windows. Though clearly modern additions, the garage and mud-room are not incompatible with the main house, being clapboarded, like the house. All of the windows, except those which occur directly below the main cornice, are ornamented with simple moulded cornices and have twelve over twelve sash.

A first floor plan of the Pitkin house appears in J. Frederick Kelly's Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut and indicates that the present ell to the rear of the main house is the right half of a two-chamber story and a half central chimney structure, constructed c. 1690. When the eighteenth century Elisha Pitkin house was built in 1764, the left half of the older structure was torn down. The remainder of the Joseph Pitkin house then became the kitchen for the new main house, connecting with its left rear chamber. (see "Figure 18") At that time, the central chimney of the 1690 house became an end wall chimney and one fireplace was blocked up. In 1955, at the time of the move, an enclosed porch was added off the 1690 ell and the fireplace re-opened. Other elements of the 1955 move and restoration included the laying of a concrete foundation behind the original red sandstone blocks, the replacement of a rotted sill, the repointing and repair of the chimneystacks and the replacement of some purlins, rafters and plates.

Two other alterations have been made. A bay window has been inserted along the left wall below the piazza roof and above it, on the second story, a third window has been centered between the original two.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Elisha Pitkin ITEM NUMBER 6 PAGE 1

"Old Houses of Connecticut"- Connecticut Society of Colonial Dames
1924 State
State Library of Connecticut
231 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT

Historic American Buildings Survey
1936 Federal
Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Elisha Pitkin ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

Much of the interior detail of the Pitkin house remains intact. There are cased summer beams in the two front rooms on both the first and second floors. The corner posts are flared and cased as well. Simple panelling exists in both front chambers on the first floor. In one chamber there is a panelled wainscot extending to the windowsills as well as a panelled fireplace wall. In the other, only the fireplace wall is panelled, though here a single panel measures 38" wide. The central staircase has two landings and a quarter turn, with turned banisters, three to a tread; there is a simple turned newel post.

Once located along East Hartford's Main Street above the meadows along the Connecticut River, the Elisha Pitkin House occupied a prominent site opposite the Third Church of Hartford. It is presently located in a suburban section of Guilford, which recently has been developed with medium-sized houses. The landscaping directly around the Pitkin House obscures these houses, setting it off from its neighbors. An inground swimming pool and a tennis court have been added to the grounds surrounding the Pitkin House.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1764 with c. 1690 ell BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Elisha Pitkin House is a fine example of late colonial architecture with its broad gambrel roof, clapboarded facade and massive double door. With the seventeenth century ell to the rear, the house reflects the resourcefulness and thrift of colonial builders and illustrates the changing forms of early Connecticut architecture. The Elisha Pitkin House and its 1690 antecedent, the Joseph Pitkin house ell to the rear, are a valuable document in the history not only of an illustrious Connecticut family but of the town of East Hartford and the state as well.

Within the town of East Hartford, the Pitkin family name loomed large. As original settlers and owners of extensive acreage, the Pitkins naturally contributed significantly to East Hartford's growth. The (now ruinous) Pitkin Glass Works in Manchester, Connecticut, is an early industry in colonial Connecticut. Surviving examples of Pitkin glass are rare today and consequently of great value. In addition to the Glass Works (to which the state assembly granted a monopoly on glass manufacture in appreciation of services rendered to the state during the Revolution), there were several Pitkin mills, for both cotton and wool, as well as other factories, most notably that which produced the "Pitkin Watch".* There were stores and even hotels, all owned by Pitkins. A glance at the 1840 map of East Hartford reveals the extent to which this one family dominated the early history of the town. The Pitkin family left their mark on affairs of wider scope as well. Descendants of Martha Pitkin Wolcott, sister of the family's progenitor, William, include seven governors, four of Connecticut and three in other states.

Squire Elisha Pitkin, owner of the 1764 house, was a graduate of Yale, a magistrate and justice in East Hartford and a major commandant of artillery in the Revolution. He was also East Hartford's representative to the General Assembly from 1784-1805 and a one third owner of the Pitkin Glass Works. In addition, Squire Elisha was "closely identified" with the manufacture of gunpowder, snuff, and anchors, and with the West Indies trade. As the home of this energetic and enterprising patriot, the Pitkin house witnessed considerable activity: it was nicknamed the "Minister's Hotel" because of the large number of clergymen entertained there and once hosted the Comte de Rochambeau when he and his troops stopped at East Hartford on their way to Yorktown. Of all the properties once associated with the Pitkin family, only this house and the ruins of the Pitkin Glass Works remain.

* According to A. P. Pitkin, in 1834, James F. and Henry Pitkin commenced manufacture of the "American Lever Watch," the first ever made in this country. Pitkin Family of America, p. lxxvii.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Ishan, Norman M. and Brown, Albert F., EARLY CONNECTICUT HOUSES, New York, Dover Publications, Inc., 1965.

Kelly, J. Frederick, EARLY DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE OF CONNECTICUT, New York, Dover Publications, Inc., 1963.

Pitkin, A. P., PITKIN FAMILY OF AMERICA, Hartford, 1887.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 5

QUADRANGLE NAME Guilford Quadrangle

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1: 24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 69, 23, 60 4517, 60, 70

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Commencing on High Woods Drive and running south on High Woods Drive to the south property line, then west to the west property line, north to the northern boundary and east returning to High Woods Drive. Volume 231, p. 508.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Sarah J. Zimmerman, Consultant

June, 1978

ORGANIZATION

Connecticut Historical Commission

203 566-3005

STREET & NUMBER

59 South Prospect Street

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Hartford

CT STATE

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

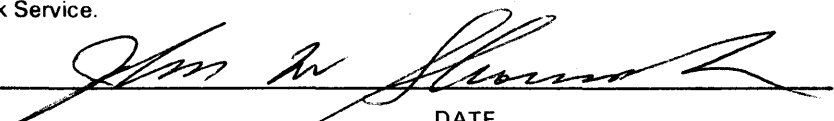
NATIONAL

STATE X

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 January 19, 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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



DATE 4.6.79

ATTEST: 
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE April 5, 1979

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CONTINUATION SHEET Elisha Pitkin ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

The house remained in the Pitkin family until 1871 and in the nineteen-forties was the object of an abortive restoration attempt by the town of East Hartford, which failed for lack of funds. J. Frederick Kelly, who had examined and recorded the house for inclusion in his Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut, was to have been the consultant for the restoration. In addition, the house was recorded by the Historic American Buildings Survey. In 1953, the house was purchased by Edward Pitkin, a lineal descendent, removed to its present site, just off Route 77 in Guilford, Connecticut, and restored by the Guilford firm of Landon and Hall. Despite this move and the repairs necessary to restore its structural integrity, the house is significant and valuable as the sole remaining building still in use associated with the influential Pitkin family. It is as well a fine late colonial house.

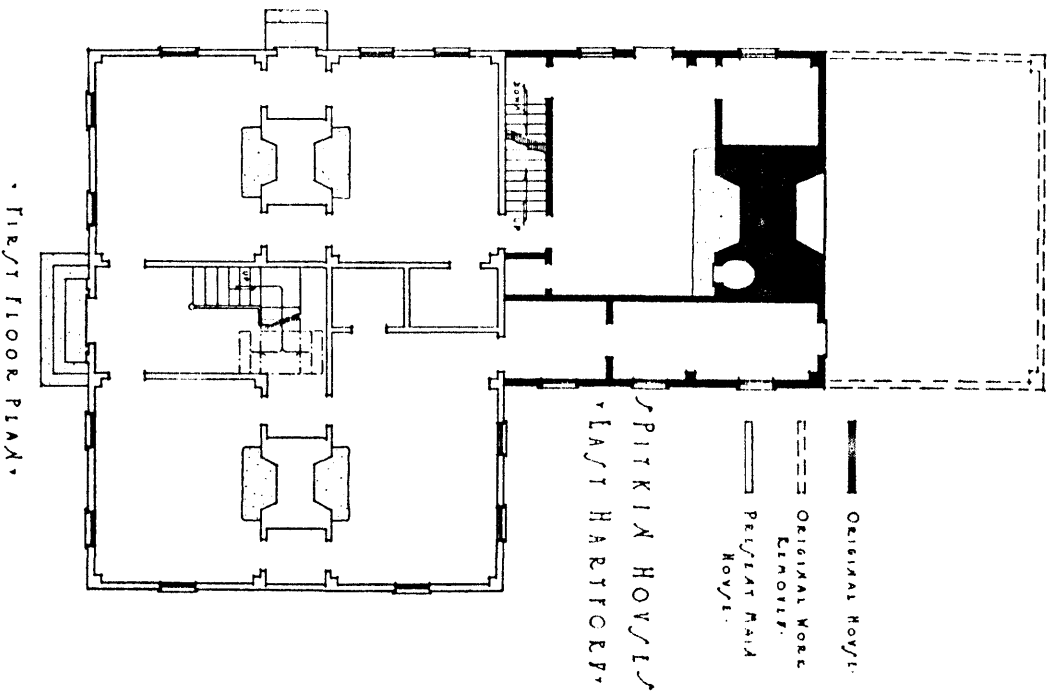


FIGURE 18.

Figure 18,
 from J. Frederick Kelly, Early
 Domestic Architecture of CT,
 p. 18

JAN 24 1979

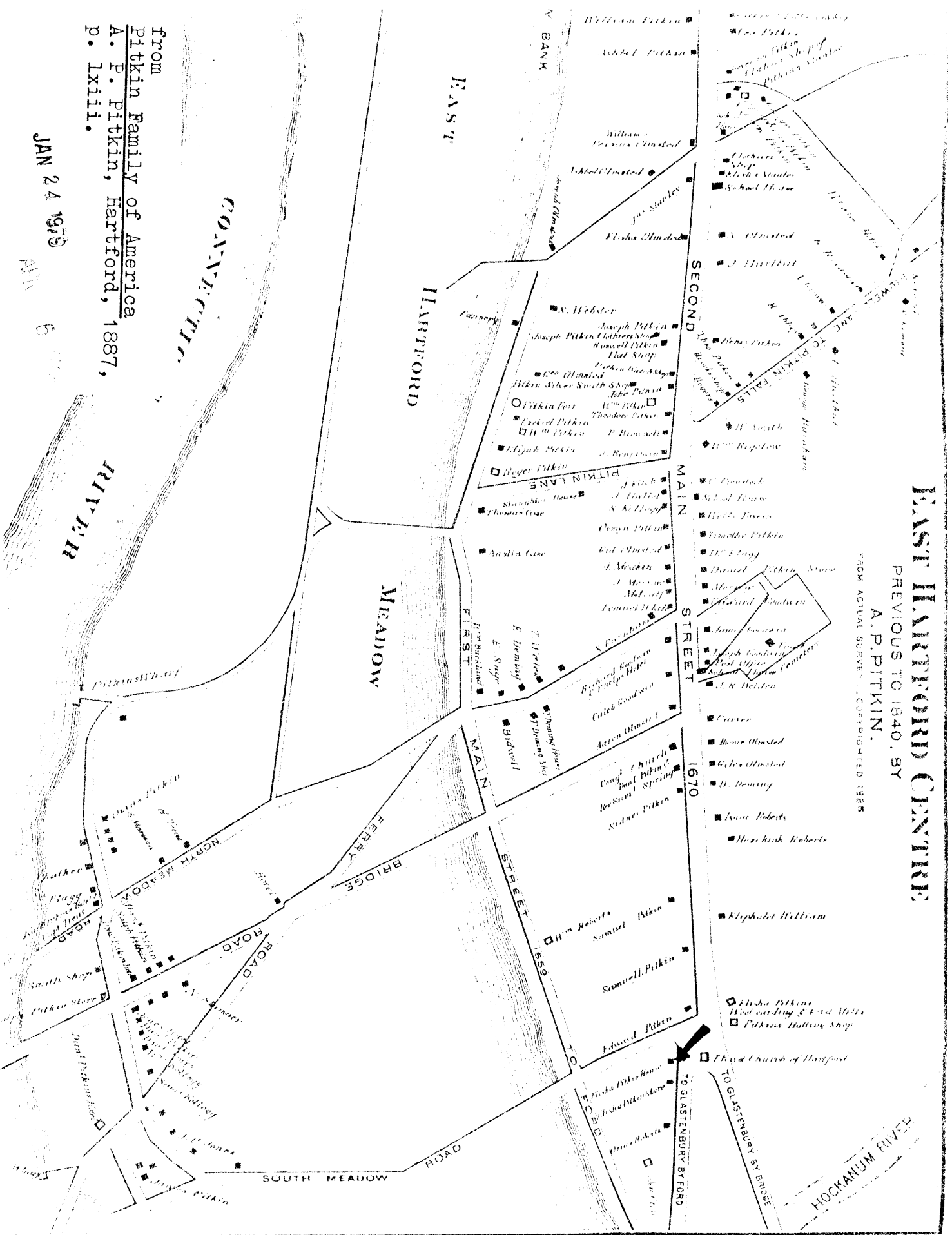
APP 6 1979

EAST HARTFORD CENTRE

PREVIOUS TO 1840, BY

A. P. PITKIN.

FROM ACTUAL SURVEY, REPRODUCED 1885



From
Pitkin Family of America
A. P. Pitkin, Hartford, 1887,
p. Lxiii.

JAN 24 1919

PLATE 6