

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 an 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 _____

other names/site number North Cove Historic District

2. Location

street & number See continuation sheet. N/A not for publication

city or town Saybrook N/A vicinity

state Connecticut code CT county Middlesex code 007 zip code 06475

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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.)

[Signature] 06/20/94
 Signature of certifying official/Title Date
 Director, Connecticut Historical Commission
 State of 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 certifying official/Title Date

 State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	<u>for</u> Signature of the Keeper	Entered in the National Register	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	<u><i>[Signature]</i></u>		<u>7/22/94</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:)	_____		_____

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply) Category of Property (Check only one box)

- Ownership: private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal. Category: building(s), structure, object.

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows for buildings, sites, structures, objects, and Total.

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

2

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling/secondary structure
COMMERCE/TRADE/tavern/warehouse

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling/secondary structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

COLONIAL/Postmedieval English
EARLY REPUBLIC/Federal
MID-19TH CENTURY/Greek Revival
LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/ Colonial Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone
walls weatherboard
brick
roof asphalt
other

Narrative Description

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

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Continuation Sheet**

North Cove Historic District, Middlesex County, Old Saybrook, CT

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Location

Church Street: 7.

Cromwell Place: 48, 50 (Map 32/20-3, partial), 52 (Map 32/20-2, partial) 54,
60, 64.

69.

North Cove Road: 40, 46, 60, 70 (Map 31/21), 86, Map 32/68, 96, 100, 110,
116, 118, 122, 132, 138, 142, 148, 152, 158, 174, Map 32/16,
184, 192, 200.

55, 61 (Map 31/20), 87 (Map 31/22), 91, 101, 103, Map 32/3,
141, 151, 171 (Map 32/6), 173 (Map 32/7), 175, Map 32/9,
191, 201, Map 32/12.

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North Cove Historic District, Middlesex County, Old Saybrook, CT

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The North Cove Historic District is located on Saybrook Point in the Town of Old Saybrook. A narrow linear district bordered on the north by North Cove, a natural harbor, and on the east by the Connecticut River, the district extends the length of North Cove Road from Church Street on the west and also includes part of one block on Cromwell Place. It encompasses and expands upon an existing local historic district of the same name. The boundaries of both districts are delineated on the attached district map. Changes to the district over time have been minimal. Although some of the names have been changed, the basic street pattern laid out in the mid-seventeenth century still remains. The spatial relationship between the buildings and their orientation to North Cove harbor, which is still apparent on nineteenth-century maps, has been maintained.

The North Cove Historic District contains 63 buildings: 44 contributing (70%) and 18 non-contributing. There are 36 principal buildings, which include 21 contributing historic houses built between 1700 and c. 1930 and one former nineteenth-century outbuilding converted to residential use. Most of the houses are wood-frame construction and rest on brownstone or ashlar rubble foundations; only two houses are built of brick. With few exceptions the houses are set close to the road and several are set off from the street by a variety of picket or rail fencing. The secondary structures consist of barns and carriage houses, as well as garages. Some of the latter were built in the early twentieth century.

Some of the oldest houses in the district, which date from the first half of the eighteenth century, may have been constructed as smaller houses which were enlarged sometime before the Revolution. The earliest is the c. 1700 Robert Bull House at the western end (Inventory #15; Photograph #1). Given its five-bay gambrel cape form, and the off-center chimney, it is probable that it was remodeled and/or enlarged about 1740, the generally accepted earliest date for this roof form, which is the presumed date of a similar Cape at the corner of Church Street (Inventory #1; Photograph #2). The curved dormers of the Bull House suggest even later features. The 1704 Black Horse Tavern, which is located between the water and the road in the center of the district, is a ridge-to-street Colonial of four bays, with both an off-center doorway and chimney (Inventory #53; Photograph #3). The placement of the chimney and the unbalanced fenestration pattern probably indicates that the house was originally an end-chimney dwelling that had an additional bay added to the left of the door. Its Federal portico, similar to others of this style in the district, is a later addition. The facade of the William Tully House is a mirror image of that of the tavern, suggesting the same building history (Inventory #47; Photograph #4). It is highlighted by a Connecticut River Valley doorway with a flat pediment, an architectural feature also found in the river towns farther north. The door itself is framed with sidelights and an eight-light transom; its center two lights are heart shaped. The last of these early buildings is the John Ingraham House, a large gable-roofed Colonial (Inventory #23; Photograph #5). Although it has extensive additions on its western end, the main block is apparently a single build, dating from about 1734. The doorway with its multi-paned sidelights is a recent

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replacement for the original entrance, which had been removed for a bay window in the 1970s, part of an earlier remodeling. The fanlights in the gables are probably early twentieth-century additions.

Several houses were built from around the turn of the nineteenth century to the end of the Federal period. The earliest is a large two-story gambrel-roofed Colonial with a facade overhang, built in 1799 by Captain William Lynde (Inventory #51; Photograph #s 6, 7). An older ell, dated at c. 1645 by restoration architect J. Frederick Kelly, was attached to the Lynde House about the time of its construction. Another turn-of-the-century house built by John Bushnell and substantially remodeled in the 1920s, is located near a point that projects into the cove (Inventory #42; Photograph #8). Two Kirtland houses built side by side near the center of the district face North Cove from the south side of the road. The Asa Kirtland House, built in 1805, has a four-bay facade with an off-center doorway (Inventory #27; Photograph #9). Its surround, which is Federal in appearance with a high entablature, has a mutule course under the cornice, which is repeated under the eaves of the house. The facade of the 1810 Bushnell Kirtland House, Colonial in form with a gable roof, is elaborated with a second-floor Palladian window over a high-style Federal doorway (Inventory #31; Photograph #10). Since these features are believed to be original, the proportioning and placement suggests some degree of remodeling. The doorway surround has, in effect, a double entablature; it may have been raised to accommodate the fanlight over the door in the early twentieth century. The Captain John Ingraham House is another example of the late use of the Colonial form (Inventory #35; Photograph #11). Built in 1822 and renovated and restored in 1941, it displays a Colonial Revival flat-roofed portico. The 1813 George Pratt House at the end of North Cove Road may also have been built in the Federal style (Inventory #61). Constructed on the foundation of an earlier house which was destroyed during the War if 1812, it has been substantially remodeled and enlarged and retains very little of its Federal features.¹

Two houses almost facing each other on Cromwell Place are transitional houses, side-hall Federals that still display characteristic features from the Late Georgian period. The first is the Giles Blague House, which was built in 1807, an early date for this plan and orientation (Inventory 10; Photograph #12). As might be expected, the heavy denticulated course and Ionic columns of its pedimented portico reflect the Georgian influence. Its counterpart, the 1813 Samuel Hart, Jr., House, has a full gable pediment defined by a mutule course and a pedimented doorway surround, more delicate than that of its neighbor, but still not as attenuated as most examples built in the late Federal period (Inventory #8).

¹ The description is taken from the historic district study report because the property is only visible from the Connecticut River. No photograph was taken for the same reason.

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Several examples of the Greek Revival style include the only historic brick house in the district, the c. 1830 Captain George Dickinson House, which has a gable roof and four end chimneys (Inventory #57; Photograph #s 7, 13). Built as a residence with a chandlery on the west end, the main block has two sections framed by brick pilasters, is highlighted by limestone sills, flared lintels, and watertable, and displays a full entablature. The one-story brick wing, recessed on the east end, is similar in detail and appears to be original construction. The doorway on the west side of the facade of the main block has a four-bay transom. The main doorway to the east is recessed in *antis*, with four Doric columns and a multi-paned transom. Three-pane sidelights are set between the column pairs. The flushboarded pediment on the gable ends of the main block contain unusual detailing: fanlights surmounted by carved wooden moldings that terminate in a knot form at the apex of the curve. A more conventional side-hall Greek Revival house, also built for a mariner, Captain Charles Williams, in 1842, is found at the east end of the district on Cromwell Place (Inventory #3; Photograph #14). It relies on the Greek temple form, as does the Captain Dolbeare House built in 1855 (Inventory #19; Photograph #15). The original house was enlarged in 1931, a remodeling that probably included the two-story colonnade on the west gable end. The few later nineteenth-century buildings include one that may be a remodeled barn or warehouse (Inventory #55; Photograph #16) and a small Queen Anne dating from about 1890 (Inventory #6).

Historic twentieth-century houses include several Capes, some of which have been remodeled, and one Bungalow, with an enclosed front porch, that was built in 1917 and moved to this location (Inventory #45; Photograph #17). A 1917 Cape to the east was recently replaced by a Post Modern house, but the original small detached garage at the rear of the lot was retained (Inventory #48; Photograph #17). One modern saltbox, enlarged from a 1930 Cape, displays a Connecticut River Valley doorway which appears authentic and must have been taken from an older house (Inventory #39). A typical example of a Federal Revival saltbox is located near the end of North Cove Road (Inventory #63; Photograph #18). Set between the road and the water, it features an elongated fanlight over the door.

Several modern houses to the district utilize the historic Cape form, including one built of brick in 1970 (Inventory #44). Interspersed throughout the district are other modern houses, built between 1957 and 1981, which have the lower profile of the Ranch-style house.

A complete inventory of the contributing and non-contributing buildings is found on the following pages.

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<u>Inv. #</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Name/Style/Date</u>	<u>C\NC</u>	<u>Ph. #</u>
1.	7 Church Street	Gambrel Cape, c. 1740	C	2
2.	7	shed, 18th c.	C	
3.	48 Cromwell Place	CAPT. CHARLES WILLIAMS HOUSE, Greek Revival, 1842	C	14
4.	48	garage, 1930	C	
5.	54	modern house, c. 1985	NC	
6.	60	Queen Anne, c. 1880	C	
7.	60	shed, 1982	NC	
8.	64	SAMUEL HART, JR., HOUSE, Federal, 1813	C	
9.	64	garage, 1930	C	
10.	69	GILES BLAGUE HOUSE, Federal, 1807	C	12
11.	69	shed, 1940	C	
12.	40 North Cove Road	modern Ranch, 1978	NC	
13.	46	modern Cape, c. 1980	NC	
14.	46	garage, c. 1900	C	
15.	55	ROBERT BULL HOUSE, Gambrel Cape, c. 1700	C	1
16.	55	garage, 1981	NC	
17.	55	shed, 1949	NC	
18.	60	modern Cape, 1960	NC	
19.	70	CAPT. DOLBEARE HOUSE, Greek Revival, 1855, remodeled 1931	C	15
20.	70	guesthouse, 1925	C	
21.	70	guesthouse, 1925	C	

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22.	86 North Cove Rd.	modern Ranch, 1954	NC	
23.	91	JOHN INGRAHAM HOUSE, Colonial, c. 1734	C	5
24.	91	barn/garage, 19th c.	C	
25.	91	boathouse, possibly 18th c.	C	
26.	96	modern Ranch, c. 1957	NC	
27.	100 North Cove	ASA KIRTLAND HOUSE, Colonial/Federal, 1805	C	9
28.	100	former barn, 19th c.	C	
29.	101	modern Cape, 1981	NC	
30.	103	modern Cape, 1979	NC	
31.	110	BUSHNELL KIRTLAND HOUSE, Federal, 1810	C	10
32.	116	Colonial Revival, rebuilt 1918	C	
33.	116	garage/barn, c. 1918	C	
34.	118	modern Gambrel Cape, 1961	NC	
35.	122	CAPT. JOHN INGRAHAM, Federal, 1810	C	11
36.	122	carriage house, c. 1880	C	
37.	122	shed, 1930	C	
38.	132	modern Cape, 1983	NC	
39.	138	saltbox, 1930, enlarged 1990	NC	
40.	138	garage, 1988	NC	
41.	138	shed, 1930	C	
42.	141	JOHN BUSHNELL HOUSE, c. 1790; rebuilt c. 1920	C	8
43.	141	shed, c. 1800	C	
44.	142	modern Cape, c. 1985 (brick)	NC	17

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45.	148 North Cove Rd.	Bungalow, 1917; moved to present location	C	17
46.	148	garage, 1917	C	
47.	151	WILLIAM TULLY HOUSE, Colonial, 1750 NR, 1982	C	4
48.	152	house, Post Modern, 1993	NC	17
49.	152	garage, 1917	C	
50.	158	modern Ranch, 1965	NC	
51.	174	CAPT. WILLOUGHBY LYNDE HOUSE, Gambrel Colonial, 1799; ell: SAMUEL DOTY, c. 1645	C	6, 7
52.	174	garage, c. 1930	C	
53.	175	BLACK HORSE TAVERN, Colonial, 1704 NR, 1978	C	3
54.	175	gazebo, c. 1970	NC	
55.	184	19th.-c. vernacular, c. 1860	C	16
56.	184	shed, 1890	C	
57.	191	CAPT. GEORGE DICKINSON HOUSE, Greek Revival, c. 1830 (brick)	C	7, 13
58.	192	GEE HOUSE, Cape, c. 1800	C	
59.	192	garage, c. 1900	C	
60.	192	garage, c. 1900	C	
61.	200	GEORGE PRATT HOUSE, Federal, 1813	C	
62.	200	garage, c. 1900	C	
63.	201	Colonial Revival, 1923	C	18

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 37

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 8	7 2 0 8 2 0	4 5 7 3 7 6 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	1 8	7 2 1 4 2 0	4 5 7 4 1 0 0

3	1 8	7 2 1 7 2 0	4 5 7 3 8 9 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	1 8	7 2 1 6 2 0	4 5 7 3 7 1 0

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 Reviewed by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

name/title Jan Cunningham, National Register Consultant

organization Cunningham Associates Ltd. date 3/20/94

street & number 37 Orange Road telephone (203) 347 4072

city or town Middletown state CT zip code 06457

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name See continuation sheet.

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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.
Inventory # 45
- 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.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

Period of Significance

c. 1700 - 1927

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

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North Cove Historic District, Middlesex County, Old Saybrook, CT

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The North Cove Historic District is an architecturally and historically significant illustration of the development of a small maritime landing at the mouth of the Connecticut River between 1645 and 1927. Of particular significance is its fine collection of well-preserved houses dating from c. 1700 to 1855 that were built during its commercial heyday. They include exceptionally well-crafted examples of Colonial, Federal, and Greek Revival domestic architecture. Added significance is derived from the district's important local historic association as the site of the first settlement of the Saybrook Colony.

Architectural Significance

The historic character and setting of the district is exceptional. Although it has continued to grow and develop as a residential neighborhood, historic sightlines have been maintained to the waterfront, thus preserving the original open interrelationship between the houses and the harbor. Few houses have been built along the North Cove shoreline since the nineteenth century. Later modern infill has conformed to the historic residential scale of the district and does not interrupt the visual continuity between the key historic resources.

The houses of the colonial period are particularly significant for their age, state of preservation, and range of form. Few communities contain such a concentration of early eighteenth-century houses. They not only demonstrate the possible variety of form and plan in this period, but they also demonstrate how some buildings from this period have evolved over time. With few exceptions, the mercantile wealth of their owners and builders is displayed in careful attention to the facade entrance, best illustrated by the doorway of the William Tully House (Inventory #47; Photograph #4). With its pulvinated frieze, flat pediment, and bold articulation, it is an excellent example of the type of vernacular doorway that was disseminated throughout the Connecticut River Valley in the mid-1700s. Some, like the Black Horse Tavern, reflect the increased prosperity of the community after 1800 in their ornately detailed Federal/Georgian porticos (Inventory #53; Photograph #3).

These transitional porticos, found both on earlier houses and those built in the Federal period, are indicative of the level of style achieved by carpenter/builders at that time. Yet the interpretation and scale of the detailing demonstrate a certain naive vernacular quality, as exemplified by the portico of the Giles Blague House (Inventory #10; Photograph #12). There, although the carving of the Ionic capitals is quite fine, instead of the attenuated detailing associated with the pure Federal style, the builder kept the boldness of late Georgian detailing. Another case in point is the facade of the Bushnell Kirtland House, where the doorway detailing, if entirely original, has been elongated to fill the center bay (Inventory #31; Photograph #10).

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One of the most individually significant buildings in the district is the Captain George Dickinson House (Inventory #57; Photograph #13). Not only is the masonry exceptionally well crafted, but the house also has a unique design, one that was created both to accommodate a multi-functional use and to fit a narrow lot. Its highly unusual main doorway, which appears to be original, suggests that an architect, yet unknown, may have had a hand in its design. This type of doorway *in antis* is rare and usually found only in the more sophisticated urban examples of the late Greek Revival. Another distinguished detail is the knot molding, an unusual architectural reference to the owner's maritime career.

Historical Background

The North Cove Historic District occupies the northern third of the original settlement at Saybrook Point, which was founded by John Winthrop, Jr., as the Saybrook Colony in 1635. The colony was chartered by several "lords and gentlemen" in England, including Lord Say and Sele and Lord Brook, who were immortalized by the name of the colony, but none of these high-ranking Englishmen ever came here. The first group to arrive were sent by Winthrop in October 1635 to forestall the Dutch, who two years earlier had established a trading post up river at Hartford and had plans for this strategic location. The English settlers included a number of carpenters, and they soon began building crude shelters against the coming winter. None of the original buildings remain but it is believed that at least one of the buildings in the district was built on a seventeenth-century foundation. A second group, lead by Lieutenant Lyon Gardiner, arrived from England the following month with the materials to build a fort with a substantial drawbridge. Nothing remains from the original site of the fort, which was on the shore of the Connecticut River to the east of the district. Gardiner later figured prominently in the Pequot War of 1637 and assisted Captain John Mason in the preparations for the Great Swamp Fight, which ended the war and opened the Connecticut coast to further European settlement. By 1643 the Saybrook Colony joined the New England Confederation and officially became part of the Connecticut Colony the following year. George Fenwick, one of the original patentees who had settled here, sailed for England, presumably to obtain the consent of founders to the union with Connecticut. By then Oliver Cromwell was in power and Fenwick, who served in several capacities in the Cromwellian government, never returned to Saybrook.

Historical Significance

Surrounded by water on three sides with a "goodly" harbor to the north, Saybrook Point was a defensible position that seemed ideal for a settlement. Its location near the mouth of Connecticut's major river made it suitable for a trading post. In addition to the river fort, a palisade with a gate was built across the neck to the mainland, which protected the settlers from attack from the east by Native Americans. In traditional fashion, land was set aside for the meetinghouse yard in the center of the community, just to

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the south of the present district. A meetinghouse was located there from 1646 to about 1726, during the period when some of the present houses were built. Farther down Church Street to the west, a parish school persisted until at least 1874. Early Saybrook records have been lost, so the reasons for the demise of the parish here are not known, but it is clear that the main area of settlement for the town moved west across the neck. In addition a number of parishoners associated themselves with the Centerbrook (Essex) meetinghouse by 1722.

North Cove became the primary maritime landing for Saybrook because the Connecticut River estuary was too shallow and exposed for a harbor. Although of moderate depth, North Cove was sheltered from Long Island Sound and large enough for 50 ships to lie at anchor. The eighteenth- and nineteenth-century maritime community that evolved here is well-represented by five houses built by sea captains, all of whom were involved in the coastal or West Indies trade between about 1700 through to about 1900 (Inventory #s 3, 19, 35, 51, 57). Part of one of these buildings, the ell on the Captain Lynde House, built about 1645, was owned by another mariner, Captain Doty, and used as a bakery for ship's bread in the 1700s (Inventory 51). Doty, who was a West Indies trader and shipbuilder and owned land from Cromwell Place north to the cove, had a shipyard, warehouse, and wharf on the river. His house, which stood on Fenwick Street, now Cromwell Place, was torn down about 1813, when the Samuel Hart, Jr., House was constructed (Inventory #8).

Several other houses have early maritime associations. The Blagues had a wharf at the head of Cromwell Place in 1703. The original house owned by Joseph Blague, one of the first settlers, is gone, but the house of a descendant still stands on the property, which remained in the family until 1983 (Inventory #10). The Blagues, large landowners in the area, acquired the meetinghouse yard at some point in the late 1700s. The Black Horse Tavern was a customs house when Saybrook was briefly a port of entry for the Connecticut River (Inventory #53). When this function was transferred upriver, North Cove's failure as a major riverport was sealed. Ships carrying foreign cargoes sailed right past North Cove Harbor to off-load at Middletown. During the Revolution, the harbor was an ideal site for smugglers. In 1779 the William Tully House was the location of armed conflict between Tully's son, also William, and Tories from Middletown, who engaged in illegal trade with the British and had come to reclaim some confiscated contraband that was stored there (Inventory #37).

The landing's continued modest growth in the nineteenth century is reflected in the exceptional brick Greek Revival house built for Captain George Dickinson. Its unusual length is attributed to the use of the west end as a chandlery. The cellar was a warehouse, and casks of rum and molasses off-loaded at the wharf were rolled up the lane to the cellar door. George Pratt, a merchant who represented Old Saybrook in the General Assembly and also served as state senator, had a wharf near his house, one of a series of three or four wharves here in 1874 (Inventory #61). His house was a replacement for

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North Cove Historic District, Middlesex County, Old Saybrook, CT

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the one that had burned after it was shelled by the British during the War of 1812. The harbor was also a source of eels and clams and David Phelps, who lived in the Robert Bull House at the east end of the district after 1851, made a successful living as a fisherman (Inventory #15).

Undoubtedly the construction of the Connecticut Valley Railroad in 1870 marked the commercial decline of the landing. The rail line extended across the harbor opening and ran down the river shore to cross South Cove and end at Fenwick. At one time it crossed over a major North Cove wharf at the entrance to the harbor, which served as a steamboat dock in the late 1800s, and completely blocked a c. 1820 brownstone pier on the river outside the district. The wharf was later rebuilt alongside the railroad on the harbor side, much in its present configuration. Some of the remains of the railroad's structures are a part of the Fort Saybrook Monument Park to the east of the district. During the steamboat era the harbor was a refuge for the passenger steamship *Granite State*, which caught fire and was beached on the far side at the entrance. Its remains are still visible at low tide. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, Henry Potter built a dock and store at the rear of the Black Horse Tavern (Inventory #53). The store, later known as Burns and Young, moved to Main Street in downtown Saybrook 1910, signalling the end of maritime commerce in the district.

The North Cove area soon became a residential refuge. People were beginning to escape from the city and live or vacation on the coast. For a time the William Tully House was a "fresh air" boardinghouse for working girls and known as "Heartsease," which may account for its use of the heart shape in its transom and shutters (Inventory #47). Several houses were built or moved here in the 1920s, and by the 1930s many of the older houses had been bought up to be restored or remodeled. Remaining open land, both inside and beyond the district boundaries, was subdivided for housing. Today North Cove is a harbor for recreational boating. Modern boat piers and docks occupy the sites of the some of the earlier commercial wharves.

**United States Department of the Interior
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9. Major Bibliographical References

County Atlas of Middlesex, Connecticut. New York: F. W. Beers & Co., 1874.

Gates, Gilman C. *Saybrook at the Mouth of The Connecticut: The First One Hundred Years.* New Haven: Wilson H. Lee Co., 1935.

"Report of The North Cove Historic District Study Committee of Old Saybrook, Connecticut." July, 1984.

Town and City Atlas of the State of Connecticut. Boston: D. H. Hurd & Co., 1893.

10. Geographical Data

UTMS continued:

5.	18	721510	4573700
6.	18	721490	4573850
7.	18	721350	4573920
8.	18	720880	4573510
9.	18	720820	4573480

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundaries of the nominated district are delineated on the attached district map drawn to scale from the Tax Assessor's Maps of Old Saybrook, Connecticut.

Boundary Justification:

The district boundaries were selected to encompass the maximum number of contributing resources associated with the North Cove Historic District during its period of significance. Care was taken to be sure that visual continuity between historic resources was maintained.

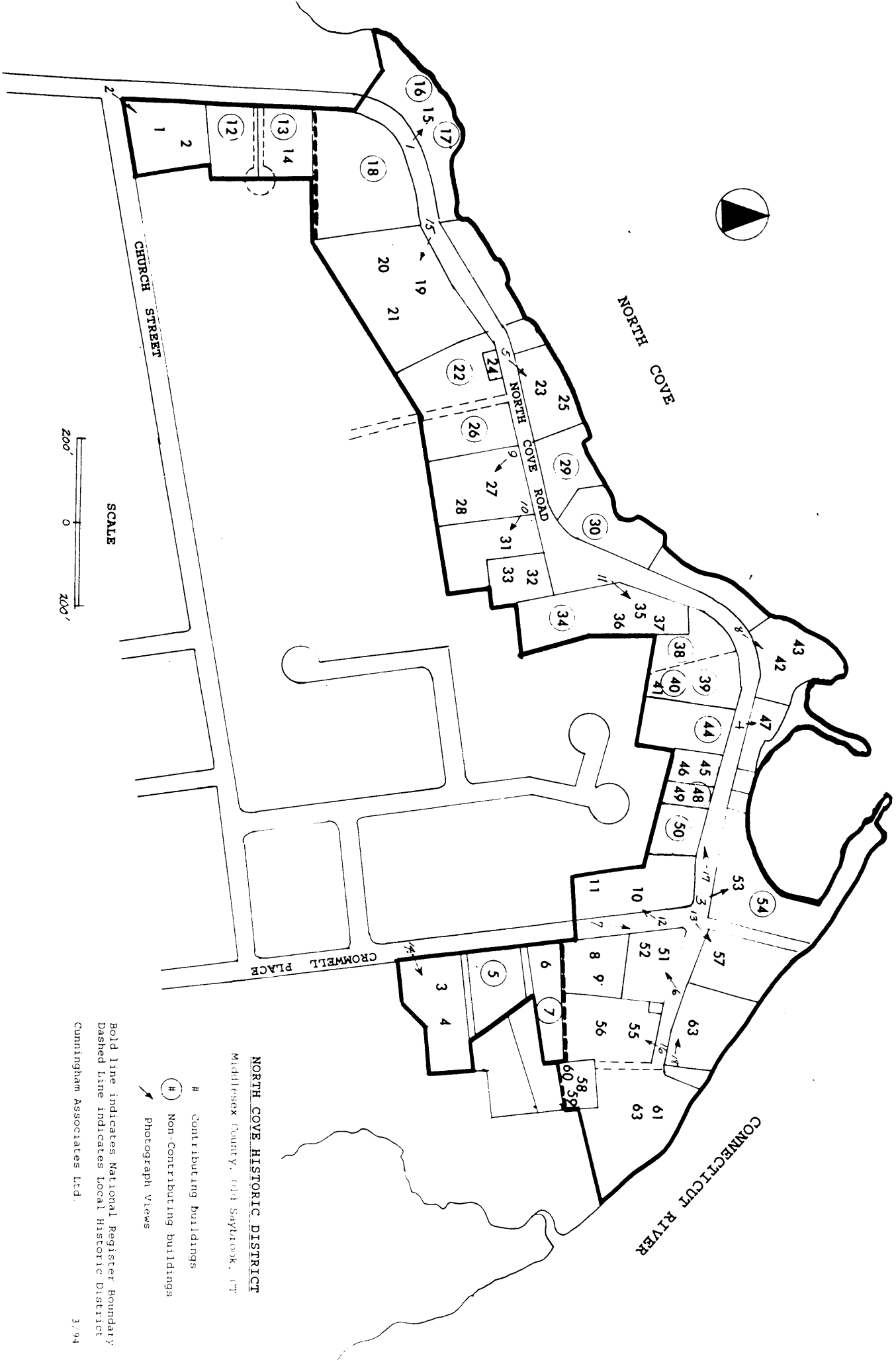
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North Cove Historic District, Middlesex County, Old Saybrook, CT

Section number Photos Page 1**List of Photographs**

Note: All photographs were taken by Cunningham Associates Ltd, 2/94, and the negatives are on file with the Connecticut Historical Commission.

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 1. View: Robert Bull House | Facing: NW |
| 2. View: 7 Church Street | Facing: NE |
| 3. View: Black Horse Tavern | Facing: N |
| 4. View: William Tully House | Facing: N |
| 5. View: John Ingraham House | Facing: NE |
| 6. View: Capt. Willoughby Lynde House | Facing: SW |
| 7. View: Capt. George Dickinson House
Capt. Willoughby Lynde House | Facing: N |
| 8. View: John Bushnell House | Facing: NE |
| 9. View: Asa Kirtland House | Facing: SE |
| 10. View: Bushnell Kirtland House | Facing: SE |
| 11. View: Capt. John Ingraham House | Facing: NE |
| 12. View: Giles Blague House | Facing: SW |
| 13. View: Capt. George Dickinson House | Facing: NE |
| 14. View: Capt. Charles Williams House | Facing: E |
| 15. View: Capt. Dolbeare House | Facing: SE |
| 16. View: 184 North Cove Road | Facing: S |
| 17. View: Streetscape
142, 148, 152 North Cove Rd. | Facing: W |
| 18. View: 201 North COve Road | Facing: NW |



NORTH COVE HISTORIC DISTRICT
 Middlesex County, Old Saybrook, CT

- # Contributing buildings
- # Non-Contributing buildings
- ↙ Photograph Views

Bold line indicates National Register Boundary
 Dashed line indicates Local Historic District
 Cunningham Associates Ltd. 3/94