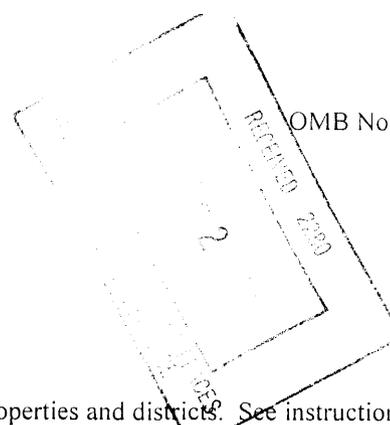


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1629



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 any 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.

I. Name of Property

historic name Northford Center

other names/site Northford Center Historic District

2. Location

street & number See Item #2. not for publication N/A

city or town North Branford vicinity N/A

state Connecticut code CT county New Haven code 009 zip code 06472

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.)

John W. Shannahan 11/20/02
Signature of certifying official Date
John W. Shannahan, Director, Connecticut Historical Commission
State or 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 commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Northford Center Historic District, New Haven County, CT

Section 2 Page 1

Location:

Maltby Lane: 2, 7, 12.

Middletown Avenue: 1382, 1386, 1400, 1405, Northford Green, 1438, 1444, 1446-86, 1512, 1514, 1536, Lot 71/51-1 (frontage only), 1565, 1571, 1572, 1580, 1635, 1639, 1647, 1655, 1659, 1663, 1666, 1682, 1684, 1686, 1693, 1701, 1703, 1704, 1709, 1710, 1713, 1717, 1719, 1739, 1743, 1745-1775, Lot 72/10A, 1785, 1793, 1795, 1797, 1801.

Old Post Road: 2, 3, 4, 13, 16, 19, 19R, 23, 26, 49, 58, 61, 254, 260, 266, 276, 300.

Northford Center Historic District

Name of Property

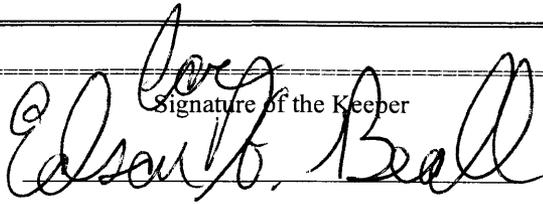
New Haven, CT

County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the
National Register
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper


Date of Action

12/31/02

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing

83

1

1

85

Noncontributing

21 buildings

___ sites

___ structures

___ objects

21 Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

3

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling/secondary structure
RELIGION/religious facility
EDUCATION/school/library

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling/secondary structure
RELIGION/religious facility
EDUCATION/school/library

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

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

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone
walls weatherboard
roof asphalt/wood shingle
other brick

Narrative Description

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

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Northford Center Historic District, New Haven County, CT

Section 7 Page 1

Located in the upper Farm River Valley in North Branford near the Wallingford and Durham lines, Northford Center Historic District consists of two principal streets: Middletown Avenue (State Route 17), the former Middletown Turnpike that runs alongside the river for almost two miles; and portions of Old Post Road (see district map). These roads diverge in the institutional center in the southern part of this linear district, with Old Post Road rising steeply before leveling off to rejoin Middletown Avenue. They also are connected by Maltby Lane near the center of the district. Because of the hills to the west of Middletown Avenue, some houses are located well above the highway, while houses to the east along the river are often sited quite close to the road.

The district contains 106 resources, of which 85 (80 percent) contribute to its architectural and historic character. Although most of the contributing resources are houses and associated outbuildings, the district also includes two churches, a schoolhouse, a library, and a small triangular green, the site of a war memorial, at the southern intersection of the two major roads.

Most of the historic houses in the district were built prior to the Civil War, with 18 percent built in the 1700s and 58 percent in the 1800s. The earliest building, the 1705 Benjamin Howd I House (listed on the National Register as the Howd-Linsley House in 1986), was restored under the supervision of J. Frederick Kelly in 1928 (Inventory #71; Exhibit A). The Howd House is part of a small residential enclave on Sol's Path,¹ now a private road at the head of the district, just one of the many colonial cartways that once led to the meadows and cultivated land along the river or to pasture land on the high ground to the west. Two other houses of the same vintage were moved there and restored by Kelly about 1940 (Inventory #s 73, 74), and the former Howd Barn, which was moved to a nearby lot in 1932, now serves as a residence (Inventory #68).

The Howd House, a three-bay Colonial with an added leanto, is one of three saltboxes in the district. In the unusual framed cornice, the roof plate extends beyond the wall, supported by cantilevered second-story girts, carved as brackets. Another unusual construction feature is the use of a second plate, or purlin, at the rear to carry the leanto roof, here a later addition.² Other framing members include chamfered gunstock posts and summer beams, detailed with lambs' tongues. Much of the exterior fabric was replaced during the restoration and the present doorway and hood were designed by Kelly. Similar roof framing and a corbelled cornice are found in the 1725 Daniel Linsley House, an integral saltbox to the south on the same side of Middletown Avenue (Inventory #62; Photograph #1). The gambrel ell there was added in 1940 and the doorway is a 1930 reproduction. Benjamin Howd II also built a three-bay saltbox about 1740 on Old Post Road, which features a double-leaf front door (Inventory #93; Photograph #2).

One of the larger five-bay Colonials in the district was moved there in the mid-nineteenth century by Julius Maltby from over the Wallingford line (Inventory #34). Probably built about 1760, it has a double overhang and a door surround with sidelights and transom. The Page-Hoadley House of 1748 displays a framed overhang in both gables (Inventory #53; Photograph #3). The flared front-door hood, which is similar to the one on the Benjamin Howd House, was added in 1975. The only Colonial Cape-style house in the district has been dated at 1815, but its form and the low facade roof plate suggest an earlier period (Inventory #28; Photograph #4). It has a two-story rear elevation because its narrow lot on the east side of Middletown Avenue slopes down to the river.

¹ Named for Solomon Linsley, a later owner of the house.

² See J. Frederick Kelly, *Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut*, pp. 52 and 123 for a discussion of these regional features, illustrated by the Evarts Tavern in Northford (no longer extant).

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Northford Center Historic District, New Haven County, CT

Section 7 Page 2

Some of the classicism of the Late Georgian period embellishes the colonial form of the c. 1785 Timothy Bartholomew House (Inventory #76; Photograph #5). Set back from the west side of the road facing the Northford Green, it features a second-floor tripartite window with narrow sidelights over the doorway, which is detailed with a rectangular transom and leaded tracery. Often the succeeding Federal style is limited to just the doorway, as in the shingled c. 1815 Colonial/Federal that sits high above Middletown Avenue, which has a blind fan over the main entrance (Inventory #23; Photograph #6), or the 1776 Josiah Fowler Tavern, which incorporates the original five-pane colonial overlight in a later Federal doorway (Inventory #57). A pedimented Federal door surround was used on the Linsley-Alling House on Old Post Road, a center-chimney house built about 1820 (Inventory #104; Photograph #7).

The neighboring Thaddeus Maltby House of 1824 is one of the few houses in the district that utilize the newer gable-to-street orientation and side-hall plan of this period (Inventory #97; Photograph #8). Embellished with a fully developed doorway sheltered by a Federal portico with cove ceiling and attenuated columns, it also displays a radial fanlight in the gable peak. A similar feature is found in the pediment of the another Maltby house built by his brother Julius about the same time at the corner of Maltby Lane and Middletown Avenue (Inventory #5).

The Greek Revival, the major stylistic influence in the district, was manifested in various ways. As was the case in the Federal period, for some houses, the doorway is the only style feature, as demonstrated by Miller's Hotel, a tavern on the turnpike (Inventory #59; Photograph #9). The similar but later Greek Revival Shipman House, partially hidden in the trees above the west side of the turnpike, also has interior end chimneys. In 1838 Samuel Maltby utilized a similar colonial form and center-hall plan as the basis for a bold, more fully developed expression of this style (Inventory #1; Photograph #10). Broad corner pilasters and frieze frame the four-bay façade, which is highlighted by a classic Greek Revival portico. That same year the first pedimented temple form of this style appeared in the Langdon Harrison House (Inventory #48; Photograph #11). Wider than most houses of this style, the façade has four bays instead of the customary three. The portico with its pierced posts and Victorian detailing was added later, but the boldly executed pediment, the doorway with its operable sidelights, and the narrow attic windows under the eaves of the kitchen wing are characteristic style features.

Many of these same features are found in the Maltby Fowler House of 1835, now in the process of restoration (Inventory #16; Photograph #12). Among other applied details that once made it the most stylish Greek Revival in Northford center are the mutules under the rake and cornices and the tryglyphs that embellish the frieze of the portico. About 1860 the fanlight in the pediment was replaced with the present pair of round-arched Italianate windows. The Italianate influence is more strongly expressed by the bay windows of the late Greek Revival Thomas Smith House of 1860, which now serves as a parish hall for the Congregational Church next door (Inventory #82; Photograph #13).

Among the many vernacular interpretations of the Greek Revival form in the district is an exceptional cottage built above Middletown Avenue for George Fowler, which has a Doric porch supported by fluted columns on the façade and south elevation, sheltering doorways with sidelights on both sides (Inventory #25; Photograph #14). A similar cottage without a porch is found farther north and sited quite close to the other side of the road (Inventory #60). The form was also used for a series of modest one- and two-story houses on Middletown Avenue, some of which were built by or for workers at the local factories (Inventory #s 36, 40, 42). A few display Italianate influences, as is the case for an 1861 house that has a segmental-arched window in the gable and round-arched lights in its original door, which is sheltered by a stylish portico (Inventory #30; Photograph #15). As late as 1875, however, the characteristic rectangular Greek Revival gable window is found in a Victorian vernacular house that also combines the shaped shingles and open porch of this period (Inventory #21; Photograph #16).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Northford Center Historic District, New Haven County, CT

Section 7 Page 3

An entirely new revival based on Gothic precedent was introduced at mid-century. The only example of the domestic version, commonly called Carpenter Gothic, also was built for Julius Maltby (Inventory #7; Photograph #17). The board-and-batten siding and decorative bargeboards, as well as the pointed windows, are characteristic features of this style. The present porch with its slim columns may be an early twentieth century replacement or addition.

The Gothic Revival as a full-blown style is represented by the churches in the district. The Congregational Church, designed by architect Henry Austin, sits on an elevated site overlooking the junction of Old Post Road and Middletown Avenue (Inventory #78; Photograph #18). Executed in random ashlar brownstone in 1846, the church is composed of a buttressed bell tower and a rectangular nave. Smaller towers with pyramidal roofs at the corners of the building are repeated on the belfrey, the latter feature a replacement for the original taller Austin design.³ Brownstone hood molds with label stops throughout define the pointed arches and lintels of windows and the main double-leaf door. The present St. Andrew's Episcopal Church to the south was designed by Alfred W. Boylen of New Haven to resemble the original 1845 edifice on this site that burned in 1938 (Inventory #9; Photograph #19). Gothic features include the belltower with sprockets and the paired pointed arched windows.

Other institutional development near the crossroads included a meeting hall and store erected by public subscription about 1875 (Inventory #13; Photograph #20) and the William Douglas School of 1924 (Inventory #89) on Old Post Road. The latter building, which occupied the site of the Sixth District School (no longer extant) was extensively modernized in 1998 and is no longer contributing. By 1940, when children were bussed to school, Clarence Williams had a bus barn on his Old Post Road property (Inventory #91). The 1805 Fourth District School, which was moved from its original rural site on Forest Road in the western part of town to a new site across from the Congregational Church in 1928, was listed on the National Register in 1985 (Inventory #79; Exhibit B). Now leased by the church to the Tokoket Historical Society, it served as the Northford library until 1956, when the present Edward Smith Memorial Library was erected (Inventory #77).

The same Colonial Revival impulse that created the Sol's Path enclave manifested itself in some new construction and remodeling in the district. One of the most popular of the styles in Northford Center was the gambrel-roofed Cape, with three examples built between 1920 and 1935 (Inventory #s 80, 84, 103). The most fully developed, the Jared Linsley House, a Dutch Colonial Revival built of brick and wood, displays a pedimented portico (Inventory #45; Photograph #21). A Colonial Revival porch and shingling were the last of a series of changes made to the Josiah Linsley House that virtually obscure its eighteenth-century origins (Inventory #105; Photograph #22). Today shingled walls and a Colonial Revival porch tie together its various sections: the c.1790 side-hall plan main block; a slightly later five-bay west wing; and c. 1880 east wing, with two-story bay window. Set on a rise at the head of Old Post Road, the house overlooks open fields and a large barn on the east side of Middletown Avenue once associated with the property (Inventory # 67).

³ The original drawings are in the Henry Austin Papers, Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, New Haven, CT.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Northford Center Historic District, New Haven County, CT

Section 7 Page 4

Inventory of Contributing and Non-Contributing Resources

Inv. #	Address	Name/Style/Date	C/NC	Photo #
MALTBY LANE				
1.	2	SAMUEL MALTBY HOUSE, Greek Revival, 1838	C	10
2.		shed, c. 1870	C	
3.		shed, c. 1900	C	
4.		garage, c. 1910	C	
5.	7	JULIUS & E. CHAPMAN MALTBY HOUSE, Federal, c. 1820	C	
6.		barn/garage, c. 1880	C	
7.	12	MALTBY- SMITH HOUSE, Carpenter Gothic, c. 1855	C	17
8.		barn/garage c. 1960	NC	
MIDDLETOWN AVENUE				
9.	1382	ST. ANDREW'S ESPISCOPAL CHURCH Neo-Gothic Revival, 1939-1940; parish hall, 1959	C	19
10.		Ranch, c. 1959	NC	
11.	1386	ISAAC BARTHOLOMEW HOUSE, Greek Revival, 1855	C	
12.		barn, c. 1800	C	
	1400	listed as 2 Old Post Road		
13.	1405	NORTHFORD STORE , vernacular, c. 1875	C	20
14.	----	NORTHFORD GREEN, 1813	C	
15.		war memorial, 1920	C	
16.	1438	MALTBY FOWLER HOUSE, Greek Revival, c. 1835	C	12
17.		garage (4-bay), 1950	C	
18.	1444	vernacular cottage, c. 1870	C	
19.		barn/garage, c. 1900	C	
20.	1446-86	SHIPMAN HOUSE, Greek Revival, c. 1850	C	
21.	1512	Victorian vernacular, c. 1865	C	
22.		garage, 1955	NC	
23.	1514	Colonial/Federal, c. 1790	C	6
24.		garage, c. 1940	C	
25.	1536	GEORGE FOWLER HOUSE, Greek Revival, 1839	C	14
26.		barn, c. 1880	C	
	71/51-1	frontage on Middletown Avenue only		
27.	1565	restaurant, 1971	NC	
28.	1571	Cape, 1815	C	4
29.		garage, 1992	NC	
30.	1572	vernacular Italianate, 1861	C	16
31.		barn, c. 1870	C	
32.		garage, c. 1920	C	
33.	1580	modern house, 1956	NC	

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Northford Center Historic District, New Haven County, CT

Section 7 Page 5

MIDDLETOWN AVENUE (continued)

34.	1635	JULIUS MALTBY HOUSE, Colonial saltbox, c. 1760 (moved to site before 1860)	C	
35.		garage, 1956	NC	
36.	1639	vernacular, 1875	C	
37.		barn/garage, c. 1920	C	
38.		poultry house, c. 1920	C	
39.		shed, c. 1920	C	
40.	1647	vernacular, c. 1860	C	
41.		barn, c. 1880		
42.	1655	vernacular, c. 1870	C	
43.	1659	modern house, 1986	NC	
44.	1663	vernacular, c. 1920	C	
45.	1666	JARED LINSLEY HOUSE, Dutch Colonial Revival, 1926	C	21
46.		garage, 1926	C	
47.	1682	Raised Ranch, 1984	NC	
	1684	ROW only (72/32C)		
48.	1686	LANGDON HARRISON HOUSE, Greek Revival, 1838	C	11
49.		barn, c. 1870	C	
50.		coop, c. 1880	C	
51.	1693	WILLIAM M. FOWLER HOUSE, Greek Revival/Italianate, 1872	C	
52.		garage, c. 1980	NC	
	1701	ROW only (72/16B)		
53.	1703	PAGE/HOADLEY HOUSE, Colonial, 1748	C	3
54.		garage, 1990	NC	
55.	1704	Raised Ranch, 1984	NC	
56.	1709	vernacular, c. 1940	C	
57.	1710	JOSIAH FOWLER TAVERN, Colonial, 1776	C	
58.		garage, 1940/1980	NC	
59.	1713	MILLER HOTEL, Colonial/Greek Revival, c. 1830	C	9
	1717	vacant lot (72/14C)		
	1719	partial lot only (72/14B)		
	1739	vacant lot (72/14A)		
60.	1743	WILLYS TUCKER HOUSE, Greek Revival cottage, c. 1850	C	
61.		barn, c. 1870	C	
62.	1745-1775	DANIEL LINSLEY HOUSE, Colonial saltbox, 1725	C	1
63.		Cape, c. 1950	C	
64.		shed/garage, c. 1900	C	
65.		shed, c. 1900	C	
66.		shed, c. 1900	C	
67.		barn historically associated with 300 Old Post Road, c. 1880	C	
	72/10A	vacant lot		
68.	1785	barn, c.1705, converted to residence, 1932	C	
69.		shed, c. 1900	C	
70.		garage, c. 1940	C	

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Northford Center Historic District, New Haven County, CT

Section 7 Page 6

MIDDLETOWN AVENUE (continued)

71.	1795	BENJAMIN HOWD I HOUSE, Colonial, 1705 (NR-1986)	C	
72.		barn/garage, c. 1880	C	
73.	1797	BARNES HOUSE, Colonial, 1676 (moved to site, c. 1940)	C	
74.	1801	PARDEE HOUSE, Colonial, 1690 (moved to site, c. 1940)	C	
75.		garage, c. 1940	C	
OLD POST ROAD				
76.	2	TIMOTHY BARTHOLOMEW HOUSE Colonial/Federal, c. 1780	C	5
77.	3	EDWARD SMITH MEMORIAL LIBRARY, Colonial Revival, 1956	NC	
78.	4	NORTHFORD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH Gothic Revival, 1845 (Henry Austin, architect)	C	18
79.	13	FOURTH DISTRICT SCHOOL, c. 1805	C	
80.		Gambrel Cape, c. 1935	C	
81.		garage, c. 1950	C	
82.	16	THOMAS A. SMITH HOUSE/Congregational Church Parish Hall, Greek Revival/Italianate, c. 1860	C	13
83.		shed, c. 1960	NC	
84.	19	Gambrel Colonial Revival, c. 1930	C	
85.		garage, c. 1940	C	
86.	19R	cottage, c. 1930	C	
87.	23	Raised Ranch, c. 1970	NC	
88.		barn, c. 1880	C	
89.	26	WILLIAM A. DOUGLAS SCHOOL, 1924, modernized, 1998	NC	
90.	49	Ambulance Service Building, c. 1960	NC	
91.		commercial garage, c. 1940	C	
92.		PHILO WILLIAMS HOUSE, vernacular, c. 1860	C	
93.	58	BENJAMIN HOWD II HOUSE, Colonial saltbox, c. 1740	C	2
94.		garage, c. 1960	NC	
95.	61	Colonial/Federal, c. 1820	C	
96.		barn, c. 1900	C	
97.	254	THADDEUS MALTBY HOUSE, Federal, 1824	C	8
98.		barn, c. 1860	C	
99.		shed, c. 1880	C	
100.		corncrib, c. 1880	C	
101.	260	modern house, 1984	NC	
102.		barn, 1990	NC	
103.	266	Cape, 1935	C	
104.	276	LINSLEY-ALLING HOUSE, Colonial/Federal, 1820	C	17
105.	300	JOSIAH J. LINSLEY HOUSE, Colonial, 1790 remodeled c. 1880, c. 1920	C	22
106.		barn/studio, c. 1900	C	

Northford Center Historic District

Name of Property

New Haven, CT

County and State

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.

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.)

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

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1705 - c. 1950

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Henry Austin; Alfred W. Boylan

Primary Location of Additional Data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: Tokoket Historical Society

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Northford Center Historic District, New Haven County, CT

Section 8 Page 1

Statement of Significance

A significant testament to the Yankee entrepreneurial spirit, Northford Center Historic District embodies one of the major themes of Connecticut's nineteenth-century history, the transformation of a colonial farming settlement into a thriving industrial village. Of particular significance is the legacy of three prominent families, whose notable success in inventing, producing, and marketing an array of new products helped shape the architectural history of the district. Enhanced by the integrity of its historic rural setting, the extensive architectural range of the district includes well-preserved examples of the Colonial, Federal, Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, and continues into the early twentieth-century suburban period with the Colonial Revival style.

Historical Background and Significance

Today a village in North Branford, Northford was once part of the Town of Branford, settled in 1644 as part of the New Haven Colony. By the end of the seventeenth century, sons and grandsons of Branford settlers began to move out from their town center on the coast, taking up land allotments in successive divisions of the town's common lands. Northford, located almost ten miles from the coast, was in the fourth and final division of 1704. Like many back country settlements, North Farms, as North Branford was first known, followed the familiar path of separation from the parent town, first forming new church societies, or parishes, within the Town of Branford, then together combining forces to achieve political independence, a process that took more than a century.

Although the distance to the Congregational meetinghouse in Branford Center was a real hardship, at first the early settler families in North Farms worshipped and attended town meetings there. By 1725 the Second Ecclesiastical Society of Branford was founded and erected a new meetinghouse in what is now North Branford Center. Although Second Society residents were taxed to support the ministry and schools, as legal residents of Branford they still paid property taxes to the parent town. Members of the Second Society in the northernmost reaches of town began to agitate for their own society as early as 1736, a move strongly opposed by the rest of the parish until 1745, when the Third Society was formed. The siting of the Third Society meetinghouse (no longer extant) near the southern intersection of Middletown Avenue and Old Post Road, established the location of Northford Center. The Reverend Warham Williams, who was settled in 1750, built a fine Georgian Colonial house, which stood just south of the meetinghouse until 1978 when it was removed to Roxbury. Anglicans in North Branford also formed their church societies and erected houses of worship; the church in Northford was built in 1764 on land on land donated by James Howd, son of Benjamin II, who lived on the Old Post Road (Inventory #93). Travelers on this highway were accommodated at two taverns; only the one built in 1776 by

Josiah Fowler, who came here from Durham, still stands (Inventory #57).³ In 1799 the two Congregational societies in North Farms petitioned the General Assembly to become a new township. Although more than 25 new towns in Connecticut were founded from old parishes in the post-Revolutionary period, the request was denied until 1831 when the new Town of North Branford was established. The whole population (2332 in 1830) was more or less equally divided between the communities, and by 1840, the first federal census enumeration of the North Branford was 1016.

With extensive land holdings in the fertile Farm River Valley and access to Branford harbor to ship their goods, farmers in the district prospered. Several grist- and sawmills were established along the river, and by the early nineteenth century, there was even greater participation in the coastal and West Indies trade. In addition to the grain crops of the 1700s, Northford farmers began to raise cattle for export. After the New Haven-Middletown Turnpike was laid out right

³ He was one of two Josiah Fowlers in this generation, who were collateral descendants of John Fowler of Guilford and Northford. Such repetition, quite common in the 1700s, persisted in this extended family; four of the sons of both Benjamin Maltby and Maltby Fowler had the same first names.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Northford Center Historic District, New Haven County, CT

Section 8 Page 2

through Northford, bypassing the steeper section of the Old Post Road, Miller's Hotel, later run by the Munson family, was erected there just across the way from the Fowler Tavern (Inventory #59). On the second floor, a swinging partition converted the space to a ballroom.

Northford Industry

Three extraordinary families, related by blood and marriage, were responsible for the industrial development of Northford Center: the Fowlers, creative inventors and machinists; and the Maltbys, promoters and investors, who together harnessed the waterpower of the Farm River for manufacturing; and their successors, the Stevens family, newcomers to town who married into this kinship network. While many proto-industrial enterprises were based on kinship, in Northford these bonds were reinforced through intermarriage over several generations, which concentrated capital within the Maltby-Fowler extended family in much the same way that their forebears had consolidated and protected land wealth in the 1700s. Largely relying on the ability of the Julius Maltby (1788–1872) and his brother, Samuel (1790-1881) to translate land wealth into industrial capital, the families retained control of their various enterprises; outside investors, the downfall of many an early industry, were avoided. Among the many patented inventions of Maltby Fowler (1780-1855) and his six sons were machines for manufacturing screws, rivets, buttons, and innovations in pin making machinery. Some of their inventions were developed by the next generation: Maltby Fowler (b. 1833), grandson of the first Maltby Fowler, who manufactured hooks and eyes; and Charles Maltby (b. 1830), son of Samuel, who founded U.S. Pin Company.

The first industrial enterprise in Northford was the Button Shop built in 1830 by Maltby Fowler, son of Josiah Fowler, and his third wife, Rhoda Atkins.⁴ His fine Greek Revival house near the south end of the district was a testament to his commercial success. (Inventory #16). It is said he kept four peddlers on the road selling buttons, which were mass produced using Fowler-designed power presses. By 1850 Samuel Maltby was a partner in the business.

Samuel and Julius Maltby were two of Benjamin Maltby's (1755-1823) seven sons. Their grandparents were miller Benjamin Maltby I and Elizabeth Fowler (1728-1810), sister of tavern keeper, Josiah Fowler. Probably while acting as agent for the family's trading interests in the West Indies, Samuel Maltby met his wife, Charlotte DeWitt, the daughter of the governor of Barbados, whom he married in 1816. Their Greek Revival-style home on Maltby Lane still stands in the district (Inventory #1). His brother Julius made a more traditional choice, marrying his cousin, Melinda Fowler, in 1819. The house that he had built at the corner of Maltby Lane was the first of his three properties in the district (Inventory #s 5, 7, 34).

The Maltby brothers were major shareholders in the Paug Manufacturing Company, organized in 1854 to manufacture farm implements, as well as the machinery used in making these products. The grist-and sawmill site they developed had been in the family for two generations.⁵ By 1859 the company changed hands, with Epaphrus Chapman Maltby, known as "E. C." (1787-1855), Julius' son, the leading partner. E.C., who moved into his father's first house (Inventory # 5) after his marriage to Hannah A. Hoadley in 1851, also built houses for his workers, of which three have been identified (Inventory #s 36, 40, 42). In addition to fabricating coconut shell dippers, agricultural hand implements, and hay rakes, the company produced an "Improved Confection" from coconut meat, which E. C. patented in 1867. Although known by several different names as partnerships were restructured, the company remained in business in Northford with E. C. in charge until 1880.

⁴ Oddly enough, Fowler was named for his father's second wife, Lucretia Maltby.

⁵ The actual location of what is now a National Register archaeological site is restricted (Maltby/Stevens Factory Site, NR, 1999).

**United States Department of the Interior
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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Northford Center Historic District, New Haven County, CT

Section 8 Page 3

The success of this firm is demonstrated by the net worth of Samuel and Julius Maltby. According to the 1860 federal census, where they were listed as farmers, together these men had \$25,600 in personal property, probably industrial shares, in addition to their \$12,000 in real estate. By 1870, Julius (82), "retired from business" with a combined estate of \$48,000, was one of the wealthiest men in town. In addition, his two unmarried daughters, still living at home, each listed \$4000 in personal property, probably company stock, for Mary sold her shares to her brother, E.C. after her father's death. Several members of the Bartholomew family also invested in local industry and may have taken a more active role. They included Isaac, who listed himself in the 1850 census as a manufacturer (Inventory #110) and Timothy, who had a net worth of \$18,000 in 1870 (Inventory #76).

When E. C. Maltby moved his business and residence to Shelton, Connecticut, in 1880, the Northford plant was taken over by David Stevens, Jr. (b. 1857), who had come here with his family from Quinnipiac in 1868. The son of David and Elizabeth Stevens, he graduated from the Russell Institute in New Haven, and started a printing business in part of his father's Britannia ware shop. Soon after he married Clara Hoadley Maltby, E.C.'s daughter, in 1879, David with his brother, Henry, founded Stevens Bros., a greeting card business, and relocated into the old Maltby factory. It soon employed 50 people and had a branch in Wallingford by 1890. Evidently Stevens Bros. was well capitalized, for in just one year the company imported \$50,000 worth of "scrap pictures" from Europe, lithographic images to use on the cards. After Steven Bros. went out of business in 1899, the factory site remained vacant until 1920, when it was taken over by the New Haven Brush Company. In 1935 the buildings were razed; the dam, the last remaining structure there, was breached by a major flood in 1972.

Although Northford became known as the "Christmas card center of the world," with as many as 25 firms in the business locally, it is clear that the economy began to falter after E. C. Maltby left town. The population, which had hovered around 1000 since the town was incorporated, declined rapidly after 1890, and did not return to nineteenth-century levels until 1920. Certainly, this loss was part of a general statewide trend, as the rural population gravitated to the booming industrial cities, or even to smaller communities on major transportation routes, such as Branford Center that had an established industrial economy.⁷ Although this demographic trend was not reversed until after World War II, new houses began to appear in the district in the 1920s, foreshadowing the future post-war suburban growth of the town. In fact, with the population reaching 10778 by 1970, Northford was one of the faster growing suburbs in the state.

Architectural Significance

A significant and well defined entity, the Northford Center Historic District encompasses a fine collection of domestic and institutional architecture, which fully express the developmental evolution of the community. Highlighted by a number of individually significant buildings, the district is distinguished by both the age and state of preservation of its colonial resources and its large body nineteenth-century of vernacular domestic architecture. Although contributing resources are dispersed over a relatively large area, continuity and coherence are reinforced through a consistency of scale, materials, orientation, and the exceptional integrity of the historic landscape.

Even overlaid with more than 200 years of development, the colonial settlement pattern etched on the landscape of the Farm River Valley still persists; passersby are still rewarded with glimpses of ancient agricultural fields behind the houses, a highly evocative rural setting that establishes a sense of time and place. As was typical for an outliver community, instead of a conventional concentration of homelots around an institutional center, settlement was dispersed.

⁷ Branford's population increased three-fold by 1890 and doubled again by 1920.

United States Department of the Interior
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Northford Center Historic District, North Branford, New Haven County, CT

Section 8 Page 4

Hemmed in by the river and the ridgeline to the northwest, the district evolved in a linear fashion well into the nineteenth century, when the path of the new turnpike stimulated domestic and industrial development along the river. And, as is so clearly evident in the new houses of that period, agrarian and industrial wealth produced a new, albeit conservative, appreciation of architectural style, and by mid-century, the erection of imposing new churches at the crossroads. The historic growth pattern carried over into the twentieth century when larger properties were subdivided. The houses of that period generally are located on small roadside lots, leaving much of the original farming acreage undisturbed.

While the district architecture as a whole expresses an almost uninterrupted continuum of historical development, several periods produced some individually significant resources. The saltboxes of the colonial period built by the Howd and Linsley families are exceptionally well preserved (Inventory #s 62, 71, 93). Two of these houses feature distinctive local construction techniques, but the Linsley House also has integrity of setting, with open fields sloping to the rear of the property, with the house itself perched quite close to the road. A more typical Colonial, the well-preserved Page Hoadley House just up the street, has a similar setting but there the land that drops off to the rear is wooded.

Distinguished expressions of the Federal and Greek Revival styles extended the stylistic range of district's vernacular architecture from about 1780 to 1880. Two well-preserved examples, the Timothy Bartholomew and Linsley-Alling houses ushered in the Federal enhancement of the colonial form (Inventory #s 76, 104). Although built more than 30 years apart, typically these properties focus much of their stylistic development in the doorways. With its slim attenuated pilasters and flat pediment the Linsley-Alling door surround is the more Federal in its execution. The epitome of the Federal style in the district was achieved in the Thaddeus Maltby House of 1824, an exceptionally well-preserved and fully detailed example (Inventory #97). The integrated design of this house, the only one of this style with a gable-to-street orientation, features fanlights in the gable and over the door, as well as a very nicely executed cove-ceiling portico.

Rural conservatism still prevailed in the Greek Revival period. Expressed in the simplified form and detailing of the many vernacular nineteenth-century houses influenced by this style, this trend is apparent in some of the more notable examples in the district, such as the exceptionally well-preserved 1838 Samuel Maltby House, (Inventory #1) Even though Maltby went to great lengths to elaborate his house with bold and sophisticated Greek Revival detail and even used a more modern center-hall floor plan, the underlying form is still colonial. The Langdon-Harrison House built that same year, employs the more characteristic pedimented façade of the Greek Revival style, but there the width of house produced an atypical four-bay fenestration pattern (Inventory #48). The most fully developed and classic example of the Greek Revival was built by Maltby Fowler (Inventory #16). Unfortunately, although some of its elaborate embellishment remains, at the present time, the loss of architectural integrity here has compromised its potential individual significance.

The Northford Congregational Church is without question the most significant architectural resource in the district. With its design by Henry Austin (1804-1891), one the most important nineteenth-century architects in Connecticut, this fine Gothic Revival edifice is an arresting presence on its hillside site. Expressing a level of style not usually found in rural ecclesiastical architecture and constructed of Northford brownstone, this church is beautifully proportioned, a composition only slightly marred by the reduced scale of the later belfry turrets. Although the whimsical romanticism that often informed Austin's work (most notably his 1861 design for the New Haven City Hall) is restrained here, this building recalls his first experiment in the institutional medieval Gothic, the Old Library at Yale University built in 1842 (now the Dwight Chapel), which also displays prominent corner towers.

Northford Center Historic District
Name of Property

New Haven, CT
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 230

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	Zone	Easting	Northing	3	Zone	Easting	Northing
2				4			

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 Preservation Associates, LLC date 3/31/02

street & number 37 Orange Road telephone (860) 347 4072

city or town Middletown state CT zip code 06457

Property Owner

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

name _____

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.).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Northford Center Historic District, North Branford, New Haven County, CT

Section 9/10 Page 1

9. Major Bibliographic References

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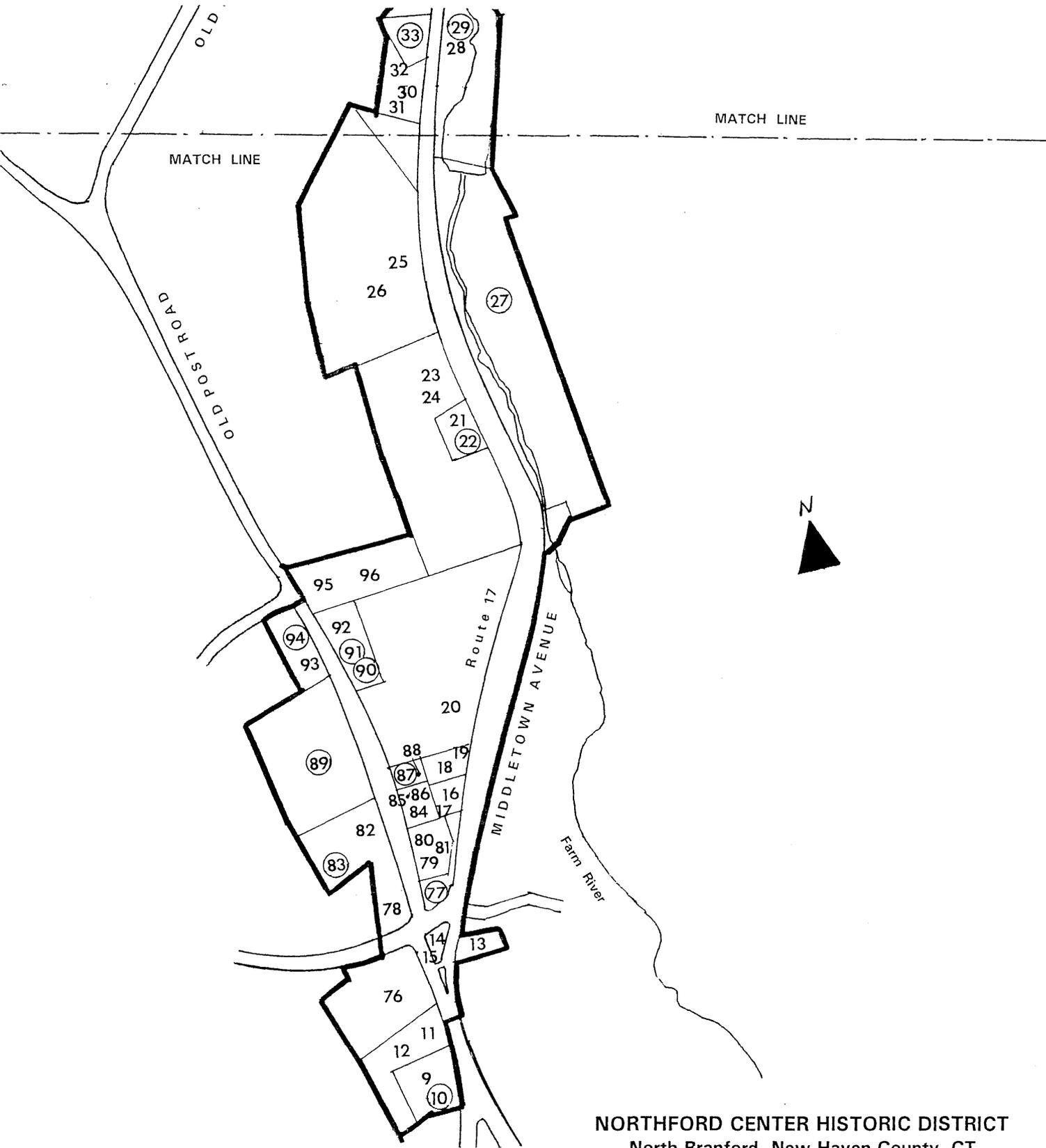
10. Geographical Data

UTM References - Wallingford Quadrangle

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| 3. 18 686000 4586300 | 4. 18 686660 4586450 |
| 5. 18 685510 4585570 | 6. 18 685030 4584030 |
| 7. 18 684640 4584620 | 8. 18 684540 4584540 |
| 9. 18 684420 4584430 | 10. 18 684610 4585610 |
| 11. 18 684810 4585820 | 12. 18 685350 4586000 |

Verbal Boundary Description: The boundaries of the nominated district are shown on the attached map drawn to scale from North Branford Tax Assessor's Map #s 62, 67, 68, 71, 72.

Boundary Justification: The boundaries of the district encompass the maximum number of contributing historic resources associated with the development of Northford Center during its period of significance.



NORTHFORD CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT
 North Branford, New Haven County, CT

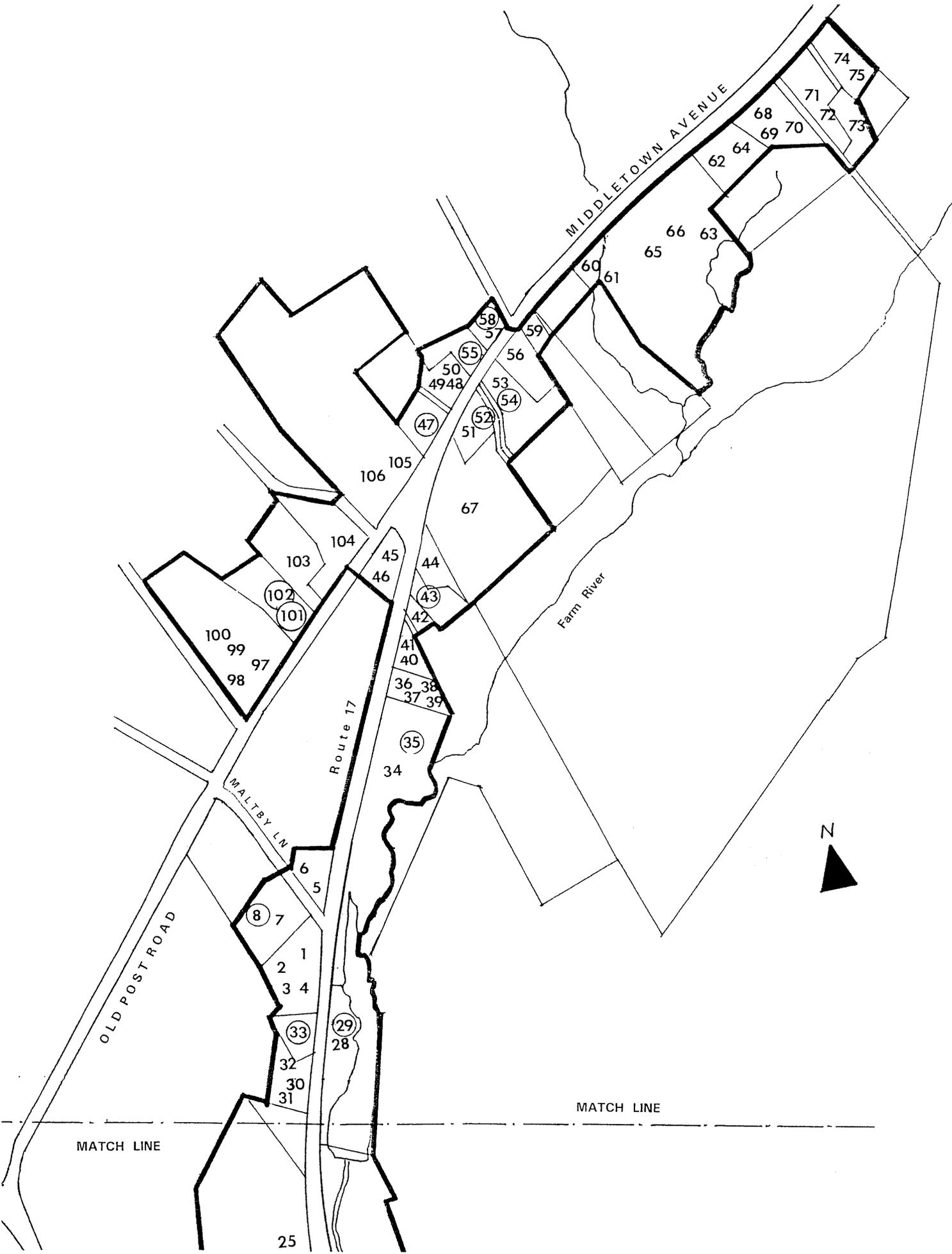
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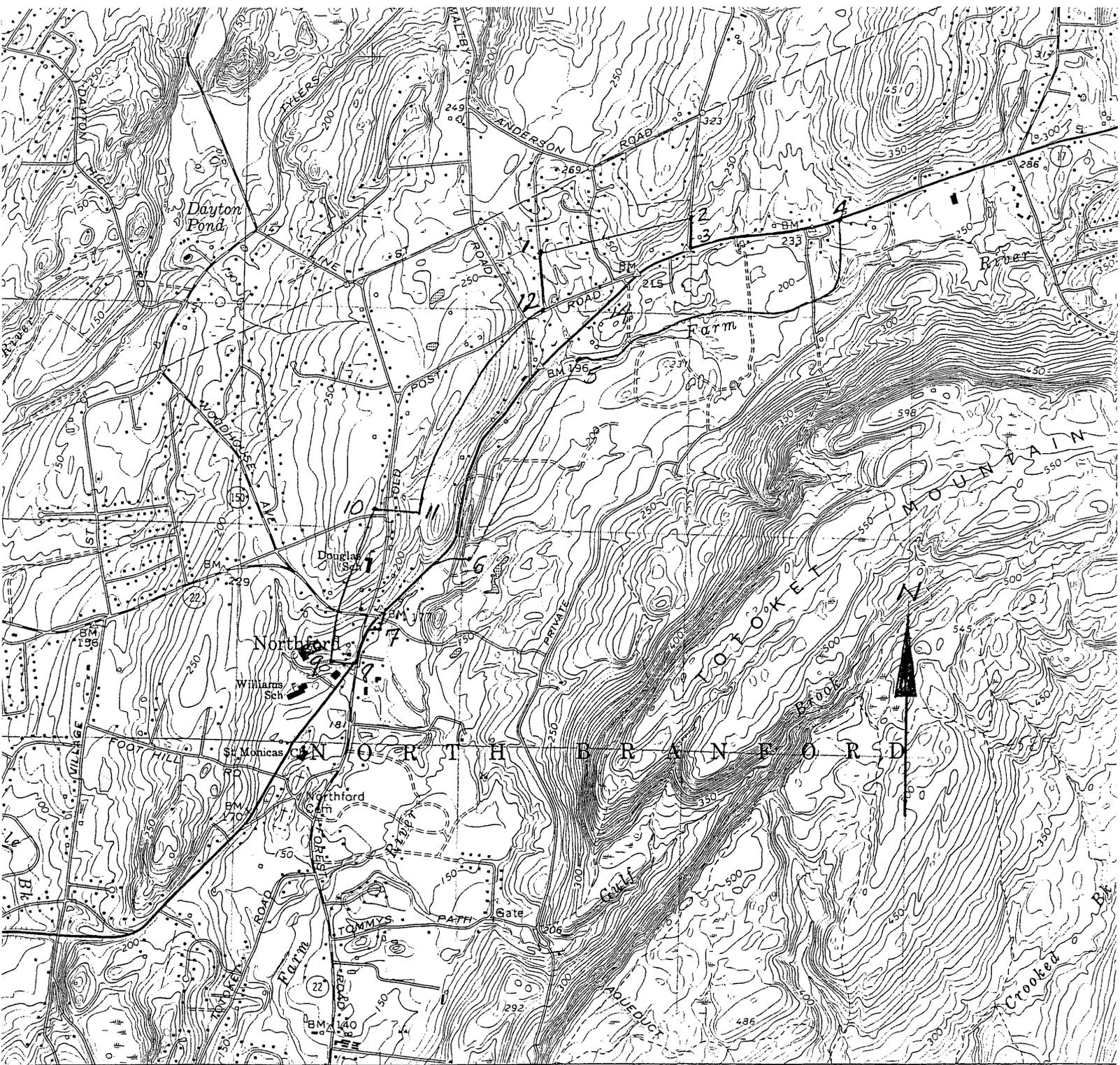
- # Contributing Resource
- Ⓝ Non-Contributing Resource

Bold Line: National Register District Boundary

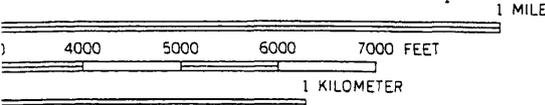
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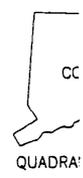
**Northford Center Historic District
New Haven County, CT**

UTM References - Wallingford Quadrangle

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Northford Center Historic District, North Branford, New Haven County, CT

Section Photo Page 1

List of Photographs

Photographer: Cunningham Preservation Associates, LLC

Negatives on File: Connecticut Historical Commission

Dates: 6/01, 2/02, 3/02

1. DANIEL LINSLEY HOUSE, camera facing NE
2. BENJAMIN HOWD II HOUSE, camera facing SW
3. PAGE-HOADLEY HOUSE, camera facing NE
4. 1571 Middletown Avenue, camera facing E
5. TIMOTHY BARTHOLOMEW HOUSE, camera facing SW
6. 1514 Middletown Avenue, camera facing NW
7. LINSLEY-ALLING HOUSE, camera facing NW
8. THADDEUS MALTBY HOUSE, camera facing W
9. MILLER HOTEL, camera facing E
10. SAMUEL MALTBY HOUSE, camera facing NW
11. LANGDON HARRISON HOUSE, camera facing NW
12. MALTBY FOWLER HOUSE, camera facing W
13. THOMAS A. SMITH HOUSE, camera facing NW
14. GEORGE FOWLER HOUSE, camera facing W
15. 1512 Middletown Avenue, camera facing SW
16. 1572 Middletown Avenue, camera facing SW
17. MALTBY-SMITH HOUSE, camera facing SW
18. NORTHFORD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, camera facing NW
19. ST. ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, camera facing SW
20. NORTHFORD STORE, camera facing NE
21. JARED LINSLEY HOUSE, camera facing NW
22. JOSIAH T. LINSLEY HOUSE, camera facing NW



EXHIBIT A: BENJAMIN HOWD HOUSE, camera facing NE (Gregory Andrews, 1986)

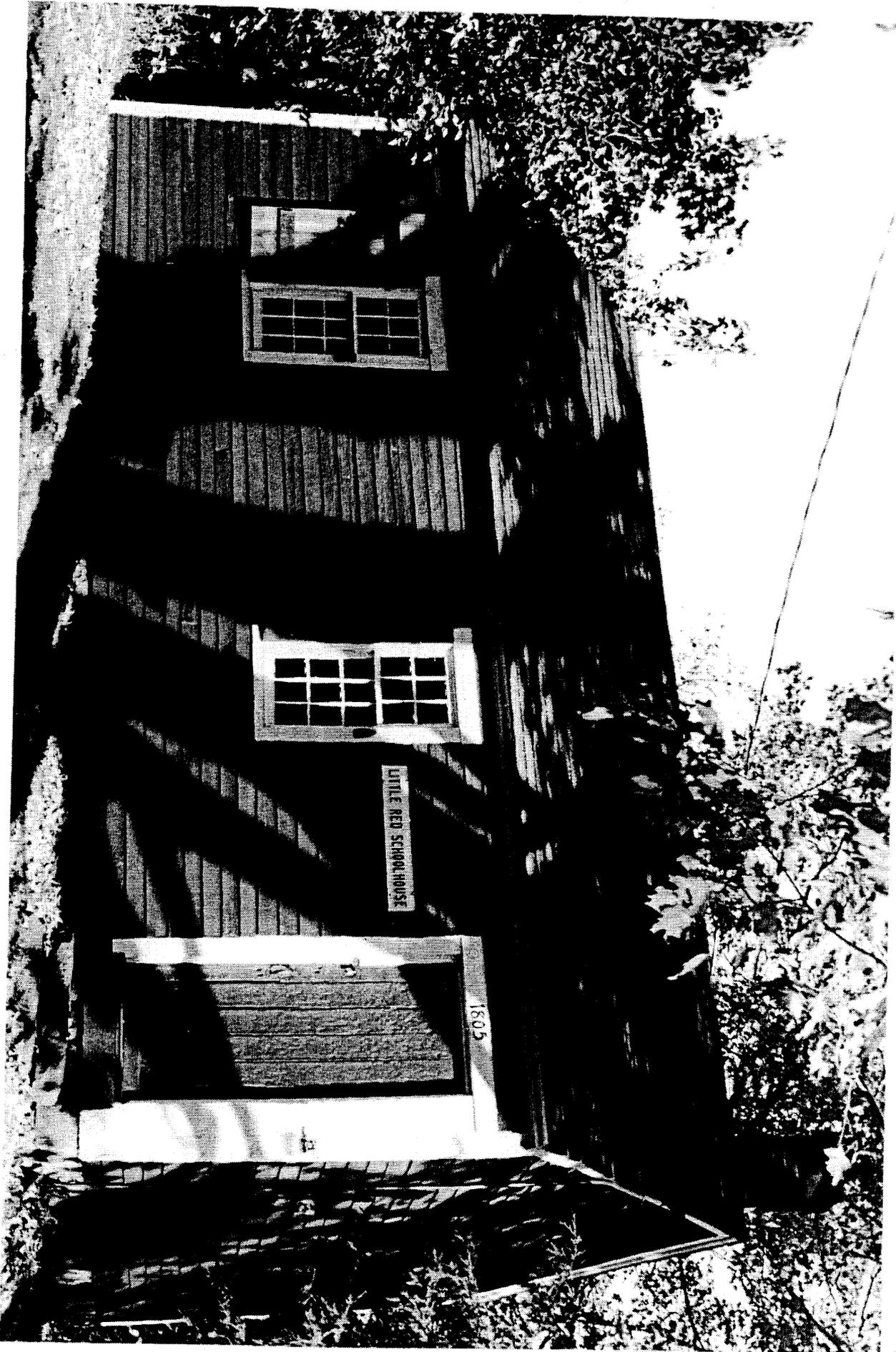


EXHIBIT B: FOURTH DISTRICT SCHOOL, camera facing NE (Jack Gold, 1984)