

DATA SHEET

PH0685607

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED OCT 4 1978
DATE ENTERED MAR 15 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 *Hudson*
Black Rock National Register District
AND/OR COMMON
Black Rock Harbor Historic District

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER *roughly around Black Rock Harbor, Haven Ave, Beacon + Prescott St.*
20-105 Beacon Street (continued) __NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CITY, TOWN CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Bridgeport 4th-Stuart McKinney
STATE VICINITY OF COUNTY CODE
Connecticut CODE Fairfield

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input 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
See complete list attached
STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN STATE
VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Bridgeport City Clerk
STREET & NUMBER
45 Lyon Terrace
CITY, TOWN STATE
Bridgeport Connecticut

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Bridgeport Historic District Survey
DATE
September, 1976 __FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Historic District Study Committee, 45 Lyon Terrace
CITY, TOWN STATE
Bridgeport Connecticut

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT DETERIORATED
 GOOD RUINS
 FAIR UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Black Rock National Register District is located at the head of Black Rock Harbor in the City of Bridgeport, approximately two and one-half miles southwest of downtown. The area within the district boundaries comprises the residential section of an eighteenth and nineteenth century seaport/shipbuilding center as delineated by old maps and surviving architectural evidence. Included are two pre-Revolutionary houses, a Federal--Greek Revival housing and manufacturing development, and an early Victorian shipbuilding community interspersed with compatible late nineteenth and twentieth century structures constructed after the village had become incorporated into the larger urban center. The area surrounding the district is an urban residential neighborhood of twentieth century one- and two-family houses. The district is sited on a coastal plain with a gentle slope up to a small hill on Ellsworth Street.

Following is a brief description of the contributory buildings, listed by street:

Brewster Street (originally Main Street) extends east from the intersection of Grovers Avenue to the old wharf district at the harborfront. It contains two of the most distinguished features of the district, the John Wheeler House at 266-8 and the row of three corresponding Federal--Greek Revival houses at 237, 259-61, and 283. The district boundary extends west as far as Grovers Avenue, where the street axis changes, and east up to, but not including, the Fayerweather Towers Condominium, a five-story structure that forms a logical termination point.

WILLIAM NICHOLS GENERAL STORE (1885), 191 Brewster Street (27 on map) --Nineteenth century photographs¹ show that this building was once a flat roofed three story tenement with a plate glass first floor storefront. Today it survives as an asbestos sided 1½ story gable front cottage with all traces of the storefront covered over (not illustrated).

CAPTAIN THOMAS RANSOM HOUSE (1839), 237 Brewster Street (7 on map)-- This 2½ story gable front structure, three bays wide with a side entrance and an attic fanlight, is typical of Black Rock architecture in the late 1830s and early '40s. It features an unusually elaborate front doorway bordered by Greek Revival style mouldings. The present entrance portico, asbestos siding, and 1/1 window sash are modern additions (Photo 7).

DAVID SMITH HOUSE (1843), 259-61 Brewster Street (13 on map)--This double house is five bays wide and 2½ stories high with two chimneys, a double central entrance, and a side gable roof. Asbestos siding has been added along with a modern entrance porch (Photo 7).

¹Black Rock: A Bicentennial Picture Book, p. 23

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181-344 Brewster Street; 3-65 Calderwood Court; 15-274 Ellsworth Street; 33-75 Hackley Street; 15-20 Harbor Avenue; 10-39 Penfield Place; 230 and 396-8 Grovers Avenue; 2-178 Seabright Avenue (even number side); 119-171 Seabright Avenue (odd number side), 60 Seaview Terrace.

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GEORGE PALMER HOUSE (1840), 283 Brewster Street (10 on map)--Built for an oysterman, this 2½ story fanlight-gabled house differs from other similarly styled houses in the village with its recessed doorway, high basement, and full front gable pediment (Photo 7).

FIRST ARTHUR SMITH HOUSE (c. 1855), 260 Brewster Street (22 on map)--This structure was once a front gable 1½ story Italianate cottage with bracketed eaves and a flank entrance. In the first part of this century it was turned one-quarter of the way around, and the present front (formerly east side) fenestration has been considerably altered. Asbestos siding and 1/1 window sash (replacing 6/6) have been installed (not illustrated).

JOHN WHEELER HOUSE, 266-8 Brewster Street (1 on map)--This severely altered house may date back to the seventeenth century although a 1720 date has traditionally been ascribed to it. The roof pitch is in excess of 60 degrees; the framing timbers (including a 22 inch wide summer beam) are exposed on the interior and reveal the great age of the house. A Gothic Revival central gable with a quatrefoil window was added in the 1850s. The chimney from the first floor up was removed and the front fenestration altered in the 1940s, and the front wall has recently been resided with wood shingles and vertical sheathing boards. The side wing, originally a 1½-story appendage (probably a summer kitchen), was raised to its present 2½-story height in the late 19th century (Photo 5).

BLACK ROCK SCHOOLHOUSE (1841), 272 Brewster Street (12 on map)--Replaced as a school by a larger structure around 1865, this small 1½ story building was converted to a dwelling in the 1920s. Asbestos siding, an enclosed front porch, and altered front fenestration date from that time (not illustrated).

Calderwood Court (originally Smith's Lane) is a narrow street one block in length running south from Brewster Street. Located entirely within the district, it is lined with mid-nineteenth century workers' housing, apparently built as an integral development.

DAVID SMITH BARN (1843), 3 Calderwood Court (14 on map)--This structure was converted to a dwelling in the 1850s. It is 2½ stories high and three bays wide with a side entrance. The exterior is covered with stained wood shingles of modern vintage (not illustrated).

WILLIAM BOUTON HOUSE (1838), 4 Calderwood Court (6 on map)--This house

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is a transitional Federal--Greek Revival three-quarter house with fan-lights in its side gables. Asbestos siding and a porch across the front are twentieth century additions (Photo 6).

RANSOM CARRIAGE FACTORY (1839), 5-7 Calderwood Court (3 on map)--Originally built as an unornamented factory building, this structure was raised up on a high basement in the 1850s and converted to a side-by-side duplex. An enclosed veranda across the front and asbestos siding have been added (Photo 13).

AARON SMITH HOUSE (1853), 8-10 Calderwood Court (16 on map)--One of the village's earliest Victorian style structures, this double house shows Gothic Revival influence in its vertical lines. It is $1\frac{1}{2}$ stories high with entrances in opposite projecting wings at the sides. An unusual eight pointed attic window dates from the reconstruction following a circa 1910 fire (Photo 6).

WILLIAM SHERWOOD HOUSE (c. 1840), 9 Calderwood Court (11 on map)--Another typical Black Rock Greek Revival house; in this case, the fan-light and cornice have been totally covered with aluminum siding. The window sash has been replaced by jalousies, and a modern enclosed porch extends across the front (not illustrated).

Ellsworth Street (originally Wheeler Street, becoming Church Street after 1849) extends in a northerly direction from the physical center of the village at Brewster Street. This street best reflects the prosperity brought by the shipbuilding industry, and contains most of Black Rock's early Victorian architecture. The district boundary is at Prescott Street, north of which are mostly twentieth century structures.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM HALL HOUSE (1856), 87-9 Ellsworth Street (23 on map)--Black Rock's most impressive Early Victorian house was built at the top of a small hill overlooking the shipyards on the point (operated by the original owner). It is $2\frac{1}{2}$ stories high and three bays wide with a side gable roof. There is a bracketed cornice and a sharp Gothic gable in the front centered over the doorway. It contains a circular window. Under it on the second floor is a triple arch false Palladian window composed of blind louvres with a square window in the center. Paired 4/4 windows are used throughout the house. It has been little altered since the time of its construction (an additional front entrance was constructed to serve the second floor when it became a two-family at the time of the First World War)(not illustrated).

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JOSEPH SMITH HOUSE (1904), 100 Ellsworth Street (35 on map)--This 2½ story late Shingle Style house complements the adjoining Gould and Smith houses and continues their scale down the slope of the Ellsworth Street hill. There is a massive neoclassical porch across the front and south flank (not illustrated).

GEORGE GOULD HOUSE (1896), 110 Ellsworth Street (34 on map)--Similar in many respects to the second Arthur Smith House next door, with a similar veranda, cornice height, and siding, this house has a side gable roof and its tower projects off-center from the front wall (not illustrated).

SECOND ARTHUR SMITH HOUSE (1893), 118 Ellsworth Street (30 on map)--Built by the Gould Brothers, local builders who lived in Black Rock (see listing for their house at 119-21 Seabright Avenue), this Shingle Style suburban house is 2½ stories high with a wrap-around veranda and a corner octagonal tower. The first floor is sided with clapboards, the second floor with novelty shingles (Photo 3).

CAPTAIN JOHN BRITTIN HOUSE (1836), 140 Ellsworth Street (4 on map)--This house, typical of many built in the Greek Revival period in Black Rock, is 2½ stories high and three bays wide with a side entrance and a front gable roof. Originally this front gable contained a full Greek Revival pediment set with an elongated fan window, but this was removed and the window replaced with a round arch Italianate window in an 1890 remodeling. The front and side porches are also later additions (a kitchen wing either added or remodeled in 1890 was later detached and stands today as a separate dwelling at 33 Hackley Street)(Photo 2).

OLIVER BURR HOUSE (1853), 228 Ellsworth Street (18 on map)--Built by a village house carpenter as his own home, this was one of the first Italian villas in Black Rock. It is two stories high with a flat roof and has a 1½-story gable roof rear addition. The projecting eaves are unusually wide; there are ornate jigsaw porch posts and curved casings around the front door and windows. Floor-to-ceiling windows open onto the porch (not illustrated).

ELIPHALET WALKER HOUSE (c. 1855), 250 Ellsworth Street (21 on map)--This house is the village's most resplendent example of the Italian villa style. The Palladian window in the front pavilion, comprised of false louvres surrounding a regular size 6/6 window, is similar to others still to be seen in Black Rock (notably on the Captain William Hall House) and in Fairfield. Below it, a double French window sur-

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mounted by a heavy drip cap with wooden wave motif decoration opens onto a three-sided veranda (Photos 1 and 17).

DAVID LOCKWOOD HOUSE (1837), 191 Ellsworth Street (5 on map)--Two bays wide with a front gable and side entrance, this small Greek Revival house was lowered off its high basement and its veranda was added in the early twentieth century. Aluminum siding has recently been installed (not illustrated).

CAPTAIN CHARLES ALLEN HOUSE (1854), 213 Ellsworth Street (19 on map)--This house, a flat roof Italian villa, consists of a central projecting pavilion, two bays wide, with flanking side wings. The main entrance is in the south wing, and floor-to-ceiling French windows opened onto a wrap-around veranda (recently removed). The window sash facing front is 2/2; on the other walls it is 6/6 (Photo 8).

ISAAC JONES HOUSE (1854), 227 Ellsworth Street (20 on map)--Originally this house was the twin of the Captain Charles Allen House. Around 1910 the gable roof was added along with octagonal projections in the recesses between the central pavilion and side wings. Recently the veranda has been removed and asbestos siding added (Photo 8).

CURTIS RAYMOND HOUSE (1856), 245 Ellsworth Street (24 on map)--Built for a worker at Hall's Shipyard, this 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -story front gable Italianate house has undergone considerable remodeling in recent years. Asbestos siding and plate glass windows have been installed, and the front veranda has been removed (Photo 8).

STURGES SEELEY HOUSE (1851), 259 Ellsworth Street (15 on map)--Built in an unusual L-shape, this transitional Greek Revival--Early Victorian house has an ornamented veranda part way across its front. It remains in virtually pristine condition (a modern wing extends across the rear) (Photo 9).

Beacon Street (originally Elm Street) is located entirely within the district boundaries. It has more of a suburban atmosphere than other parts of the district with many of its houses situated on spacious lots. Its architecture includes examples from both Greek Revival and Victorian periods as well as high quality mid-twentieth century structures.

ALFRED YOUNG HOUSE (1905), 70 Beacon Street (36 on map)--This 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -story L-shaped house with a square corner tower is unusual in its late use of Queen Anne detailing. The siding is clapboard on the first floor, scalloped shingle on the second and third. A second floor front balcony

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has recently been enclosed with clapboard to create another room (Photo 11).

JAMES CARR HOUSE (c. 1865), 82 Beacon Street (25 on map)--A simple, two-bay-wide Italianate cottage with a side entrance, this house is $2\frac{1}{2}$ stories high with a front gable roof. The present front porch is the result of a 1920s remodeling. In the back yard is a good example of a Civil War era carriage barn (Photo 11).

GERSHOM STURGES - BENJAMIN PENFIELD HOUSE (1803--1836), 105 Beacon Street (3 on map)--Originally a simple post-Revolutionary half-house, this structure was remodeled at the height of the Greek Revival period to become the village's best example of this style. A Doric order portico was added across the front with flush board siding underneath, the end gables finished as pediments with a simple, wide entablature, and a new kitchen wing built at the west side. The interior woodwork was also updated at this time and includes an unusual curved staircase with a mahogany ballustrade. The house has remained virtually unchanged for the last 140 years (Photo 10).

Seabright Avenue (originally Water Street) runs alongside Black Rock Harbor, extending south from Brewster Street. The district includes both sides of the street south to Seaview Terrace, and the water side only from Seaview Terrace south to Beacon Street (the side of the street not included consists of a development of architecturally undistinguished twentieth century houses).

WILLIAM BRANDEGEE PRINTING SHOP (1906), 4 Seabright Avenue (37 on map)--This harborfront structure, now occupied by the Norden Swedish Singing Society, is $2\frac{1}{2}$ stories high with a dormered hip roof. The first floor is faced with granite Belgian block, and the second floor, originally wood shingled, is covered with aluminum siding (not illustrated).

WILLIAM AND GEORGE GOULD HOUSE (1875), 119-21 Seabright Avenue (26 on map)--This double Mansard villa was built facing the harbor for two brothers who were perhaps the most prolific homebuilders in Bridgeport in the late nineteenth century. It was very similar in design to the George Hotel (demolished), a large hostelry located on the water about a half mile away, which was built by the Gould Brothers in 1876. The house is $2\frac{1}{2}$ stories high, symmetrical, with flanking one story wings and a delicate piazza supported by Corinthian columns (these columns are curiously similar to the Ionic ones on the Wolcott Chauncey House across the street, and may have been

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an early expression of Colonial Revivalism). Asbestos siding has been added, and the original patterned slate roof with iron cresting replaced by asphalt shingles (Photo 4).

CAPTAIN WILLIAM HOWES COAL COMPANY (1853), 128 Seabright Avenue (17 on map)--It is not immediately apparent what this building looked like in its original form. By the beginning of this century it had been turned into a double house, and a 1940s remodeling gave it its present aspect--2½ stories high with a central entrance, differing little from other mid-twentieth century neo-Colonial dwellings (Photo 12).

WOLCOTT CHAUNCEY HOUSE (1769), 150 Seabright Avenue (2 on map)--Built as part of a wharf development at the foot of Beacon Street and moved to its present site around 1840, this house is a modest 1½ story structure with a central chimney. The exterior retains its early wide clapboards and an elaborate Adamesque portico supported by Ionic columns with carved wood capitals. The window sash was changed to 2/2 in the late 19th century. The interior staircase to the second floor, apparently original, is located against the outside wall in the southwest corner of the front parlor (Photo 12).

WILLIAM NICHOLS TENEMENT HOUSES (1894), 176-8 Seabright Avenue and 181 Brewster Street (32 and 33 on map)--These 2½ story gable front Queen Anne houses were built adjacent to the Nichols Hotel (demolished) and the General Store (191 Brewster Street). Today both lack their original front verandas; 176-8 Seabright Avenue has been covered with wood shingles, and 181 Brewster Street with aluminum siding (not illustrated).

Hackley Street, located wholly within the district, runs east from Ellsworth Street parallel with the shoreline of Brewster's Cove.

CAPTAIN JOHN BRITTIN HOUSE KITCHEN WING (1890), 33 Hackley Street (29 on map)--Built as a 1½-story rear appendage (see 140 Ellsworth Street), this house was detached in 1938 and made into a separate one family residence (partly visible in background of Photo 2).

HENRY BUNCE HOUSE (1893), 34 Hackley Street (31 on map)--Erected the same year as the second Arthur Smith House (118 Ellsworth Street) and on an adjoining lot, this house is essentially a scaled-down version of its neighbor. It lacks the tower and has a veranda only across the front (not illustrated).

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CALEB HACKLEY CARRIAGE BARN (1884), 70 Hackley Street (28 on map)-- This gable front $1\frac{1}{2}$ -story cottage started out as a side gable board and batten carriage house with a central cupola. It was located on the site of the Ellsworth Field playground behind the eighteenth century Captain Caleb Brewster House (burned 1887). It served briefly as an auxiliary schoolhouse in the late 1890s and early 1900s, and was moved to its present site and made over to a dwelling in 1905. It is presently sided with asbestos shingles (not illustrated).

Harbor Avenue runs north from Hackley Street. The district includes only two of its houses which are on a line with Hackley Street.

WILLIAM WHEELER JR. HOUSE (1840), 20 Harbor Avenue (9 on map)--This former farmhouse is a three bay wide front gabled structure with an attic fanlight. Aluminum siding is a recent addition (Photo 14).

In addition to the above named buildings, there are several other features of note within the district. The WILLIAM WHEELER BOUNDSTONE, located on the grounds of the apartment house at the northwest corner of Brewster and Ellsworth Streets, is an upended rough granite slab approximately five feet high that bears the inscription "WW 1847". On Seabright Avenue opposite Seaview Terrace is the CAPTAIN WILLIAM HOWES COAL COMPANY WHARF (1849). Built of quarried granite with gravel infill and subsequently enlarged, it remains in use today as a dock for commercial fishing vessels. At the foot of Beacon Street the stone ruins of MIDDLE WHARF (1767) extend into the harbor. Its period of commercial use ended a 1845.

Twentieth century structures number about half the structures in the district. They are scattered throughout, having mostly been constructed on the divided large houselots of older homesteads. With only a few exceptions, they are unobtrusive one and two family structures that maintain the scale of the older parts of the village. A 1964 three-story brick apartment building at 15 Ellsworth Street (Photo 15) and two single-story commercial buildings at 262 and 294 Brewster Street (not illustrated) are virtually the only non contributing elements to the district's historic character.

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 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 type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Black Rock National Register District includes the remains of the village of Black Rock, third most important seaport in Connecticut after the Revolutionary War² and important shipbuilding center in the years immediately preceding the Civil War. It includes examples of every major American architectural style from the late Medieval of the seventeenth century to the Italianate of the mid-nineteenth, as well as some resort and suburban styles of the later Victorian era.

Black Rock was originally a part of Fairfield and was not joined to Bridgeport until 1870. It is situated on what was once the deepest harbor in the state west of New London, protected on the south and east by Fayerweather Island and on the west by Penfield Reef (cobblestones collected from this reef were used to pave the streets of New York City in the early nineteenth century, causing its disintegration and resulting vulnerability of the port to the onslaughts of periodic hurricanes).

Black Rock was first occupied in 1644 by the Wheeler family as a trading settlement. Major developments began around 1760, when the first shipyard was opened, three commercial wharves built, and residential building lots laid out. There were at least ten houses constructed by the time of the Revolutionary War³. Many other people who earned their livelihoods from port activities lived in Fairfield Center, which was connected to Black Rock by a causeway across Ash Creek.

Two buildings remain from this period, each of outstanding architectural and historical importance. The John Wheeler House at 266-8 Brewster Street was built by a wealthy merchant who represented Fairfield in the colonial legislature. Although in altered condition, it has what is probably the steepest roof pitch and heaviest exposed frame construction in the Bridgeport-Fairfield area.

The Wolcott Chauncey House at 150 Seabright Avenue is a rare example in Fairfield County of a small 1½-story worker's cottage from the eight-

²Based on conversation with Elsie N. Danenberg, author of Naval History of Fairfield County Men in the Revolution, September, 1976.

³Walking Through History, p. 5

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eenth century. It was the birthplace in 1772 of Commodore Isaac Chauncey, commander of American naval forces on the Great Lakes in the War of 1812 and first commandant of the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

Black Rock saw a good deal of privateering during the Revolution. It was a key link in the Culper Spy Ring, which relayed information out of New York City to Washington's Headquarters by way of whaleboats across Long Island Sound. These whaleboats were probably beached in Brewster's Cove behind the homestead of Captain Caleb Brewster, who commanded this phase of the operation.

Black Rock was made a Port of Entry for all of Western Connecticut in 1790. A government lighthouse was built at the mouth of the harbor in 1807, and a turnpike laid out to Danbury in 1812. By 1830, however, Bridgeport appears to have usurped Black Rock's place as the center of eastern Fairfield County commerce, and the village turned to ship and carriage building as a means of livelihood.

Conscientious efforts to construct an urban village center to serve as a focal point for the scattered homesteads in the area date from this time. David Smith, housewright, apparently designed and built the row of three harmonious Greek Revival houses at 237, 259-61, and 283 Brewster Street. Behind them, Calderwood Court was laid out with its workers' houses and carriage manufactory. Across the street was the first Black Rock schoolhouse, opened in 1841.

A Congregational Church (demolished 1968) was erected at the corner of Ellsworth Street and Bartram Avenue in 1849. Soon afterwards, Captain William Hall came to the village, bought up all four existing shipyards (located outside the district at the foot of Brewster Street), and commenced large scale shipbuilding operations. At peak production he employed 90 men,⁴ and many ship carpenters followed his lead by building their modest Italianate villas on spacious lots on Ellsworth Street. Hall's Shipyard was responsible for the "Charles Cooper", a 1000 ton packet ship designed for passenger traffic between Antwerp and New York. Anchored at Port Stanley in the Falkland Islands since 1866,

⁴news item in the Bridgeport Standard, 4 Nov. 1865.

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she is now the sole remainder of the 8000 or so packet ships built in the United States in the 1850s.⁵ The "Cooper" has recently been acquired by South Street Seaport Museum in New York City for eventual restoration.

The shipbuilding industry apparently died along with Captain Hall in 1860. The village became an important summer resort when the George Hotel, built as the most elegant along the coast between New York and Newport, was built at nearby Grover's Hill (then known as "Short Branch"). Other industries--notably ship chandlery on the site of the old shipyards and coaling at Captain Howes' dock on Seabright Avenue--continued along the harborfront. A turpentine factory was built on part of the shipyard lot in 1868 which, proving unprofitable, was later changed to manufacture sulfuric acid and fertilizer. It was finally moved to Fairfield around 1880.

After Bridgeport annexed the village, the land between the two centers became built up, and Black Rock's fabric was gradually incorporated into that of the larger city. The center, however, remains a relatively well preserved enclave of historic buildings. The village's businesses were removed north to Fairfield Avenue after the trolley line was built there in 1892. There has to date been no need to alter Black Rock's historic character, and David Smith's Greek Revival development, the shipbuilders' villas on Ellsworth Street, and the other important buildings of the seaport community still stand in a complementary environment.

⁵Based on conversation with Norman Brouwer, Ships Historian, South Street Seaport Museum, 17 October 1977.

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The proposed District includes the area in the City of Bridgeport bounded as follows:

Beginning at a point of intersection of the U.S. Harbor Line in Burr Creek and the northeast boundary of Ellsworth Field;

Thence southwesterly along the boundary of Ellsworth Field for a distance of 780 feet, more or less, to the north street line of Brewster Street;

Thence southeasterly to a point opposite the southwest property line located 101 feet, more or less, southwest of the intersection of Brewster Street and Seabright Avenue;

Thence southerly for a distance of 138 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the northerly property line of land now or formerly of Lula K. Wry;

Thence southeasterly for a distance of 52 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the southwest property line of land now or formerly of the Brewster Street Corp.;

Thence southerly for a distance of 162 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the south property line of land now or formerly of the Brewster Street Corp.;

Thence southeasterly for a distance of 80 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the U.S. Harbor Line in Black Rock Harbor;

Thence southwesterly for a distance of 729 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the southwest street line of Beacon Street;

Thence southwesterly along the highwater line of Black Rock Harbor to a point of intersection with the northeast property line of land now or formerly of Carl G. Ljunglof;

Thence northeasterly for a distance of 520 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the southeast street line of Grovers Avenue;

Thence northeasterly for a distance of 285 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the northeast street line of Beacon Street;

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Thence southeasterly for a distance of 124 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the northeast property line of land now or formerly of Karl and Margaret Wunsch;

Thence northeasterly for a distance of 155 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the southeast property line of land now or formerly of Karl and Margaret Wunsch;

Thence southwesterly for a distance of 16 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the southwest property line of land now or formerly of Wilhelmina C. Nadeau;

Thence southeasterly for a distance of 235 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the southeast property line of land now or formerly of Edward and Margaret Hiller;

Thence southwesterly for a distance of 57 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the northeast property line of land now or formerly of Emily J. Sanford;

Thence southeasterly for a distance of 130 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the northwest street line of Seabright Avenue;

Thence northeasterly for a distance of 450 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the northeast street line of Seaview Terrace;

Thence northwesterly for a distance of 360 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the northwest property line of land now or formerly of Elmer R. Crow;

Thence northeasterly for a distance of 174 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the southeast property line of land now or formerly of Edward and Arthur Renn;

Thence northwesterly for a distance of 228 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the southeast street line of Grovers Avenue;

Thence northeasterly for a distance of 149 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the northeast street line of Brewster Street;

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Thence northwesterly to a point of intersection with the north-west property line of land now or formerly of Mary S. Toth;

Thence northeasterly for a distance of 100 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the southwest property line of land now or formerly of Mary S. Toth;

Thence northeasterly for a distance of 212 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the northeast property line of land now or formerly of Mary S. Toth;

Thence southeasterly for a distance of 15 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the north property line of land now or formerly of Milton K. Weiss;

Thence easterly for a distance of 145 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the west property line of land now or formerly of Milton K. Weiss;

Thence northerly for a distance of 376 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the south property line of land now or formerly of Mary and Edward Lesko;

Thence westerly for a distance of 4 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the west property line of land now or formerly of Mary and Edward Lesko;

Thence northerly for a distance of 171 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the north property line of land now or formerly of Edward and Peggy Mele;

Thence easterly for a distance of 28 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the west property line of land now or formerly of Robert Owens;

Thence northerly for a distance of 139 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the south property line of land now or formerly of Mieczyslaw and Janina Pacynko;

Thence westerly for a distance of 34 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the west property line of land now or formerly of Mieczyslaw and Janina Pacynko;

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Thence northerly for a distance of 130 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the northwest property line of land now or formerly of Gertrude Williams;

Thence northeasterly for a distance of 58 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the north property line of land now or formerly of Gertrude Williams;

Thence easterly for a distance of 274 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the east street line of Ellsworth Street;

Thence northerly for a distance of 60 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the south street line of Prescott Street;

Thence easterly for a distance of 125 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the east property line of land now or formerly of Donald and Linda Martoni;

Thence southerly for a distance of 83 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the north property line of land now or formerly of Joseph Taylor;

Thence easterly for a distance of 48 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the east property line of land now or formerly of Joseph Taylor;

Thence southerly for a distance of 116 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the north property line of land now or formerly of Rolf and Zlata Marx;

Thence easterly for a distance of 98 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the east property line of land now or formerly of Rolf and Zlata Marx;

Thence southerly for a distance of 115 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the south property line of land now or formerly of Rolf and Zlata Marx;

Thence westerly for a distance of 76 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the east property line of land now or formerly of Edith Blycher;

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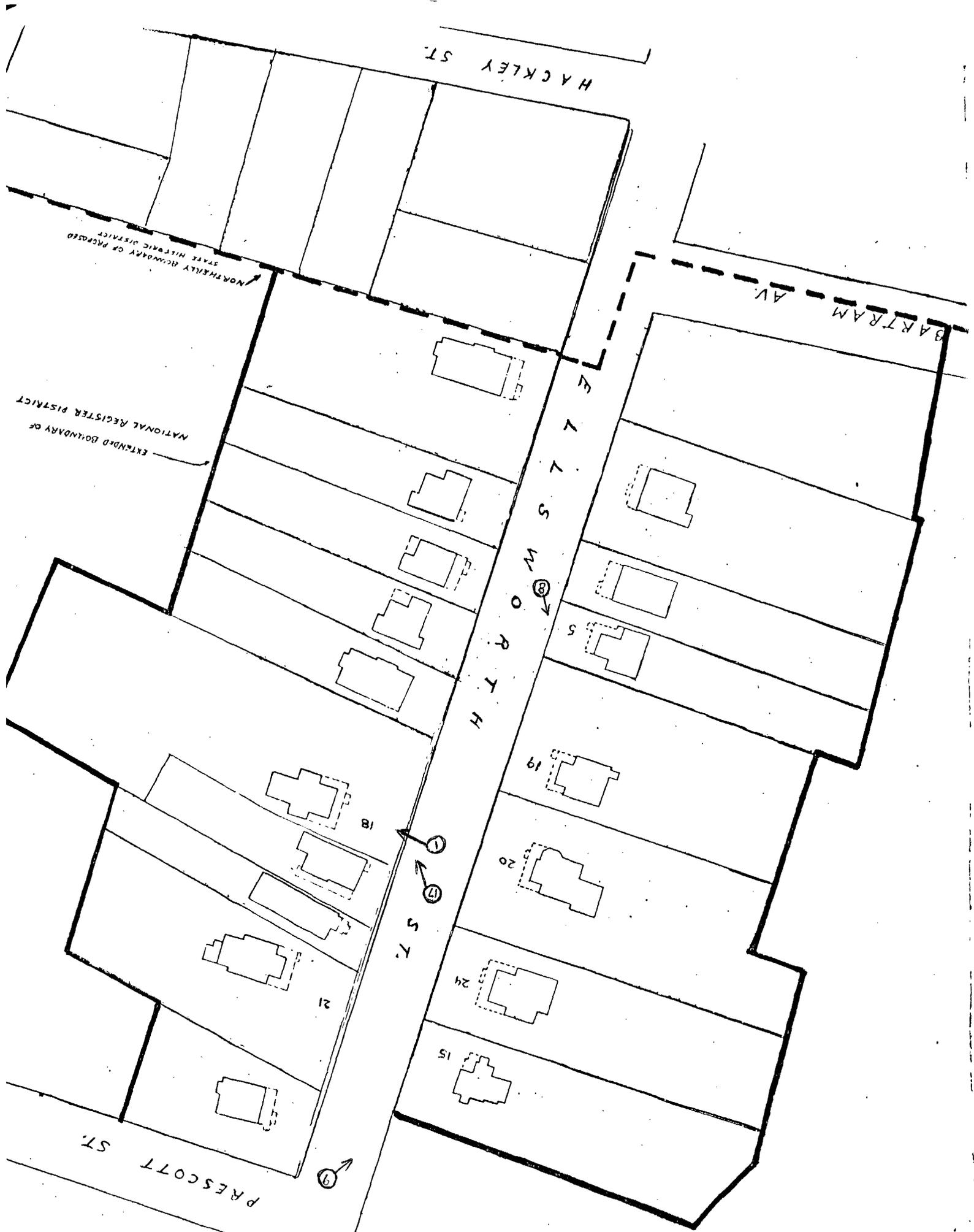
Thence southerly for a distance of 243 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the north property line of land now or formerly of Louis and John Renkavinski;

Thence easterly for a distance of 269 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the east street line of Harbor Avenue;

Thence northerly for a distance of 30 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the north property line of land now or formerly of Mildred F. Hurlburt;

Thence easterly for a distance of 391 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the U.S. Harbor Line in Burr Creek.

BLACK ROCK HISTORIC DISTRICT--Detailed map of the proposed National Register District extension





BRIDGEPORT--BLACK ROCK NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT