

**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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.

**1. Name of Property**

Historic name: Oil Mill Historic District

Other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of related multiple property listing:

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

**2. Location**

Street & number: Gurley Road, Oil Mill Road, Boston Post Road; See Item 7 for addresses

City or town: Waterford State: CT County: New London

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

**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 at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ **national**      \_\_\_ **statewide**      \_\_\_ **local**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

\_\_\_ **A**      \_\_\_ **B**      \_\_\_ **C**      \_\_\_ **D**

<b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
<b>Signature of commenting official:</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Title :</b>	<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>16</u>	<u>14</u>	buildings
<u>4</u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>20</u>	<u>14</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling, secondary structure, institutional housing

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/manufacturing facility

INDUSTRY/Waterworks

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling, multiple dwelling, secondary structure, hotel

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COLONIAL/New England Colonial

MID-19TH CENTURY/Greek Revival

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS/Colonial Revival

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the properties:

Foundation	<u>BRICK, STONE/Granite</u>
Walls	<u>WOOD/Weatherboard, Shingle</u>
Roofs	<u>ASPHALT</u>
Other	<u>N/A</u>

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

### Summary Paragraph

The Oil Mill Historic District contains archaeological remains of a nineteenth-century mill built to process locally abundant sumac and flaxseed, along with houses and an archaeological site associated with a community that developed during the most productive years of the oil mill. The district is situated on the western border of Waterford in New London County, Connecticut, at the head of the Niantic River, which flows into Long Island Sound (Figures 1 and 2). The district is about 55 acres in size and consists of 34 resources: 20 contributing and 14 non-contributing. Together, the contributing buildings represent the mill community (Figure 3). The district contains 4 contributing archaeological sites, including mill remnants and waterworks and remnants of a ca. 1700 house that served as Waterford's almshouse in the second half of the nineteenth century (Figures 4 and 5).

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## Narrative Description

### Setting

The district is located in the Town of Waterford in southeastern Connecticut, within the Southeast Hills Ecoregion. This area represents the near-coastal uplands lying within 30 miles of eastern Long Island Sound. It is characterized by low, rolling hills, moderately broad and level upland and valley bottoms. The nucleus of the district is at the intersection of Gurley and Oil Mill roads, just east of the East Lyme town line (Photograph 1). Oil Mill Road is oriented north-south, running for the most part along the Niantic River, with clear views of the water (Photograph 2). It intersects Route 1A (Boston Post Road), a major east-west town thoroughfare at the southern edge of the district. Gurley Road also runs east-west, south of and roughly parallel to Interstate 95 (I-95). Within the district, the terrain slopes gently southward, traced with small streams, and Lakes Pond Brook (also known as Oil Mill Brook). Lakes Pond/Oil Mill Brook enters the district from the north, closely paralleling Oil Mill Road, passes under I-95 and, further south of Gurley Road, it widens into a cove and empties into the Niantic River. Located at the headwaters of the Niantic River, the oil mill community is now almost entirely residential, characterized by wooded lots with historic houses set close to the road, including Capes (New England Colonial), Greek Revival houses, and vernacular dwellings, as well as some modern houses set further back, several on clear-cut lots. Despite the twentieth-century intrusions of Route 1 to the north and later I-95, most of the historic houses have survived. The district boundary includes five parcels of water and open land on the west side of Oil Mill Road, as well as the front portions of several lots on the east side of Oil Mill Road, which are part of the district's historic streetscape.

Below, the resources are described by property and listed in alphanumerical order of address, followed by a data table. Construction dates are estimated, based on deed research.

### **Isaac Dart House, 557 Boston Post Road** (1 Contributing Building, 1 Non-Contributing Building)

Isaac M. Dart constructed this house in 1834 on a parcel purchased from Thomas Manwaring in 1833.<sup>1</sup> It is 1½-stories high, with a side-gable roof and a central chimney at the ridgeline (Photograph 3). It is about 29 feet long (four bays) and 25 feet deep (two bays), with a wood paneled door, 6-over-9 windows, and vinyl siding. It is built into a steep bank, with a basement-level entrance to the rear. There is a rear addition with a hipped roof at the northwest corner. The two-bay garage (ca. 1950) has vertical-board siding.

### **Lyman Cavarly-Jonathan Comstock-John W. Keeney House, 563 Boston Post Road** (1 Contributing Building, 1 Non-Contributing Building)

This 1828 building (Photograph 4) was originally a 2-story, side gable house built by Lyman D.

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<sup>1</sup> WLR 7:168, 7/6/1833. In 1847 Dart conveyed the property to Erastus Beach (WLR 9:152, 4/3/1847). Beach died the following year and the property passed to his wife, Lucretia, who retained the house until 1896.

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Cavarly, who advertised it for sale the following year.<sup>2</sup> Jonathan Comstock, one of the mill owners, purchased it in 1830.<sup>3</sup> The building was substantially remodeled and enlarged in 1857 by John W. Keeney and retains some Italianate features.<sup>4</sup> The front-gable section is about 25 feet wide and 42 feet deep. It has composite siding and 1-over-1 windows. The front (south) and west gable ends have full cornice returns with dentil trim and Palladian windows, while the east gable has a full width arch over the tripartite window. The L-shaped wraparound porch, supported by Tuscan columns, has been enclosed on the west side. The property was converted into a motel in the mid-twentieth century. The main building contains five guest rooms; behind it are small wood-shingled cottages connected by a covered walkway (counted as one non-contributing building).

### **21 Gurley Road (Site 152-75) (1 Contributing Site)**

This property forms most of the northern boundary, as well as the furthest eastern boundary, of the district. It is the largest property in terms of acreage and is counted as one contributing site with multiple features (Figure 4, Map ID D). The 21.5-acre parcel is located east of Oil Mill Road, bounded by I-95 to the north and Gurley Road to the south. The property encompasses the archaeological remains of the Abel Moore-Joshua Moore homestead, which included a 2 ½-story dwelling built ca. 1700 (Figure 6) and demolished in 2012.<sup>5</sup> Some rubble remained in situ in 2015 (Photograph 6). The house, which faced south, was sited at the interior of the property, rather than directly on Gurley Road. Built on a fieldstone foundation, it was 2 ½ stories high, four bays long, and three bays wide, with a side hall entrance.<sup>6</sup> A rear lean-to addition gave it a saltbox roofline. There was a parged stone chimney behind the roof ridge on the east end. A wood-frame addition with a shed roof extended from the east side of the house. The property served as Waterford's almshouse and town farm from 1847 to 1906. A late 19<sup>th</sup>-century brick addition off the rear of the building was damaged in the 1938 hurricane and remained unrestored.

<sup>2</sup> *Connecticut Gazette* 11/23/1829. Lyman Cavarly advertised it as "well suited for a tavern, being handsomely situated on the East of Strait's bridge leading over the Niantic river, with barn, shed and good garden."

<sup>3</sup> (WLR 6: 413, 9/14/1830).

<sup>4</sup> Jonathan Comstock sold the house to John W. Keeney in 1857 (WLR 12:199, 2/23/1857). Keeney had considerable holdings, some 200 acres (1875 & 1878 Waterford Grand Lists, Tax Collector's Office). Keeney was responsible for the additions and remodeling of the house. He died in 1892. His estate passed to his three sons.

<sup>5</sup> The parcel was part of a much larger tract included in a 1664 grant "rounding the head of the river" bestowed on "agriculturist" Isaac Willey who, with his wife Joanna, were among the first settlers at Head of the River (Caulkins, 94, 310). The 21 Gurley Road parcel was included in the portion of the Willey farm that was conveyed to Abel Moore. His son, Abel Moore, Jr., built the house sometime between his father's death and his own death in 1705 (Bucher, II:119-120). The farm passed to his younger brother, Joshua, then to his son, Joshua, Jr. in 1761. After more than a century the homestead passed from the Moore family in 1805. In 1847 Ezra Keeney conveyed the former Moore farm and 107 acres to the town of Waterford for an almshouse and town farm (WLR 9:11, 2/23/1847). In 1852 he conveyed an additional 40-acre wood lot for the town farm for \$500 (WLR 9:374, 12/8/1852); Town Meeting Minutes, 12/8/1852, Vol. 2, p. 55).

<sup>6</sup> The building was included in the Federal Writers' Project Census of Old Buildings in Connecticut, which documented that the interior had a 15-inch summer beam and chimney girt measuring 10 ½ inches by 9 ¼ inches. Other framing members throughout the house were of average size. The census also noted two small bedrooms at the west end of the house, and two additional bedrooms on the second floor. See Federal Writers' Project, Works Progress Administration (WPA), "Census of Old Buildings in Connecticut," Form 110, 21 Gurley Road, Waterford, CT (no date, ca. 1940).

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The property also includes the archaeological remains of a ca. 1900 privy located west of the house, and a ca. 1903 barn located to the southwest. The two-story barn had a gable roof and was sheathed with vertical board siding. The privy and barn were demolished in 2012. A ca. 1940 springhouse formerly located south of the house site was extant in 2015 (Photograph 7) but demolished in 2021. Near its eastern border, this parcel also contains a section of the old King's Highway, also known as the Upper Country Road to Lyme or the New London and Lyme Road (Photograph 8). The stone wall running along much of the Gurley Road property line (Photograph 5) defines the northern bound of the old country road, the rest of which was paved over.<sup>7</sup> Much of the former farm acreage is now woodland. The 21 Gurley Road property, inclusive of the remains of the house, outbuildings, spring house, and vestigial road remnant, is recorded as CT archaeological site 152-75 in the files of the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA). The setting of Site 152-75 has remained mostly unchanged since the period of significance. Although not far from I-95, it is set back from Gurley Road and still wooded so neither modern visual or auditory elements are significantly intrusive. Visual inspection by archaeologists and communication with the Municipal Historian indicate that some building debris is still in a pile on site. The site has excellent integrity because the demolition of structures had little or no subsurface impact. Based on that visual inspection, the cellar and associated artifact deposits from refuse discard during the house's tenure as a private home and almshouse are extant. Because the house had no plumbing or modern utilities, subsurface disturbance of the site has been minimal.

This site was assessed as part of a 1998 town-wide archaeological survey, when the buildings were standing and the house was occupied, and again in 2006 as part of a proposed Route 11 extension study.<sup>8</sup> The site was walked over in 2016 after the structure demolition and its integrity was confirmed. There is enormous potential for learning more about early lifeways in Waterford beginning ca. 1700 through its phase as a dwelling house and almshouse.

### **Nathan Daniels House, 44 Gurley Road (2 Contributing Buildings)**

Nathan Daniels built this house in 1868.<sup>9</sup> It is 1 ½-stories, about 20 feet wide and 36

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<sup>7</sup> The order was given in 1669 to lay out the King's Highway, which ran from New London to the head of the Niantic River in Lyme. See Robert L. Bachman, *An Illustrated History of the Town of Waterford*, Norwich, CT: Thames Printing Company, 2000: 34. The road, which was roughly 4 rods wide, roughly paralleled Gurley Road and was likely in use before it was surveyed in 1698. See Robert L. Bucher, "The Colonial Lands of New London," Vol. 1, 1984: 47; Robert L. Bucher "The Colonial Lands of New London," Vol. II, 1990: 10).

<sup>8</sup> Mary G. Harper, et al., "Town-Wide Archaeological Survey, Waterford, Connecticut." Storrs, CT: Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc. 1998; Brian Jones, et al., "Report: Historic Resource Evaluation, Phase I Archaeological Reconnaissance Survey, Phase II Intensive Archaeological Investigations, Route 82/85/11 Corridor Project, East Lyme, Montville, Salem, and Waterford, Connecticut," Storrs, CT: Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc. June 2006; Mary G. Harper and Ross Harper, "Draft Technical Report, Cultural Resources Services Reevaluation, Environmental Studies for Route 11 Expressway and I-95 Interchange, East Lyme, Montville, Salem and Waterford, Connecticut, State Project No. 120-81, Storrs, CT: Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc., March 2, 2015.

<sup>9</sup> Nathan Daniels bought the property in 1868 (WLR 16: 90, 3/04/1868). He built the house, then sold it to William B. Beckwith the same year (WLR 16: 330, 11/34/1869). Beckwith sold it to Moses W. Comstock in 1872 (WLR 16: Vol. 16: 351, 7/17/1872). Many members of the Comstock family had financial interests in the oil mill. Lydia E. Kelsey acquired the property in 1876 (WLR 16:537, 11/6/1876).

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feet deep, set into a hill that slopes down toward the road (Photograph 9). The front-gable house is set on a raised foundation with a basement-level entrance; with three bays on the first floor and two bays on the upper level. The first-floor entrance is on the east side, sheltered by a partially enclosed porch with a hipped roof. The west side has a one-story addition, also set on a raised foundation. It has a deep raking cornice, with no cornice returns, and clapboard siding. Window openings have plain trim and the double-hung sash are typically 2-over-2. A two-bay garage constructed ca. 1920 (ca. 1920) is located northeast of the house. It is sheathed in drop siding (also known as novelty siding).

**James and John Manwaring House, 46 Gurley Road** (1 Contributing Building, 1 Non-Contributing Building)

This house was built by James and John Manwaring in 1825 on a parcel conveyed by Thomas Manwaring in 1824.<sup>10</sup> It is a 1 ½-story house that measures about 32 feet long and 22 feet wide, five bays by two bays, with a one-story rear addition (Photograph 10). At the west gable end is an enclosed porch with a hipped roof. The side gable roof is steeply pitched, with a central brick chimney at the ridge and two small gabled dormers (not original). It is sided with clapboards and the windows are modern replacements with plain trim. A detached single-bay garage with clapboard siding (ca. 1925) is located on the east side of the house.

**William Moore<sup>4th</sup> House, 51 Gurley Road** (1 Contributing Building, 1 Non-Contributing Building)

This building is a 1 ½-story house sided in wood shingles, and measures about 18 feet wide and 24 feet deep (Photograph 11). It was included in the 1847 conveyance from Ezra Keeney to the town.<sup>11</sup> The house now appears as a side gable on the west side of the ca. 1850 front-gable section. It has partial cornice returns and wide frieze boards. Most window openings have 6-over-6 double-hung sash, though the east side has 2-over-2 windows. The house has been altered with an enclosed front porch that has 1-over-1 windows, and a rear porch. A front-gable two-bay garage (ca. 1950) is set back from the house.

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<sup>10</sup> WLR 15:647, 10/22/1824. The four-acre parcel was part of a much larger tract included in a 1664 grant “rounding the head of the river” bestowed on “agriculturalist Isaac Willey who, with his wife Joanna, were among the first settlers at Head of the River (Caulkins, 94, 310). The farm was eventually sold to Christopher Christophers and Abel Moore. The former’s portion passed to John Christophers who, by the terms of his 1723 will, left the farm to his sister Esther, wife of Thomas Manwaring. The property became the homestead farm of generations of Manwarings into the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The parcel conveyed in 1824 included a house known to have been standing in 1701 when John Christophers more than likely lived there. It may also have been Isaac Willey’s house standing in 1678. (Stacy). In 1829 a deed from James Manwaring to Archibald Davis includes “a new house thereon Standing” as well as “the Old house” (WLR 7:44, 1/29/1829). Franklin J. Stanton acquired the property in 1872 (WLR 16:329, 2/2/1872) from his brother, Benjamin, who had purchased it in 1869 (WLR 16:328, 9/22/1869).

<sup>11</sup> WLR 9:13, 2/23/1847. The parcel first shows up as a “house Lott now improved by the widow Hannah Moor” in 1791 (NLLR 27:75, 12/27/1791) and in subsequent recordings as “improved by Eliphalet Beebe” (WLR 3:179, 12/16/1808). The “Small Dwelling house” and “Small Barn”, does not appear “of record” until 1811 (WLR 3:479, 4/5/1811) and therefore must be attributed to William Moore<sup>4th</sup>, ca. 1809. The house was later acquired by oil mill owners Daniel and Benjamin Stanton.



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**52 Gurley Road** (1 Non-Contributing Building)

This property is a ranch-type house constructed in 1977. It is set back a distance from the street and accessed from a driveway on Oil Mill Road. It is not visible from either road.

**Philip Cavarly House, 54 Gurley Road** (1 Contributing Building, 1 Non-Contributing Building)

Philip Cavarly built this 1 ½-story house in 1794 (Photograph 12). It measures approximately 37 feet long (3 bays) by 27 feet wide; and has a stone foundation, clapboard siding, and a gambrel roof with two narrow interior brick chimneys at the ridge. The fenestration has been altered, probably in the early twentieth century, with pairs of replacement 6-over-6 windows flanking the central entrance. The second story has gabled dormer windows, also 6-over-6. On the west side of the house is a porch with a shed roof, supported by plain square posts. At the rear of the house, on the southwest corner, is a two-story addition with a gabled roof. The addition is two bays long and two bays deep, with a later expansion at the raised-basement level. A detached three-bay garage, built ca. 1930, is located east of the house.<sup>12</sup>

**57/59 Gurley Road (Site 152-37)** (1 Contributing Site)

Located south of I-95, this property (Figure 4, Map ID B; Figure 7) contains vestiges of an 800-foot-long raceway that begins to the north at 54 Oil Mill Road (Site 152-34) (Figure 4, Map ID A). Approximately halfway between I-95 and Gurley Road is a fieldstone basin in the race. Within the Gurley Road right-of-way, the raceway continues south toward the remains of the mill's dry-laid stone water wheel pit, partially buried in fill (Figure 8; Photograph 13). Altogether, the race that powered the oil mill measures about 800 feet in length. The property also includes the remains of a dam approximately 25 feet north of the road; the mill pond is no longer extant. Between Oil Mill Road and the brook is the three-sided fieldstone foundation of a 500-square-foot barn (ca. 1844) (Figure 9; Photograph 14). The dry-laid fieldstone foundation has random pockets of Portland cement. The remnants of the mill complex were recorded as Site 152-37 in the SHPO and OSA files following their identification in the town-wide and Route 11 assessment surveys; no further archaeological investigation been done since the site forms were filed and the site was graphically documented in 2015. Although no subsurface testing has been undertaken, enough visible remains and the absence of visible disturbance makes an assessment of physical integrity reasonable. Two non-historic buildings are located on this property but are outside the boundaries of the district. These include a log cabin (1971) and a garage with board-and-batten siding (2000).

**Cavarly-Comstock-Chapman Store, 2 Oil Mill Road** (1 Contributing Building)

This building, located on the corner of Oil Mill Road and Route 1 (Boston Post Road), was

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<sup>12</sup> In 1794 Cavarly acquired "two Acres Three Quarters & 23 Rods" on the southeast corner of Gurley Road and the "pent highway to Harvey's Point" from Isaac and Lydia Manwaring, whereupon he built his house (NLLR 28:19, 1/8/1794). The following year he leased "about eight Acres . . . at the head of Niantic River" from Thomas Manwaring . . . "to improve in good husbandlike Manner for the Term of two Years. . ." (NLLR 29:25, 4/13/1795). In 1797 he acquired another 12 acres from Isaac Manwaring (NLLR 28:171m 3/29/1797). At the time Cavarly's property extended south from his house and garden to land through which the turnpike would run, and westerly bordering on the river and pentway.

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constructed as a store ca. 1825 by Lyman D. Cavarly (Photograph 15).<sup>13</sup> Evidence of the original post-and-beam construction is visible in the basement. It became a residence ca. 1916, a 1 ½-story front-gable house, about 20 by 26 feet, built on a stone foundation on the banks of the Niantic River. Vinyl siding resembles clapboards, except at the gable ends and at the gabled wall dormers, where it resembles shingles, possibly mimicking the early twentieth-century siding. The windows are 1-over-1. A shed-roofed porch wraps around the north and east sides, supported by thin square posts. A narrow stucco chimney pierces the façade's raked cornice.

**Horace Beckwith-Frank Chapman House, 5 Oil Mill Road** (1 Contributing Building; 1 Non-Contributing Building)

This house was built in 1842 as a 1 ½-story front-gable dwelling by Horace Beckwith.<sup>14</sup> In 1856 he sold it to Frank Chapman along with the store (2 Oil Mill Road).<sup>15</sup> Known as "Home Nook" and used as a seasonal hotel, major alterations were made in the late-nineteenth and/or early twentieth centuries, raising the roof to accommodate two full stories, moving the entrance and adding shingle siding and a front porch. It is now a side-gable building that measures about 30 feet (5 bays) wide by 25 feet (2 bays) deep (Photograph 16). The roof has deep raked cornices with no returns; the 2-over-2 windows have plain trim. A brick chimney rises from south end of the roof ridge. Single-story shed-roofed additions have been built at both ends. Behind the house is a small shed and a two-bay garage, both with side-gable roofs and vertical-board siding. The garage has modern doors and windows.

**Isaac Comstock House, 9 Oil Mill Road** (2 Contributing Buildings)

Isaac T. Comstock built this 1 ½-story, side-gable house in 1842 by (Photograph 17) and it was known as "The Bungalow" after actors Clara Turner and her husband James Gilmore Hammond

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<sup>13</sup> Cavarly advertised the store and attached shed for sale in 1829 "as good a stand as any in the county for business, directly on the river, with good landings and water sufficient for vessels of fifty tons to load at, within fifty feet of the door" (Connecticut Gazette, 12/23/1829). In 1830 he mortgaged the store to his father-in-law, Jonathan Comstock (WLR 6:411, 8/6/1830). Lyman Cavarly and Comstock's daughter, Julia Emmaline, were married in 1826. In 1829 Comstock had acquired the oil mill property and a mill privilege from Cavarly's father, Philip Cavarly. After his father paid off the mortgage, Lyman Cavarly negotiated a three-year lease with Isaac M. Dart "to use as a grocery store" (WLR 7:72, 10,19/1830). At some point Cavarly would occupy the store again. But within months of his father's passing in 1838 Lyman and Julia Cavarly left the state "to parts unknown" (Illinois) and in debt nearly \$100 according to the deputy sheriff. (WLR 7:371, 12/9/1839). Judgment against Cavarly was recovered with the execution of the store property in 1839 (WLR 7:371, 12/10/1839). The following year it was conveyed to Julia Cavarly's brother, Isaac T. Comstock (WLR 7:378, 1/18/1840; 8:166, 12/3/1840). In 1843 Comstock conveyed the store to his cousin Peter Comstock of East Lyme (WLR 9:29, 2/18/1843). The store would change hands again before it was conveyed to Isaac Comstock's brother-in-law, Horace Beckwith, in 1853 (WLR 12:9, 2/4/1853). In 1856 Beckwith sold the store and his house (5 Oil Mill Road, extant) to merchant Francis "Frank" Chapman and grocer/merchant Nicholas L. Smith (WLR 12:323, 3/31/1856). The building was extensively remodeled before the turn of the century. According to period postcards the store had all the appearances of a house. It was raised to meet the new road grade in 1913 ("Property at Head of River is Receiving Attention," the Day, 10/20/1913). After the Chapman estate was devised in favor of Frederick and Nellie Swan (WLR 213:696, 4/8/1900), the Swans ran a primarily seasonal operation they called the "Silver Buckle." ("Busy a Home Nook," the Day, 6/4/1909).

<sup>14</sup> WLR 10:8, 8/13/1841.

<sup>15</sup> WLR 12:323, 3/31/1856.

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purchased it in 1906.<sup>16</sup> It measures four bays (about 40 feet) wide by two bays (about 20 feet) deep, and has been enlarged with single-story shed-roofed additions at both ends. The house has clapboard siding, and the front corners are embellished with pilasters. The entrance has a 7-panel wood door flanked with half-height sidelights, with a transom and entablature above. Some of the trim appears altered but retains a measure of Greek Revival detailing. The 6-over-6 windows have plain trim. The roof has a small central brick chimney and one shed-roofed dormer with a 4-over-4 window. A small front-gable workshop (ca. 1900) with vertical siding and cross-buck doors is located behind the house.

**George Brown House, 13 Oil Mill Road (1 Contributing Building)**

This front-gable house was built by George S. Brown ca. 1844 in the Greek Revival style (Photographs 2, 18).<sup>17</sup> The house has been renovated and was enlarged with a rear addition (now measuring about 21 feet wide and 77 feet deep). While it has been sided in vinyl and no longer retains its historic detailing, the house is still able to convey its age through its form and 6-over-6 windows, and it contributes to the historic streetscape. A detached garage is set back behind the house and is not visible from the street. The garage is outside the boundaries of the district.

**Winthrop Beebe House, 15 Oil Mill Road (1 Contributing Building)**

Ship carpenter Winthrop Beebe built this front-gable Greek Revival house in 1848 (Photographs 2, 18).<sup>18</sup> While it has undergone some changes over time, such as 1-over-1 replacement windows, an altered front entry, and rear and side additions, it retains other important details, such as clapboard siding, wide corner boards, and a deep cornice with partial returns. The original house is three bays wide and three bays deep; with the rear addition, it is now about 20 feet wide and 54 feet deep. The barn located behind the house has lost integrity because of alterations to the windows and doors; it is outside the boundaries of the district.

**Thomas Ames House, 25 Oil Mill Road (1 Contributing Building)**

Thomas T. Ames constructed this house in 1865 (Photograph 19).<sup>19</sup> It has a two-story, L-shaped

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<sup>16</sup> WLR 29:154, 6/5/1906. (See also, "Community", p. -).

<sup>17</sup> Thomas T. and Cornelia C. Tabor of East Lyme to George S. Brown of East Lyme, "half an acre more or less" (WLR 10: 102, 3/16/1844). Brown mortgaged the "lot of land . . . together the Dwelling House now erecting thereon" to Frink and Prentis, New London lumber dealers (WLR 10:107, 4/16/1844). Two years later the property was in foreclosure. James P. Davis acquired title in 1846. Davis conveyed the property to John Knight in 1853 (WLR 2:36, 2/2/1853). In an agreement with neighbor Winthrop Beebe, Knight was granted the "privilege . . . to cross [Winthrop's] land to get to the tidewater . . . for a boat landing" with the stipulation that "No seaweed or rotten substance shall be allowed to remain on said land over Forty Eight hours" (WLR 15:248, 1/23/1865). Knight died in 1867 and the property was transferred "at public sale" in 1871 to Addison Beckwith (WLR 15:486, 10/16/1871).

<sup>18</sup> Thomas T. and Cornelia C. Tabor of East Lyme to ship carpenter Winthrop Beebe, 60 rods (WLR 10: 178, 3/25/1847). Beebe acquired an additional two acres of former Tabor land abutting his house lot as well as "Rock Landing" (also known as "round rock landing", WLR 8:501, 6/22/1840)) on the Niantic River (WLR 12: 356, 7/04/1860). In 1865 Newton F. Darrow purchased the two and one-half acre Beebe property which included Harvey's Point (WLR 16:43, 3/27/1865). In 1868 he sold the property to house joiner John C. Perkins of Norwich.

<sup>19</sup>Addison Beckwith to Thomas T. Ames (WLR 16:30, 6/24/1864). In 1852 Amos Beebe sold "40 rods of Ground" south of Daniel Stanton (31 Oil Mill Road) "with the buildings there standing" to Beckwith (WLR 9:354, 4/17/1852). Thomas T. Tabor had sold the "one certain lot of land to Beebe in 1847 (WLR 10:155, 1/16/1847).

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front gable massing with minimal ornament. It has been altered with vinyl siding, replacement 1-over-1 windows, an enclosed front porch, and a rear addition, but remains recognizable as a nineteenth-century dwelling. It is set back behind 25A Oil Mill Road.

**25A Oil Mill Road** (1 Non-Contributing Building)

This property is a small, one-story municipal sewer pump station constructed in 1991.

**27 Oil Mill Road** (2 Non-Contributing Buildings)

This property has a two-story house (ca. 1940) and a one-story cottage (ca. 1950) (Photograph 20). The house has a hipped roof, wood-shingle siding, a wrap-around screened porch with a shingled railing, 6-over-6 windows, and a shed-roofed dormer on south side. The cottage also has a hipped roof and wood-shingle siding.

**Daniel W. Stanton and Ellen Comstock Stanton House, 31 Oil Mill Road** (2 Contributing Buildings)

Ellen Comstock Stanton and Daniel W. Stanton, who was an owner of the oil mill, constructed this house in 1844, in a transitional yet relatively high style, with a Federal-style form and hipped roof and a Greek Revival wide, plain cornice and paneled pilasters (Photograph 21).<sup>20</sup> Resting on a brick foundation, it is 2 ½ stories high and four bays wide. The plan of the house is L-shaped; it measures about 30 feet long by 16 feet wide and is elongated with a rear addition that measures about 32 feet long by 25 feet wide. It has clapboard siding, trimmed with a wide, plain cornice and paneled pilasters. The window openings have plain flat trim, fitted with 6-over-6 double-hung sash. The paneled entrance door is surrounded by sidelights and a transom. It is sheltered by an entry porch with Tuscan columns and a gabled roof, embellished with bold dentil work at the tympanum and the cornice. The porch appears to be a later addition, likely early twentieth century. A two-bay garage with a shallow hipped roof and clapboard siding, constructed ca. 1920, is located southeast of the house.

**34 Oil Mill Road (Site 152-143)** (1 Contributing Site)

This property, at the southwest corner of Gurley Road and Oil Mill Road, is a narrow strip of land between the brook and the road with a suburban lawn and extensive landscaping (Photograph 22). It is the site of a sumac mill established by 1804, which had been converted into the oil mill by 1823 (Figure 4, Map ID C). This site predates the oil mill operation located at 59 Gurley Mill Road. Although mill remains are not visible here, the nature of the landscaping is one of filling, thus it is possible that intact mill components are below surface.

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In 1865 Thomas T. Ames purchased four and a half acres from Horace Beckwith, "on the West by the highway and land belonging to said Ames" and "on the south by land Belonging to Winthrop Beebe" (WLR 16: 47, 2/23/1865). Ames built the extant house well off Oil Mill Road and to the rear of Beckwith's "buildings thereon" which are no longer standing. Ames was a blacksmith. His "manufactory" was located on the property. (1860 census; Diary of William Gorton, 1870-71, East Lyme Public Library, 2/4/1870, 5/18, 1870, 1/28/1871; 1875 Waterford Grand List, Tax Collector's Office.

<sup>20</sup> In 1844 Thomas T. Taber conveyed a lot south of the former Cavarly place (54 Gurley Road, extant) to Daniel W. Stanton (WLR 10:124, 8/19/1844). Just weeks prior Stanton had acquired half interest in the oil mill from his father-in-law, Jonathan Comstock. Stanton and Comstock's daughter, Ellen Douglas Comstock, were married in 1843.

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**37 Oil Mill Road (1 Non-Contributing Building)**

This property is just west of 51 Gurley Road, at the northeast corner of Gurley and Oil Mill roads. It has a ca. 1960 ranch-type house sided with wood shingles, constructed ca. 1960 (Photograph 23).

**39 Oil Mill Road (2 Non-Contributing Buildings)**

This property is located to the north of 37 Oil Mill Road. It contains a ca. 1980 house and garage, both with vertical-board siding (Photograph 23).

**54 Oil Mill Road (Site 152-134) (1 Contributing Site)**

This property, located on the west side of Oil Mill Road and north of I-95, is a strip of land that forms the remainder of the northern boundary of the district, as well as part of the western boundary, along interstate highway I-395. The parcel has sandy soil and a 0-5% slope. It contains the remains of a dry-laid stone dam and the beginning of the stone-lined headrace for the oil mill previously inventoried as Site 152-37 in the Route 11 survey (Figure 4 Map ID B) at 57/59 Gurley Road, approximately 125 feet north of I-95. The headrace runs south, between Lakes Pond/Oil Mill Brook and Oil Mill Road, about 80 feet west of the road. This site is recorded as Site 152-134 (Figure 4 Map ID A; Figure 10) in the SHPO and OSA files. Based on evaluation of the above-ground remains in 2015, integrity is apparent in the lack of disturbance and visibility of remains (Photographs 24-27). The mill pond is not extant. No further archaeological investigation been done since the site forms were filed and the site was documented in 2015.

**Integrity**

The district's location at the head of the Niantic River has been the community's defining element since early European settlement. The presence of three archaeological sites associated with sumac and flax seed processing and Oil Mill Road's connection to the New London-Lyme Turnpike (Boston Post Road) are markers of the district's historic development that contribute to its feeling as a nineteenth through early twentieth-century community. A few mill features are partially buried and a small section of the raceway was bisected by the I-95 embankment making the site discontinuous, but both ends remain visible. The highway is visually buffered from the rest of the district by dense forest so that the majority of the setting is intact. In most places, there is little evidence of invasive disturbance. The surviving dam and raceway remains and the mill wheel pit and the waterway itself are strong indicators of multiple aspects of integrity. Views along Oil Mill Road are rural in character. Most recent housing introduced into the landscape is set back from Oil Mill Road and is not included within the district boundaries. Some of the houses retain their historic design, materials, and workmanship. The remainder of the contributing buildings retain their massing and are identifiable and integral to the existing historic landscape. The historic development included in the district is visually distinct within the landscape of western Waterford. Much of the surrounding area consists of late twentieth-century suburban development.

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**District Resource Inventory**

Address	Property Name	MBLU	Style/Type	Date	C/NC	Photo Number
557 Boston Post Road	Isaac Dart House	102/ /826/ /	Side gable	1834	C	3
	Garage		Front gable	ca. 1950	NC	
563 Boston Post Road	Lyman Cavalry-Jonathan Comstock-John W. Keeney House	102/ /829/ /	Italianate	1828/1857	C	4
	Motel		Side gable	ca. 1940	NC	4
21 Gurley Road	Almshouse site (152-75)	95/ /3148/ /	Archaeological site	ca. 1700/ mid-19 <sup>th</sup> – early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	C (site)	6, 7
44 Gurley Road	Nathan Daniels House	95/ /3153/ /	Front gable	1868	C	9
	Garage		Side gable	ca. 1920	C	
46 Gurley Road	James and John Manwaring-Benjamin Stanton House	95/ /3154/ /	Side gable	1825	C	10
	Garage		Front gable	ca. 1925	NC	
48 Gurley Road	(Front of lot included in boundary)	95/ /3155	n/a	n/a	n/a	
51 Gurley Road	William Moore 4 <sup>th</sup> House	95/ /3156/ /	Front gable	1807; ca. 1850	C	11
	Garage		Front gable	ca.1950	NC	11
52 Gurley Road	House	95/ /3157/ /	Ranch	1977	NC	
54 Gurley Road	Philip Cavarly House	95/ /3158/ /	Gambrel roof	1794	C	1, 12
	Garage		Side gable	ca. 1930	NC	12

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Address	Property Name	MBLU	Style/Type	Date	C/NC	Photo Number
57/59 Gurley Road	Dam, Tailrace, Wheelpit, Foundation (152-37)	95/ /3159/ /	Industrial remains	ca. 1830/ ca. 1844 foundation	C (site)	13,14
2 Oil Mill Road	Cavarly-Comstock-Chapman Store	95/ /5458/ /	Front gable	1825/ca. 1920	C	2, 15
5 Oil Mill Road	Horace Beckwith-Frank Chapman House	95/ /5459/ /	Side gable	1842/ ca. 1900	C	2, 16
	Garage		Side gable	ca. 1980	NC	
6 Oil Mill Road	(Water lot)	95/ /5460	n/a	n/a	n/a	
9 Oil Mill Road	Isaac Comstock House	95/ /5461/ /	Greek Revival	1842	C	17
	Workshop		Front gable	ca. 1900	C	17
11 Oil Mill Road	(Portion of driveway included in boundary)	95/ /5462	n/a	n/a	n/a	
12 Oil Mill Road	(Water lot)	95/ /5463	n/a	n/a	n/a	
13 Oil Mill Road.	George Brown House	95/ /5464/ /	Greek Revival	1844	C	2, 18
14 Oil Mill Road	(Water lot/open land)	95/ /5465	n/a	n/a	n/a	
15 Oil Mill Road	Winthrop Beebe House	95/ /5466/ /	Greek Revival	1848	C	2, 18
17 Oil Mill Road	(Front of lot included in boundary)	95/ /5467	n/a	n/a	n/a	
18 Oil Mill Road	(open land)	95/ /5468	n/a	n/a	n/a	
19 Oil Mill Road	(Front of lot included in boundary)	95/ /5469	n/a			

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Address	Property Name	MBLU	Style/Type	Date	C/NC	Photo Number
21 Oil Mill Road	(Front of lot included in boundary)	95/ /5522	n/a	n/a	n/a	
22 Oil Mill Road	(open land)	95/ /5470	n/a	n/a	n/a	
25 Oil Mill Rd.	Thomas Ames House	95/ /5471/ /	Front gable	1865	C	19
25A Oil Mill Road	Commercial	95/ /5518/ /	Side gable	1991	NC	
27 Oil Mill Road	House	95/ /5472/ /	Hipped roof	ca. 1940	NC	20
	House		Hipped roof	ca. 1950	NC	20
28 Oil Mill Road	(Sliver of land included in boundary)	95/ /5473/ /	n/a	n/a	n/a	
31 Oil Mill Road	Daniel W. Stanton and Ellen Comstock Stanton House	95/ /5474/ /	Federal/Greek Revival	1844	C	21
	Garage		Hipped roof	ca. 1920	C	
34 Oil Mill Road	Sumac/Oil Mill Site (152-143)	95/ /5475/ /	Industrial remains	1803/1823	C (site)	22
37 Oil Mill Road	House	95/ /5476/ /	Ranch	ca. 1960	NC	23
39 Oil Mill Road	House	95/ /5477/ /	Side gable	ca. 1980	NC	23
	Garage		Front gable	ca. 1980	NC	
54 Oil Mill Road	Dam and Headrace (152-134)	88/ /5478/ /	Industrial remains	ca. 1830	C (site)	24-27



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## 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.)

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- INDUSTRY
- COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
- SOCIAL HISTORY
- ARCHAEOLOGY

**Period of Significance**

1804-1921

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

- 1804: sumac mill was established by this year
- 1825: store at 2 Oil Mill Road established
- 1830: oil mill site was moved north of Gurley Road and expanded
- 1844: construction of mill owner Daniel Stanton's house
- 1847-1906: 21 Gurley Road used as almshouse and town farm
- 1916: by this time oil production ceased at the mill site

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

Euro-American  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The district meets Criteria A and D at the local level in the categories of Industry, Community Planning & Development, Social History, and Archaeology. Under Criterion A, the district is associated with a series of small water-powered mills that processed local natural resources, most importantly linseed oil, which was manufactured at this site for about 65 years. No other oil mills are known in Waterford. In the early nineteenth century, there were only two dozen documented in the state.<sup>21</sup> It also meets Criterion A for Community Development for the housing in the district, which dates to the time period when the oil mill was at peak productivity and includes the extant homes of the two mill owners. Coincidental with the gradual decline of the oil industry was the rise of tourism, which capitalized on convenient access to the river above Straits Bridge. The district meets Criterion A in the category of Social History for its association with the town's almshouse and farm. Under Criterion D, the district has potential to yield important information about the oil-extraction processes and milling facilities regarding their organization, layout, equipment, and adaptation of old mills for new industrial purposes, a once common practice. Likewise, the archeological site of the house and related outbuildings at 21 Gurley Road is significant for its ability to reveal details of the day-to-day life in nineteenth-century almshouses in terms of diet, living conditions, material culture, daily activities, and labor, as well as information useful for interpreting broader local and regional patterns of poor-relief, class relations, and social and economic change during the period of early industrial growth and expansion. The period of significance begins in 1804, the establishment of the first oil mill in this location, which was originally built to process sumac. It ends in 1921, when the almshouse returned to private ownership. This period encompasses the construction of the turnpike and subsequent development.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

### **Criterion A: Industry**

The district is significant under Criterion A in the category of Industry as an integral component of Waterford's natural resource-based economy and related development from the nineteenth through the early twentieth centuries. The vicinity of the Lakes Pond Brook (also known as Oil Mill Brook) where it crosses the New London and Lyme Road (Gurley Road) was a hub of

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<sup>21</sup> Carolyn C. Cooper, "Technology in Transition: Connecticut Industries 1800-1832", *Voices of the New Republic: Connecticut Towns 1800-1832, Vol. II: What We Think*, ed. Howard R. Lamar and Carolyn C. Cooper. New Haven: Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2003: 167.

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small-scale mill activity since the late seventeenth-century.<sup>22</sup> The industrial core of the district is the site of the oil processing mill located at the intersection of Gurley and Oil Mill Roads and the associated extant raceway to the north. During the period of the oil mill's development, the economy of Waterford was primarily agricultural with small farms predominating.<sup>23</sup> A small number of for-profit farms used the railroad to ship produce to markets including New York City in the late-nineteenth century and the dairy industry grew during the early twentieth century. The Niantic River and Long Island Sound offered an abundance of fin and shellfish. Sloop and schooner rigged smacks with live wells enabled offshore fishermen to keep their catch alive long enough to sell directly at Fulton Market in New York City. Granite quarrying became a major industry by the late-nineteenth century. Approximately 400 people were employed at the Millstone Point quarry alone in the 1890s. Mills along the brooks that constitute the Niantic River headwaters, including Latimer and Lakes Pond (Oil Mill) Brooks, as well as Alewife (Hunts) Brook in the Quaker Hill section of Waterford and Jordan Brook to the south, variously produced lumber, ground meal and paper, as well as the oils extracted from flax seed and sweet birch brush. Before the forests became largely depleted, just north of the district, in the National Register-eligible Wolf Pit Hills Historic Archaeological District, the community supplemented hardscrabble farming with the extraction and processing of products from the hardwood forests, especially oak, including lumber; charcoal; and tannin from tree bark.<sup>24</sup> These products were

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<sup>22</sup> There were at least five mills in the vicinity of the crossroads of Gurley Road with Oil Mill Road, the earliest a sawmill built by Major Edward Palmes sometime before 1698. There was no mention of the sawmill in the 1700 property conveyance to Samuel Waller, so it probably had ceased operation (Bucher II: 10). In 1713, Waller and his son, Samuel, received permission to erect a second sawmill on roughly the same site, just north of Gurley Road on Lakes Pond (Oil Mill) Brook, "which brook is eastward of said house where [Waller] now dwells" (Bucher II: 10, 116). When the property was conveyed in 1740 to John Keeny, the mill was not mentioned (Bucher II: 312-313). A third sawmill, on the south side of Gurley Road, is cited in an 1804 advertisement "adjoining the Sumac Manufactory (Connecticut Gazette and Commercial Intelligencer, 12/19/1804). The fourth mill belonged to Philip Cavarly (who built the house at 54 Gurley Road). In 1820 Cavarly was mortgaged two parcels diagonally across from his house lot on the north side of Gurley Road, a three-acre piece that included "a grist mill and two Small Dwelling houses" . . . , the other piece, six acres, bordered to the north. (WLR 5:9, 13, 6/6/1820). In 1826 the mortgage release cites "the lot on which his sawmill Stands" (WLR 5:692, 4/5/1826) which appears to reference a new mill, cited in a quitclaim deed in 1829 from Cavarly to Jonathan Comstock, 60 feet up the brook from Gurley Road (WLR 7: 65, 9/15/1829). Cavarly also had a sawmill further north, on the east side of Oil Mill Road (WLR 4: 234, 10/28/1820.) The fifth mill at this crossroads was a gristmill built sometime before 1781, probably by Joshua Moore, Jr. In an April 1781 conveyance from Moore to his two sons, Caleb and Ebenezer, the description includes "a dwelling house and other buildings thereon standing with a grist mill and millhouse" (Bucher unpublished paper: M-A-2, C-10). The gristmill was also referenced in the Philip Cavarly mortgage cited above. The gristmill location was documented on the 1811 Warren and Gillet map.

<sup>23</sup> In 1664, a grant "rounding the head of the river" was bestowed on "agriculturalist" Isaac Willey who, with his wife Joanna, was among the first settlers at Head of the River. See Frances Manwaring Caulkins, *History of New London, Connecticut, from the First Survey of the Coast in 1612 to 1852*, New London, published by the author, 1852: 94, 310). The Willey farm was eventually sold to Christopher Christophers and Abel Moore. The former's portion of the Willey farm passed to John Christophers who, by the terms of his 1723 will, left the farm to his sister Esther, wife of Thomas Manwaring. The property became the homestead farm of generations of Manwarings into the nineteenth century (Bucher 1990: 123). The 1686 conveyance to Abel Moore included the parcel at 21 Gurley Road; Abel Moore died in 1689.

<sup>24</sup> Hardscrabble refers to limited and difficult agricultural production because of poor soils and in this location, steep ledge.

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frequently shipped to distant shores from the landing at Harvey's Point on the Niantic River just south of the New London and Lyme (Gurley) Road.

### Sumac Mill

By 1804 a "Sumac Manufactory" had been established, adjoining a sawmill,<sup>25</sup> at the southwest corner of Gurley Road and Oil Mill Road on Lakes Pond (Oil Mill) Brook (Figure 4, Map ID C, Site No. 152-143). Job Taber erected "a certain Building or Mill . . . for the purpose manufacturing sumake . . . on land belonging to my Father Samuel Taber. . . ."<sup>26</sup> The mill was mentioned in an 1806 advertisement as a: "a valuable sawmill, situated at the head of the Niantic River. Also, the building lately improved as a Sumac Factory..."<sup>27</sup> Sumac takes the form of a shrub or a small tree, depending on the species, which all have small red fruit called drupes. Sumac, which is common across New England and thrives in fertile, upland sites and open or disturbed areas like fields, roadsides, and fence rows,<sup>28</sup> was likely common in the local environment. Ground to a fine powder, the leaves were used in vegetable tanning of lighter leathers (e.g., sheep and goat hides). Sumac was also used as a dye and its bark as mordant, a dye fixative.<sup>29</sup>

Historical references to sumac processing are uncommon. Thomas Anburey, a lieutenant in the Army of General Burgoyne, wrote in 1778, while outside of Boston, that "sumach is much used by the tanners and dyers . . ."<sup>30</sup> A local reference was made in the journal of Taber's neighbor and former business partner, surveyor and mapmaker Moses Warren, Jr. Warren had a fulling mill to the west, on Latimer Brook. On Saturday, June 2, 1790, Warren "Set the Kettle with alder & sumac for the beginning of Bottle Green . . ." On the following Monday he "Began to Color . . . by entering ye goods in a die exactly like a black excepting weaker and more Sumach & no butternut bark." On Tuesday he found that "the Gum of ye Sumach made ye goods appear cloudy." By Wednesday, after further processing, Warren was satisfied with the results.<sup>31</sup> Perhaps Taber's sumac processing was of benefit to Warren.

The sumac mill site represents a small part of a larger local economy involving the export of products from New London. There was already a sumac industry in New London, and products were exported to Europe. As noted by French aristocrat and social reformer Duc de la Rochefoucault-Liancourt, as he traveled through New London,

"The whole exportation to Europe consists of not more than a dozen ship's cargoes

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<sup>25</sup> *Connecticut Gazette and Commercial Intelligencer*, 12/19/1804.

<sup>26</sup> WLR 3:10, 1/23/1810. The mill does not appear on the 1811 Warren and Gillet map; no sumac mills were documented on this map.

<sup>27</sup> *Connecticut Gazette*, New London, CT, Vol. 43, Issue 2229, 1806: 1.

<sup>28</sup> USDA NRCS, Staghorn Sumac (*Rhus hirta*) Plant Fact Sheet, Northeast Plant Materials Program, 2002.

<sup>29</sup> *Report of the Commissioner of Agriculture for the Year 1869*. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1870: 230.

<sup>30</sup> Thomas Anburey, *Travels Through Interior Parts of America in Two Volumes*, Vol. II. Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1923: 130.

<sup>31</sup> Moses Warren Jr., Journal 1789-90, unpublished manuscript, Connecticut Historical Society (Ms 69841), Hartford, CT.

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a year, which go to England or Ireland, and consist of wood, lint-seed, potatoes, pearl-ashes, and sumac, which a merchant of this port [New London] prepares for exportation, by an invention of his own, for the sole benefit of which he enjoys a patent right for the space of fifteen years. The sumac grows in great plenty on the uncleared grounds. It is first cut into small pieces, and dried, then reduced to a coarse powder, and in this condition applied to the purposes of dyeing. It is sold at the rate of eighteen dollars and one-third a barrel; and for these last two years there have been exported not less than two thousand barrels a year.”<sup>32</sup>

The merchant the Duke was referring to was Roswell Saltonstall of New London, who received patents for his sumac manufacturing on February 28 and May 1, 1793.<sup>33</sup> That same year Roswell and Richard Saltonstall of New London were paying four pounds and 10 shillings per ton to suppliers.<sup>34</sup> The Taber sumac mill likely supplied that larger local export industry. William Saltonstall was contracting “for about fifty tons of SUMAC, to be cut in the months of July and August”, according to an 1803 advertisement. The “sumac will be taken at the factory in Groton, where application can be made to Mr Israel Allyn, and at the head of Niantic river.”<sup>35</sup>

### Linseed Oil and Paint

Job Taber’s sumac business didn’t last long. In 1812, and perhaps for a number of years before then, he was producing linseed oil. In that year his oil mill was for sale as well as “Linseed Oil by the barrel or gallon.”<sup>36</sup> In 1817 the mill was for sale, advertised as “an Oil Mill and Calender, with from one to four acres of Land, . . . and admits of good water carriage quite to the Mill, is a good stand for any kind of water machinery or for trade.” In 1823, Taber conveyed to Elisha M. Comstock four acres along with the “Oil mill and a small building . . . with the dam, and all the privileges . . . including the Mill pond . . .”<sup>37</sup> It would be the Comstock and Stanton families—related by marriage—who subsequently capitalized on linseed oil and paint manufacture.

Linseed oil was commonly used for architectural paints, though other oils were used as well. The production of paints in America followed English practices, which remained essentially unchanged from the seventeenth through the mid-nineteenth centuries. Painters bought basic pigments (such as white lead) pre-ground into oil for convenience, and would mix in additional pigments, binders, and thinners to prepare the paint for application. The paint produced at this oil mill was likely a mixture of pigments ground into the linseed oil. Large-scale production of

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<sup>32</sup> Duc de la Rochefoucault-Liancourt, *Travels in the United States of North America, The Country of the Iroquois, and Upper Canada, in the Years 1795, 1796, and 1797*, London, England: R. Phillips, 1799, 512.

<sup>33</sup> Commissioner of Patents, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Patents for the Year 1891*, Patents before 1800. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1893: 10.

<sup>34</sup> Harper 1998; Sportman et al., “Report, Cultural Studies Documentary Research, State Project No. 172-418, Route 11 Expressway and I-95 Interchange, East Lyme, Montville, Salem and Waterford, Connecticut,” Storrs, CT: Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc., March 27, 2017: 26.

<sup>35</sup> Connecticut Gazette and Commercial Intelligencer, 6/22/1803.

<sup>36</sup> *Connecticut Gazette*, April 29, 1812. *Connecticut Gazette*, October 1, 1817. The “Calender” may refer to the machinery that pressed the flaxseed with rollers.

<sup>37</sup> WLR 5: 608, 7/09/1823.

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ready-mixed paints in America did not develop until after the Civil War. By 1900, about two-thirds of paints used in the United States were ready-mixed.<sup>38</sup>

Linseed oil is extracted from the seeds of the flax plant. Flax was grown throughout the American colonies and frequently exported, but most linseed oil was imported rather than domestically produced. In 1718, there were just two documented oil mills in Connecticut. With the expansion of flax production after the American Revolution, the number of oil mills increased significantly. By 1810, there were 24 oil mills reported in Connecticut; most, if not all, produced linseed oil.<sup>39</sup> This site is the only known oil mill in Waterford.

Oil mill operations typically began in the fall, after the flax harvest, and continued through the winter into spring, depending on flaxseed availability. Making linseed oil at a water-powered mill involved three basic steps. First, the flax seeds were crushed. At this mill, edge runners were used to crush the seed, as evidenced by extant granite millstones with grooved edges (one from this mill is extant at the Waterford Historical Society). After the seeds were crushed, the flax meal was roasted or cooked to increase the volume of oil released. A cast-iron kettle from this mill site (now at the Waterford Historical Society), suggests that the meal was cooked. The calender pressed the meal with rollers and the oil was poured into wooden kegs for storage and shipment. Leftover flaxseed cakes were pressed a second and sometimes a third time for additional oil, then ground for cattle feed or fertilizer.

Although the Comstock “Oyl Mill” appeared to be successful, by 1829 plans were underway to relocate the mill operation to the north side of Gurley Road, between Oil Mill Road and Lakes Pond Brook (to the location shown on Figure 4 as Map ID B, Site No. 152-37). Elisha Comstock’s brother, Jonathan, appeared to have been a key player in the move, though other family members were involved, holding interests in the venture at different times. In June 1829, another of Jonathan’s brothers, Peter Comstock, advertised “For Sale, A few barrels of pure linseed oil, made from clean flax seed at the Oil Mill at River Head,” likely the last of the previous winter’s output at the old site.<sup>40</sup> In September 1829, Jonathan Comstock acquired property on the north side of Gurley Road, “about Sixty feet Square” from Philip Cavarly as well as “One certain mill privilege . . . Northside the Old New London Road [Gurley Road] and the Right to dig a ditch and Construct a trough or Sluice to Convey the Water” . . . not to “Exceed twenty four feet in width” . . . and the “Right to turn the Water” of [Lakes Pond] brook “into Said ditch . . . for the purpose of water works. . . .”<sup>41</sup>

Meanwhile, William Keeney quitclaimed the “Right to Cut a ditch about 25 rods long [roughly 412 feet]. . . Northward of Cavarly’s mill” between Oil Mill Road and Lakes Pond Brook “Sufficient to Convey all the Water that ordinarily runs in Said brook with the Right to place Stones gravel or timber in the bed of Said brook at the head or beginning of Said ditch Sufficient

<sup>38</sup> Roger Moss, ed. *Paint in America*, Washington, DC: Preservation Press, 1994: 45, 55, 257.

<sup>39</sup> Carolyn C. Cooper: 167.

<sup>40</sup> *New London Gazette and General Advertiser*, June 3, 1829.

<sup>41</sup> WLR 7: 65, 9/15/1829.

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to turn Water of Said brook into Said ditch”, not to “Exceed the width of twenty four feet.”<sup>42</sup> On January 1, 1830, the selectmen gave an order to John Keeney “for three Dollars for Carting 3 Stone to the Bridge at Comstock Mill.” On February 3, they gave an order to Elisha Beckwith for twelve Dollars and fifty cents “it being for building a Stone bridge over the new Oil Mill Stream on the old road from N.L. to Lyme”.<sup>43</sup> The first reference to “an Oil mill Erected” at the new site appeared in an 1830 mortgage deed the following spring, between Jonathan Comstock and Peter Comstock’s sons-in-law, James Loomis of Lyme and James L. Strickland of Montville. The deed also referenced the “gate” that regulated the “floom”.<sup>44</sup> Over the next decade Comstock family members completed a series of quitclaims and mortgages, including Jonathan’s sons, Isaac Turner Comstock of Waterford and Matterosa Maro Comstock of New London.

In addition to his interest in the Waterford oil mill, Matterosa Comstock had a grocery store in New London that offered a wide selection of goods.<sup>45</sup> He was one of at least a half dozen New London grocers who offered the raw materials that painters purchased in bulk, undoubtedly some made at the Waterford mill. His stock included linseed oil; dry and ground white lead; numerous pigments, both dry and ground in oil; turpentine; putty; window glass; and oil cakes, the by-product of the milling process.<sup>46</sup> At the end of summer in 1832, Comstock was looking to pay “a liberal price in cash” for flaxseed in anticipation of the new cycle of linseed oil production.<sup>47</sup>

Improvements were made to the oil mill in 1836. Jonathan Comstock and New London investor Erastus Crandall secured an agreement with the Town of Waterford for the “privilege of Building an addition to the Oil Mill . . . to be built on the South end of Said Oyl Mill and to cover the ground South to the Stone Bridge and as far as the Wheel pit enters and as far West as the main Brook. . . . Said Comstock and Crandall Agree to widen the Road and Bridge . . . and Cover the Water Wheel.”<sup>48</sup> Since it was so close to the road, the requirement to cover the wheel may have been an effort both to control spillage and to ensure safety of passersby. Today, the extant stone-lined wheel pit is visible (partially infilled) at 57/59 Gurley Road (Figure 4, Map ID B, Site No. 152-37).

In 1844, Jonathan Comstock conveyed his half interest in the oil mill to Daniel Washington Stanton, who had married his daughter Ellen D. Comstock the previous year.<sup>49</sup> Daniel and Ellen Stanton built their house at 31 Oil Mill Road (extant) in 1844. The same year, Daniel Stanton made an agreement with William Keeney’s son, John, and it was recorded that Stanton had

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<sup>42</sup> WLR 7: 66, 9/09/1829.

<sup>43</sup> Town Book (record of selectmen’s meetings), 1801-1834, Town Clerk’s Office.

<sup>44</sup> WLR 6: 25, 4/30/1830.

<sup>45</sup> *New London Gazette and General Advertiser*, February 1, 1832, February 8, 1832; November 27, 1833.

<sup>46</sup> *New London Gazette and General Advertiser*, March 28, 1832; June 6, 1832.

<sup>47</sup> *New London Gazette and General Advertiser*, September 19, 1832. Matterosa Comstock’s business was located in the former “corner store” of [Joseph] Lawrence at State and Bank streets in New London (“A Useful Life Ended,” *The Day*, New London, CT: November 23, 1891; R. B. Wall Scrapbook, No. 503, New London Historical Society, undated. In 1844 he quit-claimed his remaining interest in the oil mill to his father, Jonathan (WLR 10: 25, 7/24/1844).

<sup>48</sup> WLR 7: 262, 4/05/1836.

<sup>49</sup> WLR 10: 125, 7/07/1844.



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recently “erected a Barn” on 500 square feet of land leased from Keeney. The extant foundation is wedged between Oil Mill Road and the sluice, just south of the “floom gate” and north of the mill seat. Presumably it was used for storage or perhaps where the miniature wooden kegs were filled with paint.<sup>50</sup> John Keeney was to “receive the yearly rent of one dollar per year . . . in Linseed Oil, Oil cake or Paints the produce of said mill at fair market value . . .”<sup>51</sup> According to “Statistics of the Condition and Products of Certain Branches of Industry in Connecticut, For the Year Ending October 1, 1845,” the mill’s three employees produced 17,000 gallons of linseed valued at \$11,900 (\$.70/gal., or \$23.49/gal. in 2019).<sup>52</sup> The abstract provides a rare comparative snapshot of the linseed oil industry in 1845 though in some cases “information was wholly refused the [town] Assessors, and in others, partial statements only could be obtained.”<sup>53</sup> Of the five linseed oil mills in New London County (including this one, one in East Lyme, and three in Montville), the Waterford mill’s output was 36% of the county-wide total. It is not surprising then that the \$7,000 (\$235,480 in 2019) of capital invested in their manufactory far exceeded each of the other four in the county.<sup>54</sup> (The abstract cited only four additional mills beyond New London County, making suspect any sort of state-wide comparison).

In 1847, Daniel Stanton acquired the remaining “undivided half” of the oil mill from his brother-in-law Isaac T. Comstock.<sup>55</sup> Shortly thereafter, Daniel Stanton conveyed one half of the mill property and privileges to his brother, Benjamin Gallup Stanton.<sup>56</sup> Coinciding with the rapid growth in residential and commercial construction in the years after the Civil War, however, the development of large-scale production of ready-mixed paints must have been of some concern to the brothers. In 1871, Daniel Stanton, his wife Ellen, and their teenaged daughter Julia, were thrown from their carriage when the harness broke and their frightened horse bolted forward. Both women survived, but Daniel Stanton died instantly.<sup>57</sup> Benjamin Stanton subsequently assumed full ownership of the mill property and held it until his death in 1899.

No substantial capital investment was made in the business and aging mill after 1871, when paint was becoming increasingly available in cans with resealable lids. Although Benjamin Stanton’s occupation was recorded as “Oil Maker,” in the 1860 census, he may have left day-to-day operations to his brother. According to the 1880 census his occupation was “farmer”. Indeed Benjamin Stanton “was so upset” after his brother’s death, according to the “family record”, he moved to Pine Neck farm with his wife, Sarah, and their three boys. Sons Miric, Charles, and John, all worked on the farm with their father.<sup>58</sup> In 1875, Stanton’s several properties totaled 117 acres and the mill was assessed at \$1,800 (\$4,832 in 2019), a fraction of its value 30 years

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<sup>50</sup> Bachman, 63.

<sup>51</sup> WLR 10: 188, 10/03/1844.

<sup>52</sup> Daniel Tyler, *Statistics of the Condition and Products of Certain Branches of Industry in Connecticut, for the Year Ending October 1, 1845*. Hartford: J. L. Boswell, State Printer, 1846, 87.

<sup>53</sup> Tyler, 2-4.

<sup>54</sup> Tyler, 73,81,215,234.

<sup>55</sup> WLR 9:162, 6/23/1847.

<sup>56</sup> WLR 10:189, 9/11/1847.

<sup>57</sup> R.B. Wall Scrapbook No. 409, New London Historical Society, undated; New London Democrat, 9/9/1871.

<sup>58</sup> family record

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earlier.<sup>59</sup> The mill may have been closed by that time. Stanton died in 1899 and his probated estate referenced only the “sight of the old oil mill.”<sup>60</sup> In 1909 Benjamin Stanton’s sons conveyed the property, including the 24-foot-wide sluiceway, to William C. Beebe, reserving “the right to remove all personal property located in and around the barn and Oil Mill Site.”<sup>61</sup>

### Birch Oil

Oil of birch was the last extractive product manufactured at the oil mill site (Figure 4, Map ID B, Site 152-37). Birch oil was used as a substitute for wintergreen, with an almost identical flavor. The industry began in Pennsylvania, but in the 1880s the technology was brought to Essex, Connecticut. By 1891, there were eight birch mills in the state. The extraction process involved collecting brush from sweet birch (also called black birch), typically provided by local farmers to supplement their agricultural incomes. The brush was chopped into pieces by a cutting machine, placed in metal tanks, and boiled in water for about 6 hours. Oil was distilled from the steam and clarified. Like linseed oil mills, birch mills operated primarily in the winter, from October through April.<sup>62</sup>

In 1906 Carl S. Reynolds leased a tract of land for his birch oil mill from William C. Beebe, “north by my old sawmill” and South by the B. G. Stanton property” with “control of my mill ditch and the right to repair same . . . and to use all the water he may want from the [Lakes Pond] brook” as well as “a right to excavate and to lay pipes and set scales or any other work he may wish to do. . . .”<sup>63</sup> Reynolds subsequently erected “a large mill” and installed “new up-to-date machinery” on the site.<sup>64</sup> Local farmers from the Head of the River vicinity, “in their spare time from their regular farm work” carted hundreds of tons of birch brush to the mill, yet it was not enough “to supply the demand in the large cities for the oil.”<sup>65</sup> In 1916 Reynolds relocated again, to property he purchased to the southeast on Boston Post Road.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> 1875 Grand List.

<sup>60</sup> WLR 26:131m 2/12/1901.

<sup>61</sup> WLR27:285,4/16/1909.

<sup>62</sup> The Manufacture of Oil of Birch,” *American Druggist: An Illustrated Semi-Monthly Journal of Pharmacy, Chemistry, and Materia Medica*, Vol. 20, New York: William Wood & Company, 1891: 272-273.

<sup>63</sup> WLR 29: 62, 12/10/1906.

<sup>64</sup> “Birch Mill Moved,” *The Day*, New London, CT: September 23, 1909: 2.

<sup>65</sup> “Birch Mill Busy,” *The Day*, New London, CT: February 1, 1909: 12.

<sup>66</sup> WLR 33: 278, 7/03/1916; in 1918 Reynolds acquired an abutting parcel at the southwest corner of Spithead Road (WLR 33: 476, 4/15/1918).

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## Criterion A: Community Planning & Development

### Head of the River (aka Riverhead and Straits Bridge)<sup>67</sup>

The district meets Criterion A in the area of Community Planning & Development for because the nineteenth through early twentieth century housing in this location was constructed by residents engaged in the town's small-scale industries and was facilitated by contemporary transportation improvements. Aside from the oil extraction industry no other factor was as important to the development of the Riverhead community in the nineteenth century than the New London–Lyme Turnpike (Boston Post Road, Rte. 1-A). Moses Warren, Jr. surveyed and directed construction of the toll road, which was completed in 1811 with the construction of Straits Bridge over the Niantic River.<sup>68</sup> In notoriously poor condition, the New London & Lyme Road had always been a challenge. Indeed the “main King’s Highway through Connecticut ‘was an insult to its proud title’”, according to Robert B. Gordon.<sup>69</sup> With Straits Bridge in place, the Waterford selectmen wasted little time in extending Oil Mill Road southward from Harvey’s Point.<sup>70</sup> On April 22, 1812, the layout of “a highway” was approved through the land of Philip Cavarly.<sup>71</sup> Cavarly was awarded “Damages in the sum of Sixty Dollars . . . for his Making a road from harveys point To Straits Bridge” and Thomas Manwaring was paid \$7.00.<sup>72</sup>

The vastly improved road system and a developing oil extraction manufacture, neither entirely independent of one another, played an important role in the industrial, commercial, and residential development of the district. The “situation is pleasant,” read an April 29, 1812 advertisement in the Gazette, “being at the head of a navigable river, . . . on the mail stage road from Boston to New-York, half a mile from the Post-Office, and between five and six miles west of New London. Vessels of 50 tons may load within 80 rods of the mills, and small boats or scows of 15 tons burthen may pass to and from the mills loaded”.<sup>73</sup> Much of the development occurred on land owned by mill proprietor Philip Cavarly or his estate extending south from his house (**54 Gurley Road**) and garden and along the new Oil Mill Road to land through which the turnpike ran, and westerly bordering on the river.

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<sup>67</sup> In a “Letter from Waterford” to the editor of The Mystic Pioneer, Oct. 1861, the correspondent who penned himself “Pequot” referred to “the limit of tidewater” as “Straits Bridge or Riverhead.” However, the name “Head of the River” appears more frequently in land records as well as in notices, advertisements, and newspaper articles. Straits Bridge encompasses a larger area, including the district and land on the other side of the river.

<sup>68</sup> Warren’s Account of Expenses, New London County Historical Society.

<sup>69</sup> Travels on Connecticut’s Roads, Bridges, and Ferries, 1790-1830,” Voices of the New Republic, II, 172.

<sup>70</sup> Harvey’s Point was an important landing place even before Isaac Willey conveyed the site to John Harvey in 1686, NLLR 5:92, 11/26/1686. A “pent highway” connected the landing to the New London Road, NLLR 28:19, 1/8/1794. When Oil Mill Road was surveyed in 1776 it began northerly at “the end of the hard land at the Point at Highwater Mark at the Landing Place.” NLLR 21:125, 4/27/1776.) to the new turnpike.

<sup>71</sup> WLR 2:64, 4/22/1812.

<sup>72</sup> Town Book, 1801-1835, 7/6/1812.

<sup>73</sup> Job Taber & Son offer for sale, their Oil Mill, Nail Manufactory, Black-smith’s Shop, Dwelling House and Store, with two or three acres of Land adjoining. Connecticut Gazette, 4/29/1812

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Taking advantage of the location of his father's land bordering the turnpike, Lyman Cavarly built a store ca. 1825 between the river and Oil Mill Road (**2 Oil Mill Road**). The store passed through a number of hands both before and after he and his wife, Julia, migrated to Illinois soon after his father Philip's death in 1838. In 1853 the store was conveyed to Julia Cavarly's brother-in-law, Horace Beckwith. After Philip Cavarly's death, the distribution of what remained of his estate followed soon thereafter. In 1840 Cavarly's son, Hiram Cavarly, of Green County, Illinois, conveyed nearly eight acres south and west of the house lot (**54 Gurley Road**) to his niece, Cornelia Cavarly Tabor, and her husband, Thomas T. Tabor, of East Lyme.<sup>74</sup> Terms of the agreement included "reserving 2 rods of land about the graves of Philip Cavarly & Wife . . . & the privaledg of going to and from the same. . . ." Outside the district, the grave site is located along the eastern-most and abutting portions of 19 and 21 Oil Mill Road.<sup>75</sup>

A few months earlier, Hiram's brother John, of New York City, conveyed his interest in two tracts to the Tabers. The first tract was bounded by the land of Hiram Cavarly to the north; Ebenezer H. Manwaring to the east; Isaac M. Dart (**557 Boston Post Road**), Jonathan Comstock (**563 Boston Post Road**) and Mary D. (Cavarly) Lamb (daughter of Philip Cavarly) to the south; and by Oil Mill Road to the west. The second lot, commonly called the round rock landing, was bounded by Oil Mill Road to the east and the Niantic River on all other sides.<sup>76</sup> In 1841 Mary Cavarly Lamb and her husband, Charles, of Bolls County, Missouri, conveyed 2/3 acre at the northwest corner of the Post Road and Oil Mill Road to Mary's brother-in-law, Horace Beckwith who built a house on the lot (**5 Oil Mill Road**).<sup>77</sup> Between 1841 and 1847 the Tabors parceled out what remained of the Philip Cavarly estate along Oil Mill Road including a "lot on the highway Leading from the New London & Lyme Turnpike" (Oil Mill Road), south of the former Cavarly place, to Daniel W. Stanton in 1844. Stanton worked as a partner in the oil mill with his father-in-law, Jonathan Comstock at the time.

Among the mid-nineteenth-century owners of Oil Mill properties, four were ship carpenters, including Horace Beckwith and Winthrop Beebe who built houses at **5 and 15 Oil Mill Road**. Ship carpenter John Knight **purchased 13 Oil Mill Road** in 1852 from caulker James P. Davis who had acquired the foreclosed property in 1846. Horace Beckwith's ship carpenter brother, Addison, purchased 25 Oil Mill Road (not extant) in 1852 (see Thomas Ames House). All four, as well as the caulker, most likely worked for the Beckwith brothers' father, Elisha, and their uncle Gurdon Beckwith, who operated the shipyard just west of Straits Bridge in East Lyme. The Beckwiths built mostly smacks.<sup>78</sup> The shipyard shut down around 1860.

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<sup>74</sup> WLR 7:410, 10/10/1840. Cornelia Cavarly was the daughter of Hiram's brother, Philip A. Cavarly (deceased) and his wife, Elizabeth)

<sup>75</sup> The cemetery was destroyed by vandals sometime in the 1950s. The inscriptions were recorded by Margaret Stacy sometime in the 1930s (Waterford Library): Philip, 3/28/1838, age 75; Mary, wife of Philip, 5/31/1836, age 71, "Like a shock of corn fully ripe She was gathered to the garner of her Lord"; Philip A. Cavarly, died at St. Augustine, East Florida, 2/11/1823, age 35; and William D. Cavarly, died at Maysville, Kentucky, 11/19/1818, age 27. A granite post inscribed with the Cavarly name was installed at the site in 2019 by the Waterford Historic Properties Commission).

<sup>76</sup> WLR 8:501, 6/22/1840.

<sup>77</sup> WLR 10:8, 8/13/1841.

<sup>78</sup> "New London's Old Tales Retold: Old Beckwith Shipyard Now Long Forgotten", The Day, 6/18/1946.

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In 1856 Horace Beckwith sold the store and his house to merchant Francis “Frank” Chapman and grocer/merchant Nicholas L. Smith.<sup>79</sup> Chapman eventually bought out Smith and for more than a generation, Chapman’s store, as it was known, was a Riverhead fixture. The store carried a wide range of items – from food staples to hardware, sewing needles to ax handles – even a horse for \$1.25/day to go to New London. An 1862 store advertisement included fish guano [fertilizer] “of good quality, . . . for sale on reasonable terms . . .”.<sup>80</sup> Prominent members of the community with accounts at Chapman’s store included brothers and oil mill owners Daniel W. Stanton (31 Oil Mill Road) and Benjamin G. Stanton (37 Oil Mill Road, not extant), James Manwaring (46 Gurley Road), John Keeney (563 Boston Post Road), and the Town of Waterford (21 Gurley Road, Town Farm). Chapman provided the almshouse with a steady supply of opium-based, laudanum and paragoric, as well as bottles of “pain killers”.<sup>81</sup>

By the final decade of the century, life on the Niantic River was shifting from local industries toward regional tourism. The river had become shallower, due in part to the construction of the railroad embankment over the bar. There was no more lumber to be shipped from the landing at Harvey’s Point. The shipyard at Straits Bridge had closed down and so had the yard at Keeney’s Cove. The fishing industry had already been in slow decline. The granite quarry in the Oswegatchie Hills was abandoned “by reason of shoal water, crooked channel, etc. . . .”<sup>82</sup> Frank Chapman’s occupation was recorded as “hotel keeper” in the 1890 census and he was likely aware of Seldon Manwaring’s success with the Oswegatchie Hotel at Pine Neck further downstream.<sup>83</sup> Ideally situated and surrounded by natural beauty, Chapman and his wife, Abby, may well have opened their home (**5 Oil Mill Road**) to guests, a common practice at the turn of the twentieth century.

Frank Chapman died in 1894 and in 1900 the estate of his wife, Abby H. Chapman, which included the store (**2 Oil Mill Road**), passed to Frederick and Nellie Swan. In 1899 Nellie Swan purchased the George A. Chappell house (6 Oil Mill Road, demolished in 2016).<sup>84</sup> Known as “the Rock Landing piece” the parcel abutted the Swan’s riverfront property to the south. Either the Chapmans or Swans enlarged the house at 5 Oil Mill Road and converted it into a small seasonal hotel called “Home Nook”. In May of 1910, Proprietor Swan was “prepared to cater to the public as usual and will open to the public on the coming Sunday when he will serve one of his famous shore dinners to a large party of guests from out of town.”<sup>85</sup> Around the time of the completion of the New London and East Lyme Electric Railway in 1905, the former Chapman store, owned and managed by the Swans, became a primarily seasonal operation, serving not

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<sup>79</sup> WLR 12:323, 3/31/1856.

<sup>80</sup> New London Daily Chronicle, June 5, 1862.

<sup>81</sup> Chapman Store Ledger, 1864-68, privately held by Timothy and Amy Sullivan, 5 Oil Mill Road; Town Accounts, 10/6/1884 & 9/23/1887.

<sup>82</sup> Letter from the Secretary of War, relative to Certain examinations and surveys in Rhode Island and Connecticut, January 18, 1873, House of Representatives, Ex. Doc. No. 107, Government Printing Office, Washington, 1873.

<sup>83</sup> National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Oswegatchie Historic District.

<sup>84</sup> WLR 22:531, 10/4/1899.

<sup>85</sup> “Local Resorts Have Opening Preparations Complete”, The Day, May 27, 1910.

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only Home Nook guests, but visitors attracted to the new “Golden Spur” amusement park at the East Lyme side of Straits Bridge as well.<sup>86</sup> The former Chapman store was renamed the “Silver Buckle.” Store proprietors, Messrs. Swan and Kelsey, offered ice cream and confections, and in 1909 purchased a sailboat to add “to their staff of boats that they let to pleasure seekers at the Golden Spur.”<sup>87</sup> A pavilion was also built on the riverfront on fill level with Oil Mill Road across from Home Nook. Frederick Swan died in 1911 at the age of 45. His wife, Nellie, leased the Silver Buckle to William P. Chappell, but continued to manage Home Nook. In 1915 “a large dock and float” was built “for the use of boat parties.”<sup>88</sup>

In 1915 James Gilmore Hammond began “filling in” **Harvey’s Point** for a park. A “large boathouse and combination pavilion” was planned, “making an excellent place for pleasure parties and picnics.”<sup>89</sup> The park proved a popular attraction.<sup>90</sup> Hammond and his wife, Clara Turner, were actors who “toured throughout the East playing leads in such plays as ‘The Girl of the Golden West’ in various stock companies.”<sup>91</sup> Their “cozy little residence . . . dubbed the ‘Bungalow’ [9 Oil Mill Road], at the head of Niantic River, is an ideal retreat and the natural beauty of its surroundings forms a perfect setting. . .”<sup>92</sup> Hammond had several boats, “being one of the most enthusiastic motor boat owners on the river.”<sup>93</sup> Increasingly the Niantic River was finding favor among tourists seeking pleasure and recreation, its importance to the community as in years past having diminished.

### Criterion A: Social History

The district meets Criterion A in the category of Social History, for its association with Waterford’s town farm and almshouse located at 21 Gurley Road (Site 152-75), which operated from 1847 through 1906. During the nineteenth century, each town was required to aid indigent people within the community. The most common form of assistance was known as “outdoor relief”, in which people received town support, but remained in their homes. Other relief systems involved the placement of people in almshouses or with a contractor hired by the town. Children

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<sup>86</sup> Olive Tubbs Chendali, “Entrepreneurs at Golden Spur,” Post Road Review, April 1995.

<sup>87</sup> “Local Boats Change Hands,” The Day, November 30, 1909. The Mr. Kelsey referenced in the article may have been Robert Kelsey, son of Lydia Kelsey, 44 Gurley Road. He was recorded in the 1910 census, at age 38, as working odd jobs and as a “laborer.”

<sup>88</sup> “Silver Buckle Open This Season”, The Day, May 12, 1915.

<sup>89</sup> “Making a Park at Head of the River”, The Day, May 24, 1915.)

<sup>90</sup> East Lyme resident Frank Hoagland recalls his grandfather, Frank Hoagland, who was a conductor on the electric railway, telling him that the pavilion was a popular destination.(Interview with municipal historian Robert Nye, May 9, 2017).

<sup>91</sup> Bachman 2000, 138.

<sup>92</sup> “Clara Turner at Home”, The Day, 6/4/1907.

<sup>93</sup> “Making a Park at Head of the River, The Day, 5/24/1915.

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could also be “bound out” as apprentices, sometimes at the request of a family member.<sup>94</sup> Town selectmen served as the overseers of the relief system.<sup>95</sup>

Shortly after the town’s incorporation in October 1801, the selectmen identified residents in need of support. Names listed in the selectmen’s meeting minutes from December 7, 1801, included Nehemiah Rodgers, Mary Boals, Hannah Keeny, Elenor Lynsey, Bethiah Dart, Lucy Waid, Nathan Crocker and Amy Bryer. Additional people were identified during the January 15, 1802, meeting including George Niles, Ezra Calkins, Ephraim Bacon, and Zophar Daton and Wife. The selectmen appointed overseers of the poor for terms of one year, although many were reappointed for one or more years. The duty of an overseer was “to superintend the management of the estate and concerns ‘of the ward,’ to assent to all contracts and dispositions of . . . property, and to restrain him from wasting his property.”<sup>96</sup> Within the first year, Waterford selectmen made four appointments: Isaac Rodgers<sup>97</sup> (overseer to Caleb Dart), William Douglass to Lydia Leach, Thomas Douglass to Guy Beckwith, and Richard Durfey to John Smith.<sup>98</sup> Rodgers and Douglass were reappointed for several years thereafter. The number of overseers grew steadily in subsequent years. Philip Cavarly was reappointed at least twice as overseer to Amon Fox.<sup>99</sup> A number of overseers were responsible for multiple people. Although appointments and their terms were recorded as required by state law, the reasoning for each appointment was not documented. One exception was the appointment of Richard Chapel as overseer to John Whipple “on account of his Mismanagement of his Business & his being at times deranged in his Mind.”<sup>100</sup>

The Town struggled to provide for the humane treatment of people in their care, particularly before the establishment of the 1846 almshouse. In 1804, the Waterford selectmen placed people with contractors through agreements in which “no security had to be taken to secure adequate provision for the paupers’ wants.”<sup>101</sup> Many towns placed people with the lowest bidder, until the practice was outlawed in 1886. In 1813, towns were empowered to establish asylums or almshouses for “such town poor and destitute persons” as “might be judged proper.”<sup>102</sup> Waterford established an “Assylum for the poor . . . Disorderly . . . and Refractory” in August 1814 and adopted bylaws, which gave extraordinary authority to the “Keeper” of the house, appointed by the selectmen.<sup>103</sup> The location of this first almshouse is not known. In a letter published in the Connecticut *Gazette* (New London) on April 4, 1815, a concerned citizen condemned Waterford’s provision for the poor as “an outrage upon humanity,” . . . a system of

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<sup>94</sup> Edward Warren Capen, *The Historical Development of the Poor Law in Connecticut*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1905: 164.

<sup>95</sup> Capen, 1905: 134.

<sup>96</sup> Capen 1905:122.

<sup>97</sup> Rogers was the town’s first representative to the General Assembly.

<sup>98</sup> Town Book, January 18, 1802 – January 13, 1803.

<sup>99</sup> Town Book, April 2, 1804 – June 2, 1806.

<sup>100</sup> Town Book, April 4, 1808.

<sup>101</sup> Capen 1905:134.

<sup>102</sup> Capen 1905:134.

<sup>103</sup> Town Business, Vol 1, p. 59-61.

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“avarice and oppression . . .” Three weeks later, another anonymous author described Waterford’s support of the poor as “radically defective”, in comparison to New London’s almshouse, which “furnishes every reasonable comfort to this unhappy class of mankind . . .”<sup>104</sup> At the time, the overseer of the Waterford workhouse carried out punishments to the inhabitants, including restraints, confinement, and the “Abridg[ing] of their food and drink.”<sup>105</sup>

The matter of establishing another workhouse was frequently discussed at town meetings for the next three decades. In 1819, the selectmen were “Instructed . . . to hire a Small Farm for the year Ensuing” but there is no evidence that it happened.<sup>106</sup> A Board of Relief was established the following year “under the law of 1819”, but no substantial improvements were made.<sup>107</sup> A “poorhouse” was referenced in town meeting minutes in 1822, but the location is not known.<sup>108</sup> In 1824 the Town voted “that it is expedient to Establish a work house or other establishment . . . and that a Committee be appointed to devise a Set of Rules and Regulations”.<sup>109</sup> The Town ran an advertisement in the Gazette in December, 1824 that read, “Wanted, A good man to take the charge of a work and alms house in Waterford, for the year ensuing. A man with a small family is preferred.”<sup>110</sup> On April 4, 1825, the Town appropriated a house owned by Captain Robert Douglass on the New London-Hartford Turnpike “to be Improved in future by this Town as and for a work house for the term of four years . . . Such part . . . of the house not occupied as a work house Shall be used and occupied as for an almshouse.”<sup>111</sup> Three and one-half pages of “Regulations” were also approved but included few limitations. At the direction “of all or Either of the Overseers,” the master could employ any persons sentenced “to Labour at Said work house” on “any of the adjacent farms.” Before the contract expired, the Town voted on January 19, 1829, “to Except John Watrous proposition to take and furnish a Sufficient house and three acres . . . for planting and fire wood . . . to keep two Cows Summer and Winter and to act as Overseer . . .” for three years.<sup>112</sup> The Town continued to hire a house or farm for the poor every three years, in 1832, 1835, 1838, and 1841. In 1832, the Town voted to allow for the selectmen to seek admission of people to the “Hartford Retreat for the Insane” (now the Institute of Living). Watson Prentis of Waterford was admitted that year and the Town defrayed the expense for three months. After that, Prentis’ mother, Bridget, was responsible for the expense, forcing her to rely on relief.<sup>113</sup>

The Town’s approach to caring for the poor shifted in 1842 when one half of the Deposit fund was allotted “for the purpose of purchasing a Suitable Situation for an Alms House to consist of

<sup>104</sup> Connecticut Gazette (New London), 4/26/1815.

<sup>105</sup> Town Business, Vol 1, p 61, 8/3/1815.

<sup>106</sup> 11/4/1819, Vol 1, p 82.

<sup>107</sup> 10/2/1820, Vol 1, p 84; Town Book, 7/3/1820.

<sup>108</sup> Town Book, 1/28/1822 and 2/25/1822.

<sup>109</sup> 10/4/1824, Vol 1, p 101.

<sup>110</sup> CT Gazette (New London), 12/8/1824.

<sup>111</sup> 4/4/1825, Vol 1, pp 102-05.

<sup>112</sup> The house was located somewhere between the New London – Hartford Turnpike and the Old Colchester Road/Vauxhall Street Extension. Vol 1, p 115.

<sup>113</sup> 11/5/1832, Vol 1, p 125; Town Book, Selectmen’s meetings, 4/4, 7/1, 10/3/1833, 1/13, 8/18/1834. (Last entry in selectmen’s book is 10/1/1834).



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a Dwelling House and Lands proper & Convenient for the use of the poor.”<sup>114</sup> A committee established in 1846 was authorized to actually make a land purchase.<sup>115</sup> The Town bought the ca. 1700 Abel Moore house and 107 acres from Ezra Keeney for \$3,000 in 1847, and an adjacent 40-acre wood lot from Keeney in 1852 for \$500.<sup>116</sup> The reason this particular property was chosen is not clear; presumably it was available at an affordable price.<sup>117</sup> Shortly after the town bought the property, the house was enlarged with a brick addition to accommodate the almshouse. The 1847 deed referenced “a certain farm” on the Lyme (Gurley) Road westward to the road “leading from straits Bridge . . . by Stantons Oil Mill . . . containing about one hundred and seven (107) acres . . . with two dwelling houses and the other buildings thereon.”<sup>118</sup> On October 4, the selectmen were “Directed to carry all of the paupers of said town to the alms house as in [their] opinion can be moved.”<sup>119</sup>

The 1850 census lists Isaac Birch (54) as the almshouse farmer; he and his wife Nancy (53) were the caretakers. There were 12 resident “paupers”: John Chapel (53), David Bolles (70), Morris Dunbar (70), George Whipple (43), Chauncy Dayton (25), Lydia Bickery (70), Abigail Tinker (71), Sarah Beebe (70), Lydia Powers (75), Mary Rogers (54), Rachel Berkwith (45), and Jane Beebe (2), an African American toddler. By 1860 the almshouse was run by Michael and Mary Maynard, who lived there with their 4 children and 15 “paupers”. Six adult males in residence at the time ranged in age from 40 to 82, including farm laborers and a seaman. Only one, Chauncy Dayton, had lived there in 1850. Rachel Dayton (66) may have been a relative. The female residents ranged in age from 30 to 66, including Lynda Beckwith (66), Hannah Beckwith (60), and Gurtrude Beckwith (30) who may have been related. Edward (6) and Charles (4) Beckwith were Gertrude’s sons. Gertrude married William W. Mosier in 1863. Edward died in 1926. Charles died in 1870 of consumption.<sup>120</sup> The youngest resident was Herbert Jones (1)<sup>121</sup> who was likely “male child” born to Hannah Jones on February 26, 1859.<sup>122</sup>

One of the goals of the almshouse was to eliminate the system of public welfare known as outdoor relief, which the town considered too expensive. Institutionalizing the poor, it was believed, would deter the able-bodied from asking for relief.<sup>123</sup> From 1868 through 1876 the

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<sup>114</sup> Vol 1, p 161

<sup>115</sup> 12/7/1846, Vol 2, pp 27-28

<sup>116</sup> Bachman, 2000: 98.

<sup>117</sup> Abel Moore Jr. (son of Abel and Hannah Moore) built the house sometime between 1698 and his death in 1705 (Bucher II: 119-120). Abel Moore Jr.’s younger brother, Joshua, settled the farm at after 1705. Joshua rented the farm from his brother’s two daughters until acquiring the property outright in 1726. Joshua died in 1761, and the house and farm passed to his son, Joshua Jr., who owned it until his death in 1801.

<sup>118</sup> WLR 9/131, 2/23/1847.

<sup>119</sup> Waterford Town Meeting Minutes November 23, 1846: 27; October 4, 1847: 31.

<sup>120</sup> Vital Records, town clerk’s office, Vol 4, p 60; Vol 3, p 474; Vol 2, p 125

<sup>121</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Statistics of the Population for Waterford, 1850 and 1860.

<sup>122</sup> Vital Records Vol 2, p 13; U.S. Census Bureau, Statistics of the Population for Waterford, 1850 and 1860.

<sup>123</sup> McKinney, Hannah J., The development of Local Public Services, 1650-1860, Lessons from Middletown, Connecticut. Contributions in Economics and Economic History, Number 166. Greenwood Press, Westport Connecticut.

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Town upheld a regulation, “That all persons receiving partial supplies [relief] from the town to the amount of \$25.00 Shall be removed to the Alms house Except in cases of Sickness.”<sup>124</sup>

After the “Connecticut Hospital for the Insane” in Middletown opened in 1868, Selectmen were required to send people with mental illnesses to the facility, with expenses shared between the town and the state. However, the Town often placed people in the local almshouse instead, to avoid the shared cost of the state hospital. Following the Panic of 1873, the Town discussed selling the town farm, but voted to retain it at an October 5, 1874, annual town meeting.<sup>125</sup>

The 1880 Federal Census provides a more detailed look at those housed in the Waterford almshouse. By 1880 there were only six residents: Thomas Woodworth (70), “Cannot read or write.” Abby Biglow (50), “Cannot read or write.” Ann Thornley (35), “Insane, Cannot read or write. Lucy Clark (40), “Idiotic, Cannot write.” Mary Dayton (18), “Epilectic, Idiotic, Cannot read or write.” Flora Chapell (2). Oscar Dart (26), “Blind.” Henry Williams worked as the overseer and lived in the house with his wife, Rose, and their two sons, Charles (10) and Roger (14). The 1880 census labeled three other persons as “insane” as well. Only one, Albert Phillips, was among the outside poor. According to the 1885 Town Account, he had been committed to the “Connecticut Hospital for the Insane” at Middletown. Oscar Dart, who was at the almshouse in 1880, was subsequently among the outside poor in 1885. He received relief for expenses incurred at the Perkins Institute for the Blind in Watertown, Massachusetts. In addition to Phillips and Dart, another 20 persons received outside relief as well.

For the year ending September 3, 1879 (the only surviving Town Account close to 1880), the expenses for the almshouse totaled \$1,482.56 and included the interest on the farm, overseer’s salary, labor, repairs, clothing, provisions, and grain, etc. For the same period, outdoor relief expenses for 23 people totaled \$772.90. For fiscal year 1885, almshouse expenses amounted to \$2,076.76 and outside relief cost \$793.94. Almshouse expenses continued to outpace the cost of outside relief over the next decade, by two-and-one-half to three-and-one-half times.<sup>126</sup> At the town’s October 3, 1887 Annual Meeting the selectmen considered “the advisability of disposing of the Town Farm and procuring another in its place.”<sup>127</sup> The selectmen completed a report about selling the Town Farm in 1889, but no action was taken.<sup>128</sup> Instead, the two-thirds of the almshouse rear lean-to was demolished to accommodate a new brick addition that included a kitchen directly connected to the house. The addition is visible in a 1935 photograph and was comprised of building materials consistent with late-nineteenth to early twentieth century construction. Specifically, the floor consisted of poured concrete, with Portland Cement used as the binding agent in the concrete mix.<sup>129</sup> The floor was poured over lattice of sawn plaster lathe,

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<sup>124</sup> 10/5/1868, Vol 2, p 181.

<sup>125</sup> Town Meetings, Vol 2, p 229.

<sup>126</sup> Town Accounts for fiscal years ending 1885, 1887, 1888, 1893, 1894, 1898, and 1899. Town Clerk’s Office.

<sup>127</sup> Vol 3, p 86.

<sup>128</sup> January 14, 1889, Vol 3, pp 104-05.

<sup>129</sup> Gaudette, Paul & Slalton, Deborah, Preservation of Historic Concrete, Preservation Brief 15, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

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evenly crisscrossed and tacked at every intersect with a small nail. The total floor thickness was measured approximately two inches.

The addition was located on the north side of the house, centered opposite the enormous chimney stack. A fireplace originally located in the lean-to was open to the addition and a bee hive oven was built into the masonry just to the left of the fireplace opening. The addition contained two first story windows, both in the south half, one west facing in the kitchen, the other east in a room 1/3 the size of the kitchen connected by a doorway. The only other window was in the gable end of the attic/half story to the north. In the center was a room that included stairs to the attic and doors to the outside, one east side, the other west. The west door was opposite the staircase and accessed the kitchen as well. A chimney, presumably for a wood stove was located at the north end of the room. The northern-most room covered approximately 20% of the floor area and had an exterior door on the west wall. An interior doorway in close proximity to the outside door opened to the center room. The interior wall also included two barred windows.

Although the town had paid for one person, Albert Phillips, to live for many years at the "Connecticut Hospital for the Insane" in Middletown, other people resided at the almshouse in poor conditions. According to *The Historical Development of the Poor Law in Connecticut*, "Waterford illustrates how towns too often care for their insane paupers. In 1897, there were in the almshouse an insane man tied in a chair and an insane woman existing in a miserable room with cement floor, and no furnishings except a tick filled with straw. She could not care for herself decently or keep herself properly clothed."<sup>130</sup> In 1898, officials' visits to towns' almshouses included this assessment: "Waterford, almshouse very old and should be replaced by a new one, two insane persons were found and the board recommended their removal to the Middletown hospital."<sup>131</sup>

By 1900, the Waterford almshouse population had declined to five inmates, most of them quite elderly. Noyes (54) and Jane (46) Getchell were the caretakers that year, living there with their daughter Dora (19). The inmates were John Marsh (84), Mary Mattison (87), George Clark (76), Frank Collins (75, an Irish immigrant), and David Barnes (57, from England).<sup>132</sup> After years of operating the almshouse at a considerable deficit, and with a change in state law that allowed adjoining towns to have "union almshouses for paupers," Waterford decided to move the two remaining occupants to the New London almshouse and rent out the property for \$200 per year. The annual cost to operate the almshouse was roughly \$2,000, while the cost to house its remaining wards in the New London facility was \$156 per person.<sup>133</sup> The town remained responsible for the expenses of people placed in state mental health hospitals. In 1906 six people from Waterford were housed at the "Connecticut Hospital for the Insane" in Middletown and the "Norwich Hospital for the Insane," which opened in 1904. Patients included Albert Phillips, Annie Thornby, Charlotte M. Douglass, Harry Tinker, Kate Hicks, and James Norberry.<sup>134</sup>

<sup>130</sup> Capen, 372.

<sup>131</sup> "News of the State," *New Haven Register*, Vol. LV: 53, 5, March 3, 1898.

<sup>132</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, *Statistics of the Population for Waterford, 1900*.

<sup>133</sup> Town Account, Year ending September 4, 1906.

<sup>134</sup> Waterford Town Account, Year ending September 4, 1906.

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Phillips had been at Middletown since at least since 1897.<sup>135</sup> The Phillips family, meanwhile, regularly received outside relief.<sup>136</sup> Phillips, whose occupation was listed as a farmer, died at the hospital at age 50 on February 23, 1908.<sup>137</sup> The names of his parents were “not given” in the death record, as one common at the time due to social stigma related to mental illness.

The Town sold farming and dairying equipment, livestock, and produce from the almshouse property for just over \$1,000 in 1906, including: 20 head of cattle, a pair of oxen, a horse, 3 pigs, chickens; hay, oats, corn, and vegetables.<sup>138</sup> The property returned to private ownership in 1921.<sup>139</sup> Its new owner, Austin Peabody, sold the property two years later to Anna Kravchuck.<sup>140</sup> She and her husband, Abraham Daniel Kravchuck, operated the property as a dairy farm, selling milk under the name “A. D. Kravchuck.” In 1926 they had 2 cows, increasing to 8 in 1928, and 13 head of cattle by 1930. The brick addition was seriously damaged in the 1938 Hurricane and never repaired. They built a spring house for milk storage ca. 1940. Anna Kravchuck quitclaimed the property to their daughter, Irene Kravchuck Kross, in 1986. By the early twenty-first century, the house had fallen into disrepair, and it was demolished on July 3, 2012.

### Criterion D: Archaeology

The district meets Criterion D in the category of Archaeology because its data sets of artifacts and cultural features, such as visible mill remains, have the potential to yield information about the processing of sumac, linseed, and birch and the adaptation of old saw- and gristmills for new industrial purposes. The evolution of small, early historic-period mills into other, larger types is overall well-documented in southern New England, but without detail. The almshouse site in the district meets Criterion D in the category of Archaeology because its data sets have the potential to yield information about the daily lives of almshouse residents at the site, as well as the broader regional strategy of almshouses to house the indigent, infirm, and mentally ill in nineteenth-century New England.

The manufacture of linseed, birch, and other organic oils are documented in sources such as *American Druggist* and “Technology of the Oil Mill Industries.”<sup>141</sup> The mill sites at 54 Oil Mill Road (152-134) and 57/59 Gurley Road (152-37) appear to retain their physical integrity; with no visible evidence of pervasive disturbance elsewhere, the surviving dam and raceway remains appear intact. The wheel pit at 152-37 may have been filled in to prevent collapse, a common

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<sup>135</sup> Waterford Town Account, Year ending September 1, 1898.

<sup>136</sup> Town Account, Year ending September 4, 1906. Family members were not identified.

<sup>137</sup> Vital Records, Town of Waterford, 1908.

<sup>138</sup> Waterford Town Account, Year Ending September 4, 1906.

<sup>139</sup> WLR 36: 521, 1/13/1921.

<sup>140</sup> WLR 38: 459, 4/20/1923.

<sup>141</sup> “The Manufacture of Oil of Birch,” *American Druggist: An Illustrated Semi-Monthly Journal of Pharmacy, Chemistry, and Materia Medica*. New York: William Wood & Company, 1891, and “Technology of the Oil Mill Industries,” *Building Community: Medieval Technology and American History*. Penn State University: National Endowment for the Humanities, October 11, 2010.

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practice. No physical archaeological investigations have been conducted at these mill sites (152-134 and 152-37), but the relatively undisturbed nature of the sites suggests the likelihood for data sets including buried artifacts, soil strata, and structural remains that could contribute important information to the understanding of this industry in its local context, as the mill sites provide specific local examples of regional industrial patterns and processes.

The archaeological sites included in this district were identified based on assessment-level archaeological survey conducted as part of a 1998 town-wide archaeological assessment survey, and then revisited as part of archaeological surveys conducted under Section 106 associated with the proposed extension of Route 11 to a terminus at Route I-95.<sup>142</sup> In 2015 the Connecticut Department of Transportation conducted a reevaluation of cultural resources in the Route 11 project area on an assessment-level only, to update the information on archaeological sensitivity and sites gathered earlier.<sup>143</sup> The 2015 reevaluation study demonstrated that although archaeological sites in the northern part of the project area have been affected by development and logging, the southern portion, adjacent to and within the district, had generally been undisturbed. Although the buildings at 21 Gurley Road (Site 152-75) have been demolished, a visual inspection completed in 2015 indicated that surface and below-ground deposits are intact.

Two of the district sites contain visible surface remains of their industrial/mill past, which formed the core of the Oil Mill district. The oil mill at 57/59 Gurley Road (Site 152-37) contains an intact stone foundation, a wheel pit, and a partly buried/partly visible 800-foot-long intact tail race, which extends from the Gurley and Oil Mill Road intersection northward toward I-95 and probably once connected to Site 152-134 (see below). A walkover of this entire wooded site indicates no visible ground alteration; thus the site is certain to contain unretrieved data sets that can contribute to our understanding of the mechanics of how oil mills functioned beyond what can be learned from documentary evidence. At 54 Oil Mill Road (Site 152-134), visual inspection in 2015 indicated that this site has remarkably intact visible components and no apparent ground disturbance. Site 152-134 appears to be a continuation of Site 152-37.<sup>144</sup> The sites were bisected by the construction of a berm for I-95. This unusually long race system and mill complex survival certainly can fill in data gaps in the documentary record.

The archaeological remains of the mill sites in the Oil Mill District reflect over 200 years of milling activity on Oil Mill and Latimer brooks. As is well-documented across New England, the early saw- and gristmills, which were vital to local economies in the Colonial period, were often later re-fitted and re-purposed to the meet changing economic needs of individuals and communities. The earliest mills, like the pre-1698 Palmes mill in the district, were established at prime locations along local waterways to best exploit the region's natural waterpower and other

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<sup>142</sup> Harper et al. 1998; Jones et al. 2006. No subsurface testing was conducted in the Route 11 survey within the proposed district due to funding issues and timing; winter closed in when the project was put on hold.

<sup>143</sup> Harper and Harper 2015; Sportman et al., 2017.

<sup>144</sup> They were assigned separate site numbers because Site 152-134 was not noted in the 1996 town-wide archaeological survey, or in the earliest Route 11 survey because plans for the highway's southern terminus had not been developed. The mill remnants here were only noted as the Route 11 survey was completed and were confirmed in the 2015 reevaluation of the 2006 survey (Harper and Harper 2015).

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resources. As economic needs, industrial trends, and resource availability changed through time, the locations and infrastructure of early Colonial-period mills were adapted to new uses. Regardless of their primary purpose, for instance, grinding grain versus processing timber, most small mills had similar design elements because they employed the same basic technology in their operations. The major components included a wheel, dam, penstock, headrace, tailrace, and wheel pit,<sup>145</sup> which provided the basic infrastructure for later expansions and updates. Careful excavation and documentation of the archaeological sites can provide information about when and how the mills were updated for new purposes, the types of machinery, or technologies used in different mill iterations, as well as technological changes.

The mills in the Oil Mill District had a documented history of use, decline, revitalization, and reuse that dates back to the late seventeenth century, when Major Edward Palmes's pre-1698 sawmill fell into disrepair and a new mill was soon constructed in the same location.<sup>146</sup> The documentary record indicates that the infrastructure of Sites 152-134 and 152-37, which eventually comprised the nineteenth-century linseed oil mill, had several previous iterations, first as a sawmill, then a sumac mill, followed by a linseed oil mill, and finally a mill to extract birch oil. Local newspaper advertisements record these changes to former mills, including an 1806 ad that notes "a valuable sawmill, situated at the head of the Niantic River. Also, the building lately improved as a Sumac Factory...".<sup>147</sup> In the late nineteenth century, documentary sources regarding the birch oil mill indicate that while a large mill was built and "new up-to-date machinery" was installed, the mill also made use of existing infrastructure.<sup>148</sup> While some details of these improvements and alterations are present in documentary sources, archaeological investigation has the potential to illuminate the aspects of mill infrastructure that were maintained and altered through time to keep up with technological advances and functional changes. Little previous work has been conducted on this aspect of New England industrial development, and the archaeological deposits and features from the mill sites in the district are key to understanding these processes.

The mill site at 34 Oil Mill Road (Site 152-143), at which a sumac mill operated before it was converted into the oil mill, (and later moved to Site 152-37), is landscaped and difficult to access. However, the site is visible from the roadside, and although landscape fill has clearly been laid atop the site adjacent to the brook, there is high potential for intact mill remains beneath the loam and grass. Few sumac or oil mills, or any small mills, have been excavated archaeologically in southern New England and the sites in the Oil Mill district have the potential to contain intact archaeological deposits and cultural features that can illuminate the organization, technological, and functional aspects of the former oil extraction and processing operations.

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<sup>145</sup> Mailhot et al. "Phase IA Archaeological Assessment and Cultural Resource Support for the Interim Removal Action Clearance Program at New Boston Air Force Station, New Boston, Amherst, Mont Vernon, Hillsborough County, New Hampshire," Prepared for Shaw Environmental and Infrastructure, Denver, Co. Littleton, MA: John Milner and Associates, Inc., 2010: 20.

<sup>146</sup> Bucher II, 10, 16.

<sup>147</sup> *Connecticut Gazette* 1806: 1.

<sup>148</sup> WLR 29: 62, 12/10/1906; WLR 27: 285, 4/16/1909; "Birch Mill Moved," 1909.

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Archaeological features and deposits associated with sites 152-134 and 152-73 have the potential to answer questions about the oil-mill construction, organization, functionality, and evolution. Is there evidence of the original, Colonial-period mill infrastructure? Archaeological remains dating to the earliest period of the mill potentially provide evidence of the original date and type of construction. Such remains might also indicate how the mill was originally organized in terms of the layout of the mill components and what processes occurred in which portions of the site. The archaeological deposits have the potential to shed light on how the mills were altered and repurposed over time in terms of expansion and use of new technologies, as the mills were transitioned for different industries. The mill sites may also provide archaeological evidence of past mill uses in terms of layout, equipment remains, and botanical remains of grain, sumac, linseed, or birch. The physical evidence can be compared with documentary data to evaluate the record of use, activities, and operational dates. The archeological remains of the mills also have the potential to illuminate the processes involved in closing down the mills and answer related questions such as: what components were deliberately buried, such as raceways? What components were taken away, perhaps to be repurposed, and what components were left behind when the mills were abandoned? Is there evidence of waterwheel or turbine components in the fill in the wheel pit?

The archaeological mill sites also have the potential to shed light on aspects of the local and regional economy. While most local people were engaged in agriculture during the period of significance, documentary research conducted for the National Register-eligible Wolf Pit Hills Historic Archaeological District (to the north of this district) indicates that many local farmers supplemented their incomes with forest products,<sup>149</sup> and many others by granite quarrying. The use of the mills for sumac, flax, and later birch processing represent a continuation of the practice of a mixed agricultural and forest extraction economy into the nineteenth and even twentieth centuries. The two mill sites also represent a small part of a larger local economy involving the export of products from New London.

The entire 21 Gurley Road property was part of the original c. 1700 Moore parcel. It was separated from the remainder of the 147-acre parcel for the construction of I-95 in 1961 when land was sold to the state.<sup>150</sup> Although the almshouse and town farm buildings have been demolished, close visual inspection in 2006 and 2015 revealed very little ground disturbance. Surface contours were not altered from visits in 1999, 2005, 2006 and 2015. There is very high potential that archaeological excavations at the site would yield details about the daily lifeways of people in nineteenth-century almshouses (as well as the entire span of early eighteenth-century lifeways). This residence never had utilities installed, and the privy areas remain over 300 years later.

The archaeological deposits on the almshouse property potentially date from the eighteenth century through the mid-twentieth century and potentially include buried cultural features and artifacts related to outbuildings and outdoor activities conducted at the site, as well as midden

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<sup>149</sup> Sportman et al. 2017.

<sup>150</sup> WLR 133: 87, 10/16/1961.

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deposits containing a range of domestic refuse. Archaeological investigations would provide site-specific data about the daily lives of the indigent and mentally ill residents of the almshouse in terms of their diet, living conditions, material culture, daily activities, and labor, as well as information useful for interpreting broader local and regional patterns of poor-relief, class relations, and social and economic change during the period of early industrial growth and expansion. The Waterford almshouse was established during a documented period of almshouse construction and expansion across southern New England,<sup>151</sup> as towns adapted to the realities of an increasingly industrialized economy, changing cultural ideas about the role of society in addressing deviant behavior,<sup>152</sup> and the challenges of caring for their poor and incapacitated citizens in an affordable manner.

Archaeological materials at the site have the potential to address several research questions that documents cannot. Are there archaeological deposits and/or cultural features within the site that are associated with the almshouse period (1847-1921) such as food remains, personal items, domestic artifacts, or tools? Can the archaeological deposits at the site shed light on living conditions and the health of the residents in the almshouse period? Intact privy deposits may contain evidence of the foods that were consumed by the almshouse residents, along with preserved evidence of parasites and other diseases. Medicinal artifacts have the potential to shed light on the health problems and medical care provided to almshouse residents. Tools, utensils, and other labor-related artifacts illuminate the working lives of almshouse residents. Artifacts associated with women and children potentially provide information about the quotidian lives of the most common types of residents of in almshouse settings. Can archaeological materials from the almshouse site be compared to the assemblages from other documented poorhouses, almshouses, and workhouses in New England to shed light on regional trends in almshouse populations, living conditions, types of labor, and treatment of inmates?

While not within the district's period of significance, it should be noted that the vestigial remains of the King's Highway on 21 Gurley Road is a very rare survivor, the only known extant segment of an early colonial road, and it is significant as a rural historic landscape feature. With its connection to the former house, integrity of its early eighteenth-century setting is high.

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<sup>151</sup> James Garman and Paul A. Russo, "A Disregard for Every Sentiment of Humanity": The Town Farm and Class Realignment in Nineteenth-Century Rural New England. *Historical Archaeology* 33(1) (1999): 118-135.

<sup>152</sup> David J. Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic*, Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1971.



Oil Mill Historic District  
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**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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: Connecticut State Library

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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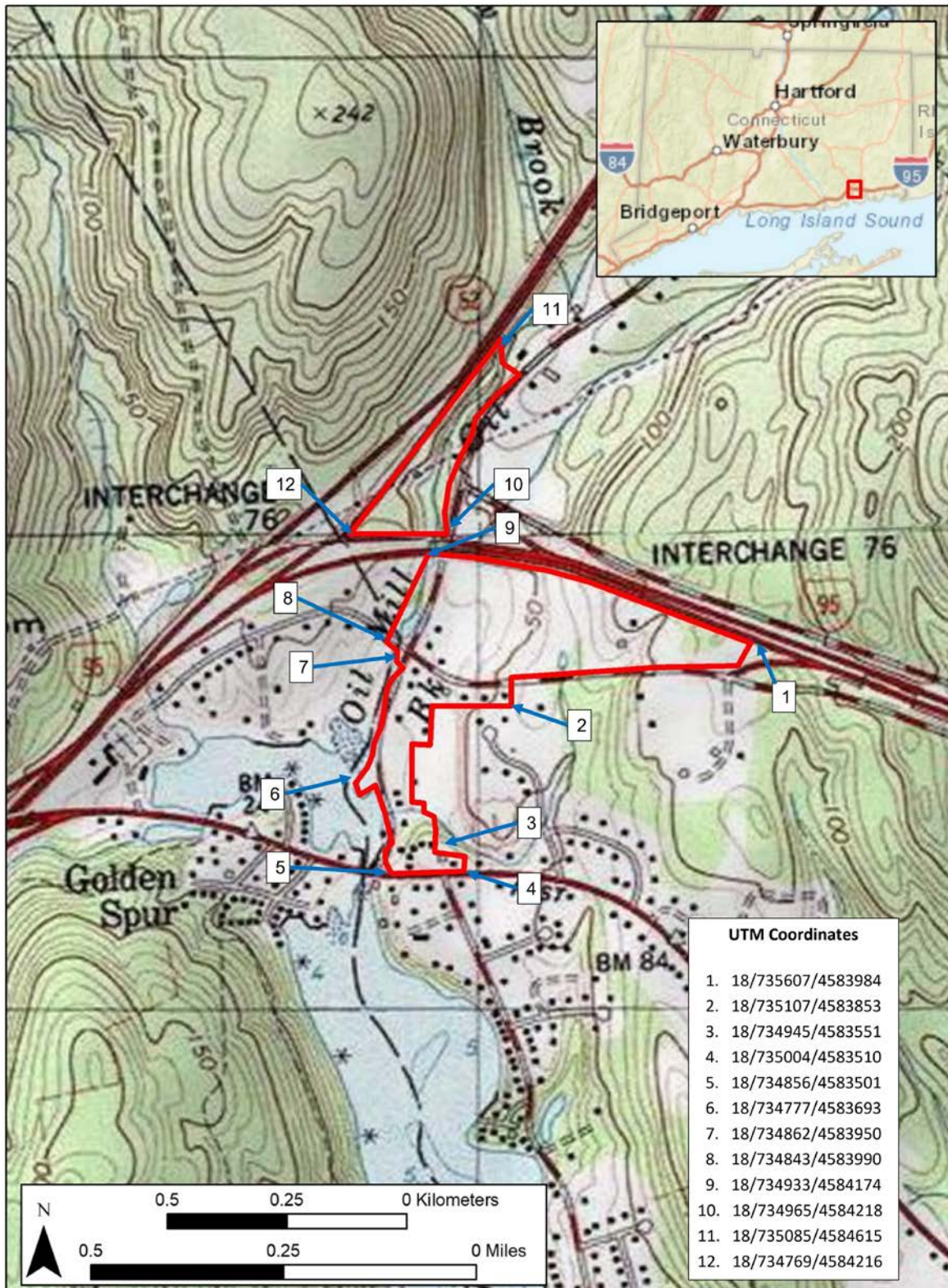
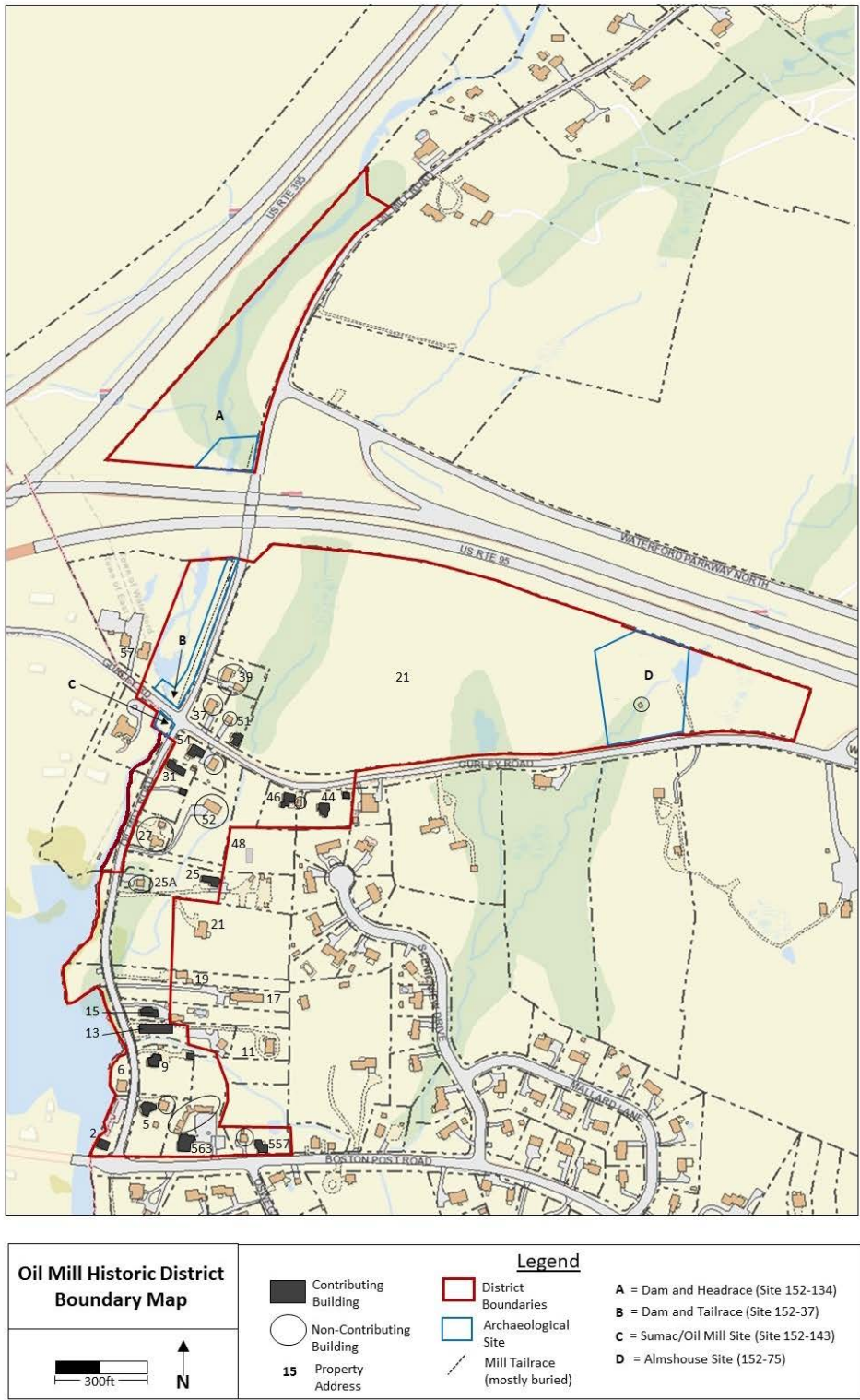


Figure 1. Oil Mill Historic District Location Map.

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**Figure 2. Oil Mill Historic District Boundary Map.**



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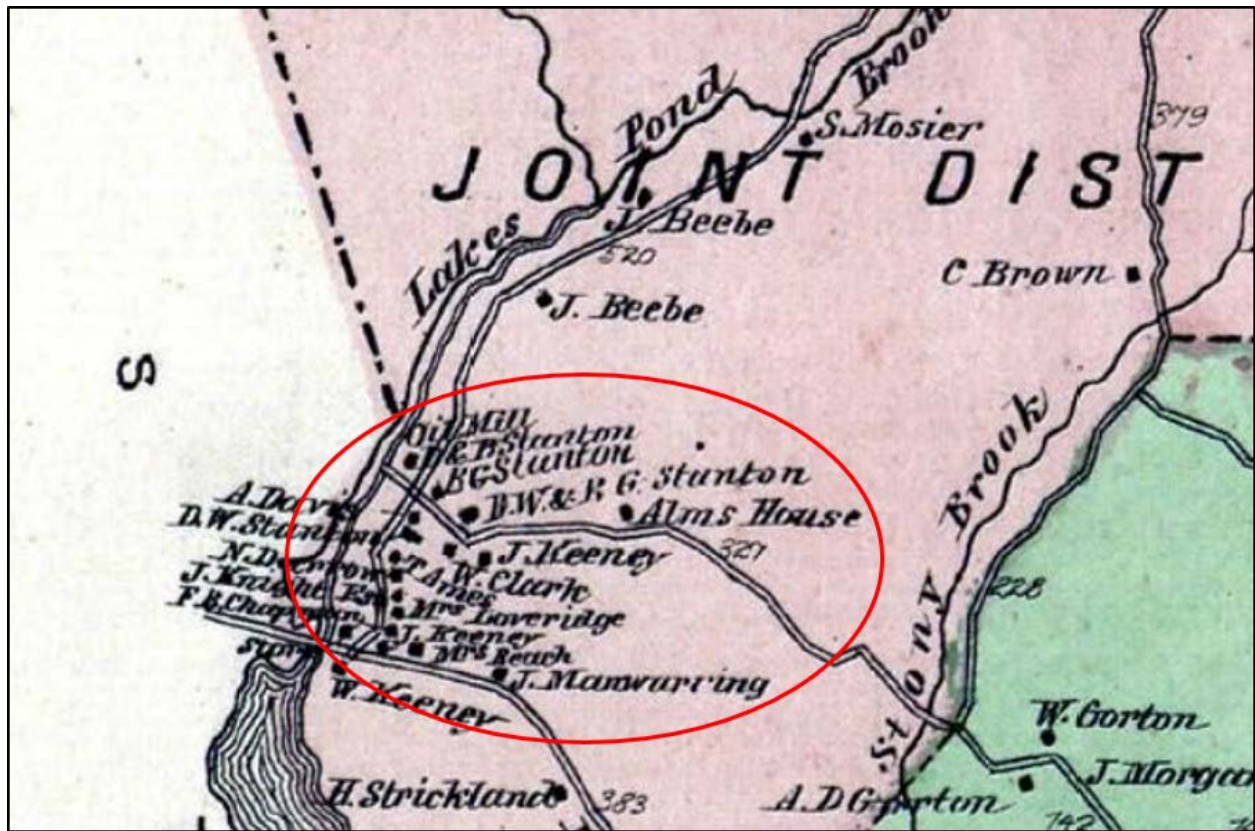


Figure 3. Excerpt of 1868 Beers map (from University of Connecticut).

Oil Mill Historic District  
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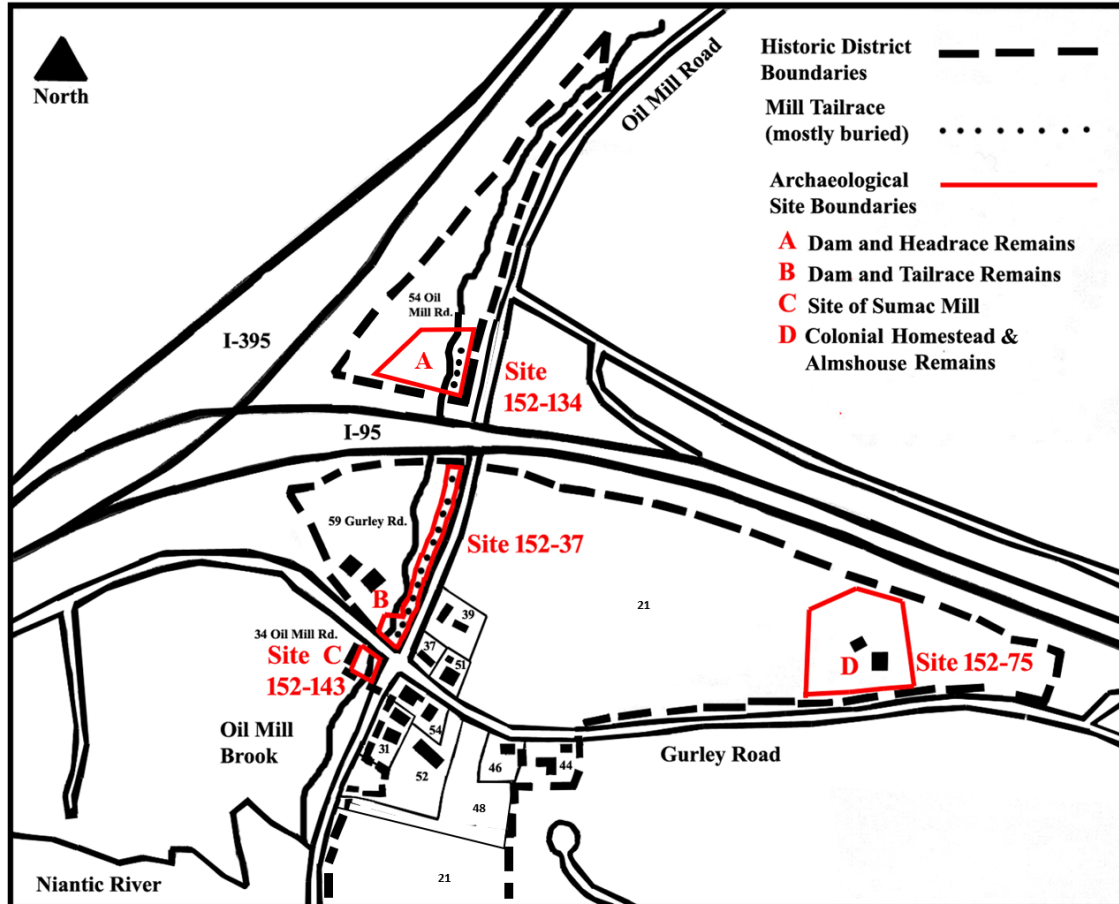


Figure 4. Sketch map of district's archaeological resources.

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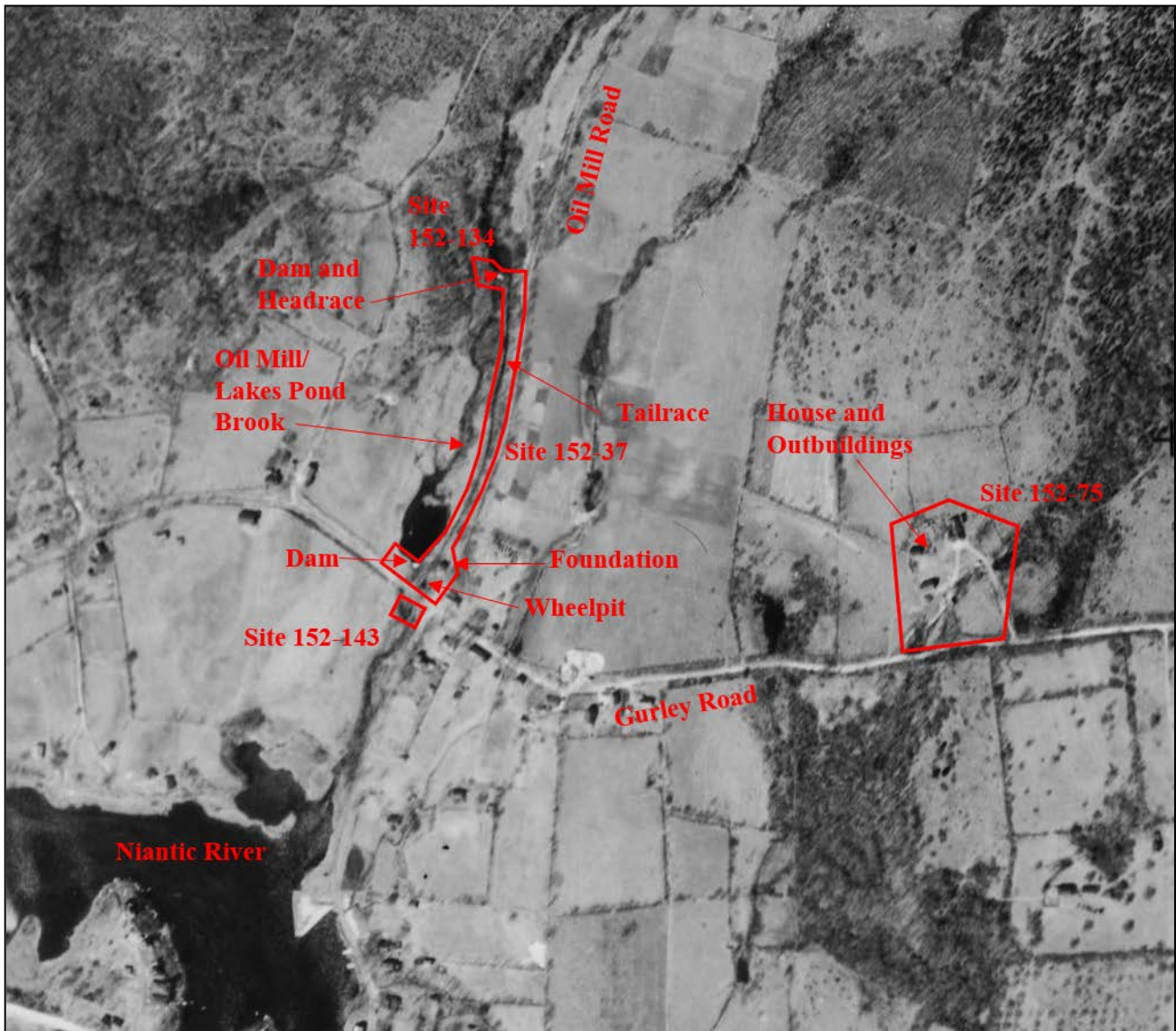


Figure 5. 1934 aerial photograph with archaeological features (from University of Connecticut).

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**Figure 6. Former almshouse (built as the Abel Moore house), December 15, 1935, camera facing northwest (photographer Margaret Stacy, from Waterford Historical Society).**

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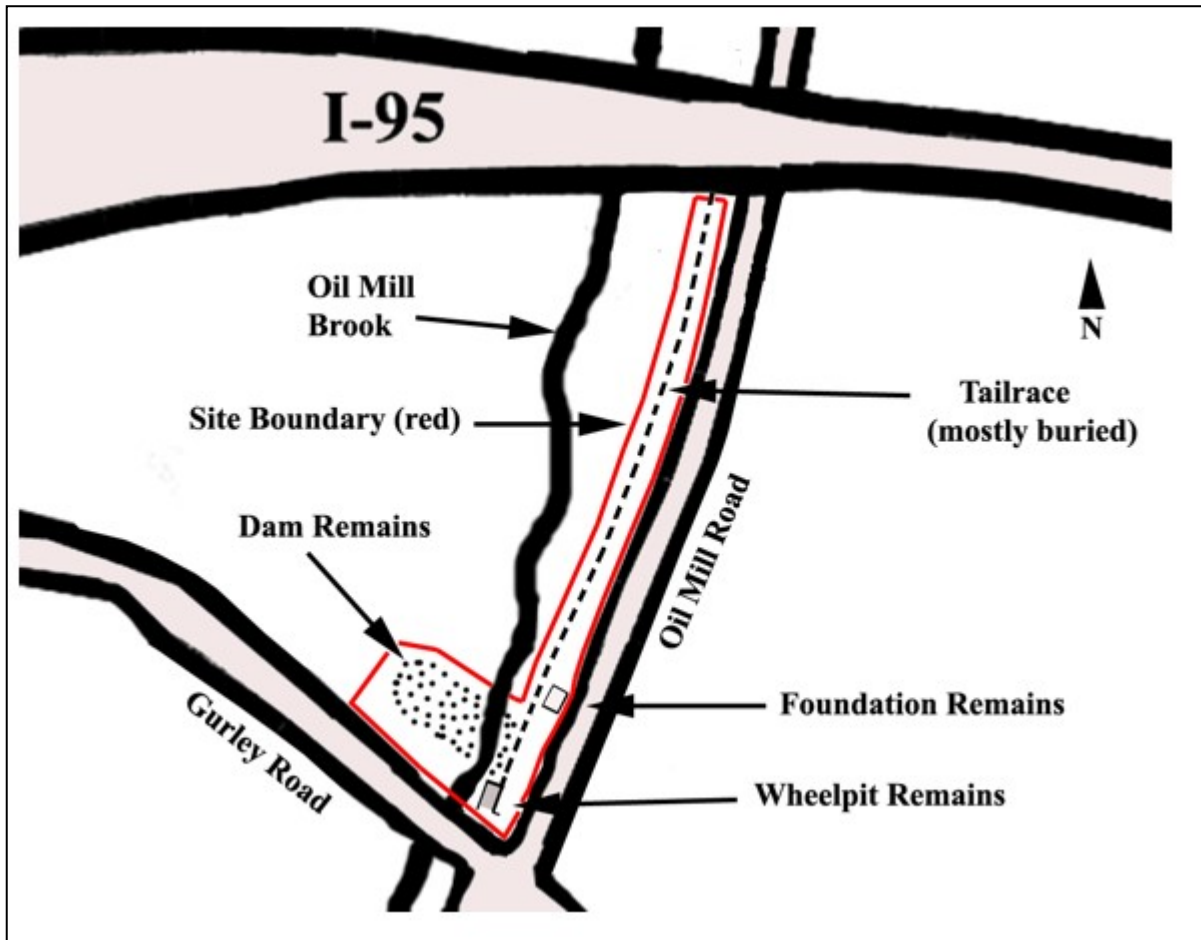


Figure 7. Sketch of mill site at 57/59 Gurley Road (Archaeological Site 152-37).

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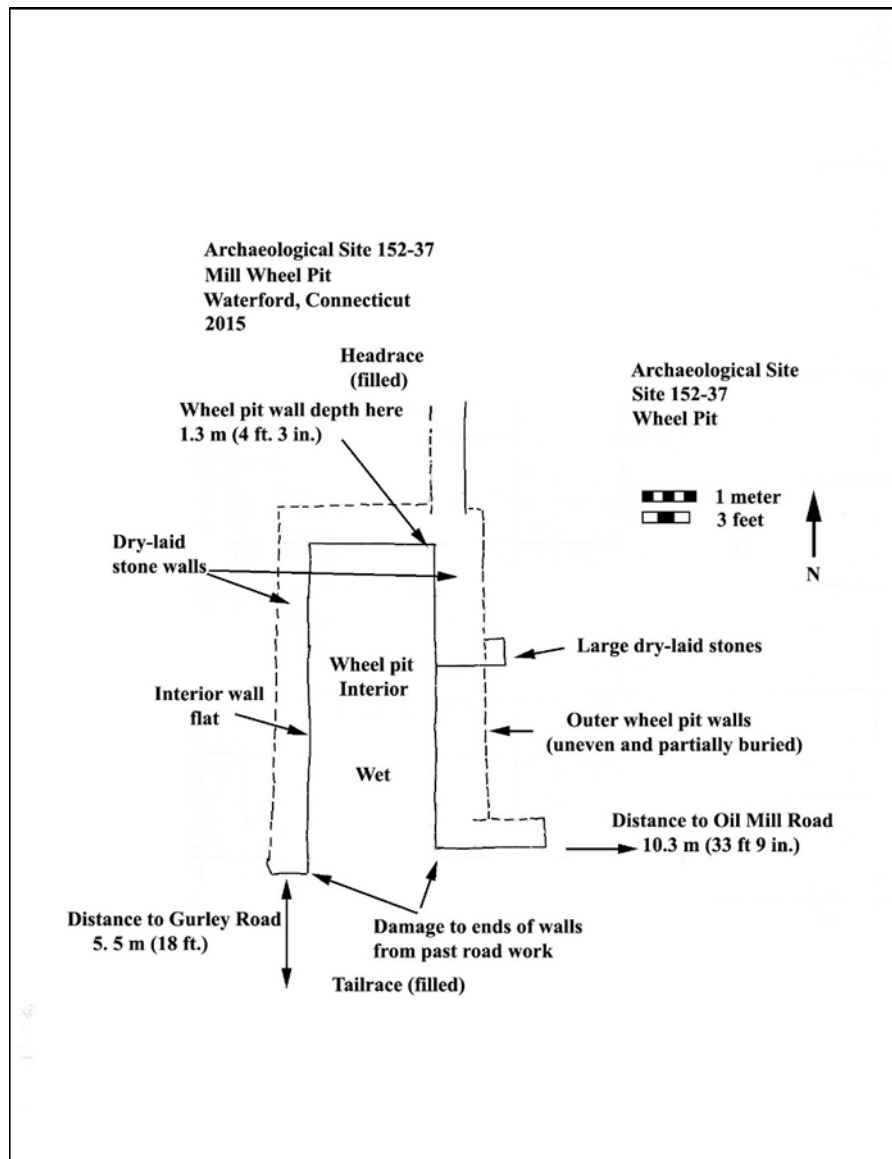


Figure 8. Sketch of mill wheel pit at 57/59 Gurley Road (Archaeological Site 152-37).

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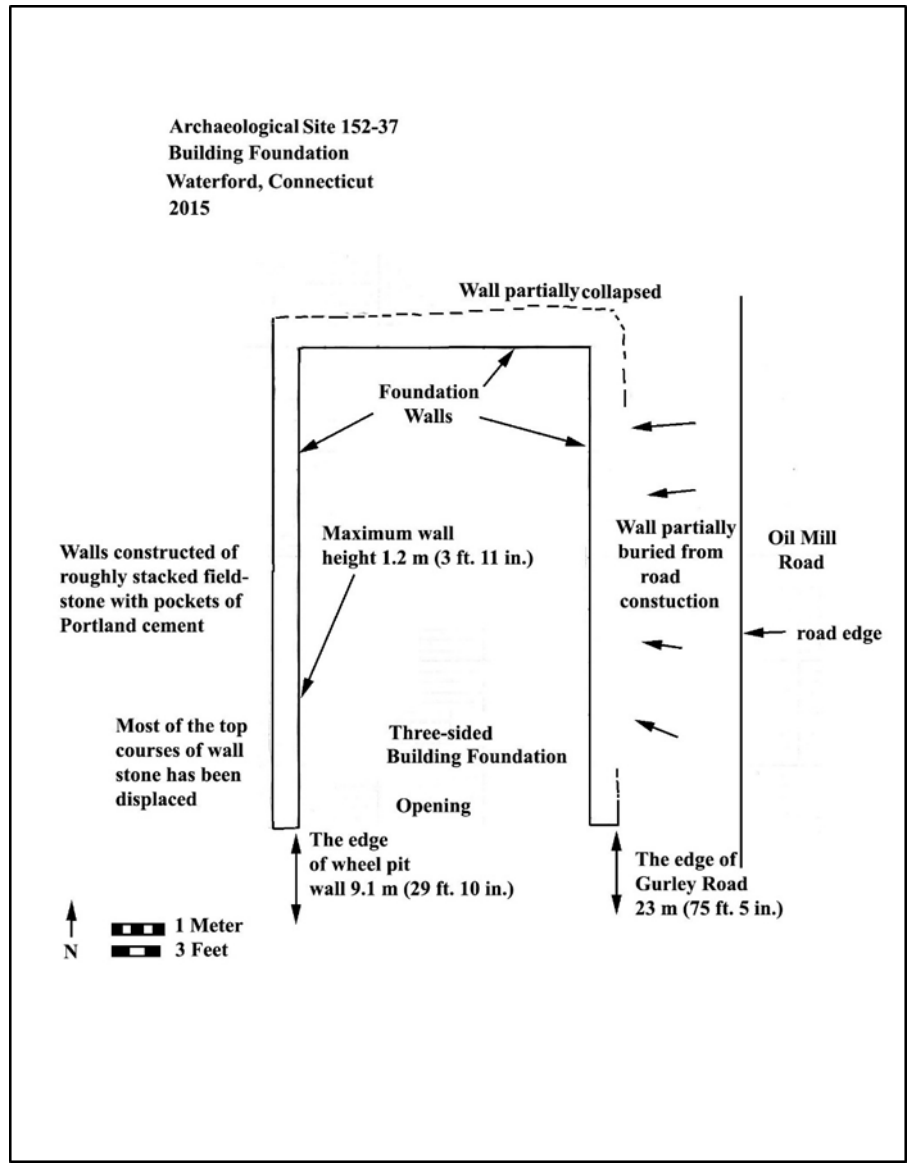


Figure 9. Sketch of building foundation at 57/59 Gurley Road (Archaeological Site 152-37).

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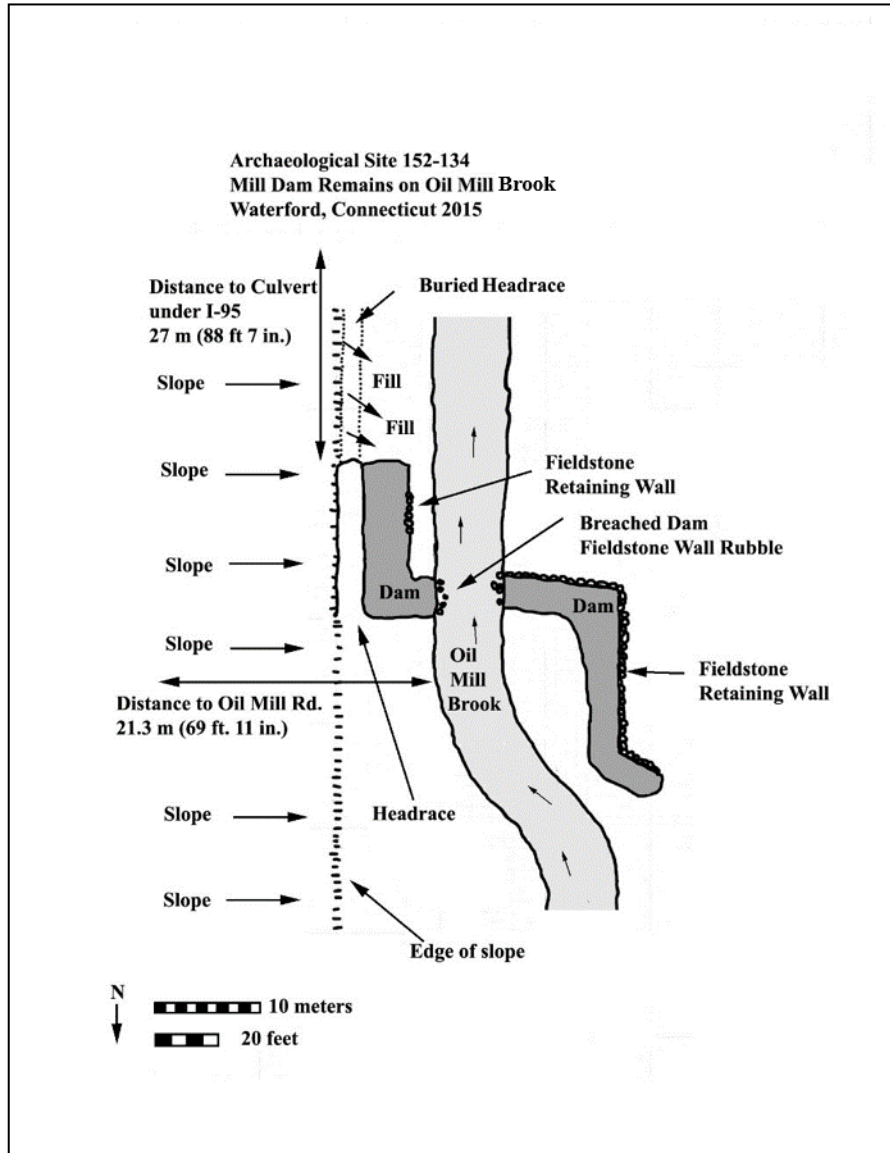
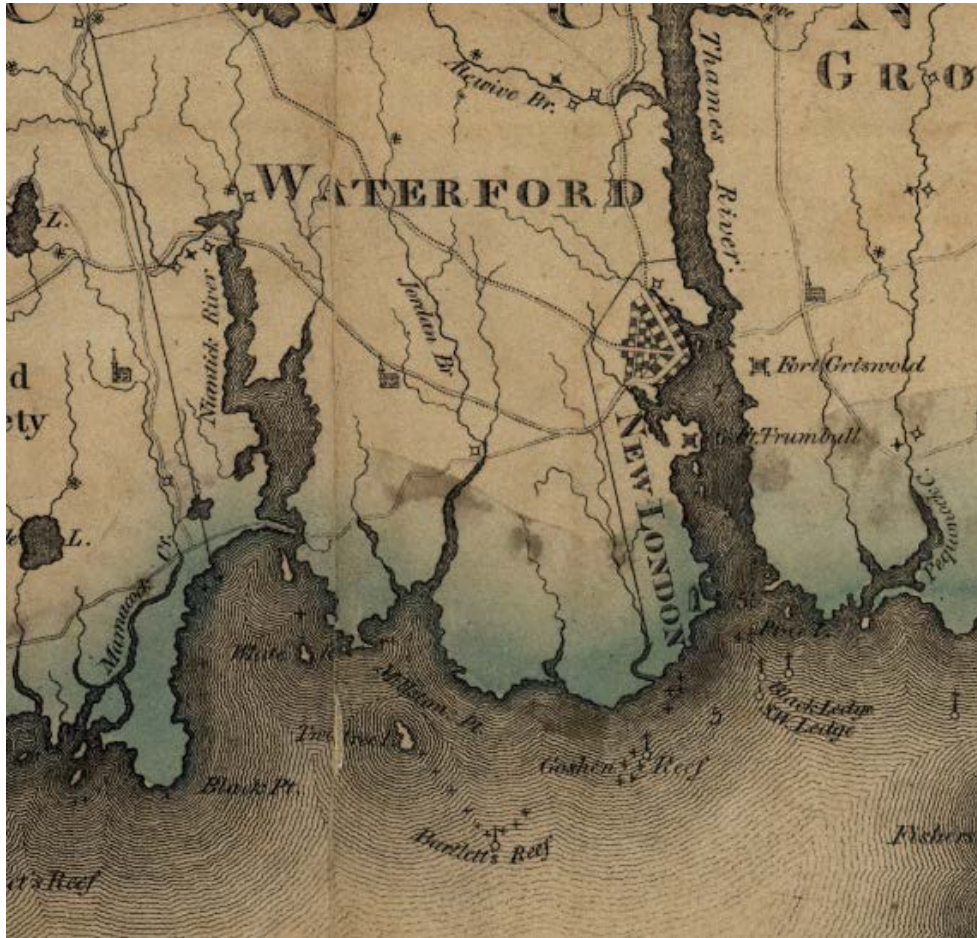


Figure 10. Sketch map of mill dam remains at 54 Oil Mill Road (Archaeological Site 152-134).



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**Figure 11. Excerpt from 1811 Warren and Gillet map.**

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Figure 12. Excerpt from the 1854 Walling map.

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreege of Property:** 55 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

**Or**

### UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |             |                 |                   |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 18 | Easting: 735607 | Northing: 4583984 |
| 2. Zone: 18 | Easting: 735107 | Northing: 4583853 |
| 3. Zone: 18 | Easting: 734945 | Northing: 4583551 |
| 4. Zone: 18 | Easting: 735004 | Northing: 4583510 |
| 5. Zone: 18 | Easting: 734856 | Northing: 4583501 |
| 6. Zone: 18 | Easting: 734777 | Northing: 4583693 |
| 7. Zone: 18 | Easting: 734862 | Northing: 4583950 |

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8. Zone: 18	Easting: 734843	Northing: 4583990
9. Zone: 18	Easting: 734933	Northing: 4584174
10. Zone: 18	Easting: 734965	Northing: 4584218
11. Zone: 18	Easting: 735085	Northing: 4584615
12. Zone: 18	Easting: 734769	Northing: 4584216

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The district boundaries are shown on the Oil Mill District Boundary Map (Figure 2), which is based on the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments GIS map <https://seccog.org/maps-gis>.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The district boundaries are drawn to encompass a distinct locus of nineteenth-century processing of natural oils. The boundaries encompass the intersection of Oil Mill Road and Gurley Road and extend south along the east side of Oil Mill Road to the Boston Post Road to include several properties within the period of significance. It extends north of the intersection on both sides of Oil Mill Road to include contributing archaeological resources. Buildings on abutting properties to the east and west are not historic and have no known archaeological resources. Non-historic outbuildings and houses on the periphery of the district are intentionally excluded, but the front portions of lots are included where there is a cohesive visual corridor. The district is discontinuous in order to include a segment of a historic raceway (on the west side of Oil Mill Road) that is integral to the district but is separated from it by Interstate 95; how much of the raceway is extant under the highway has not been confirmed. Further north is the National Register-eligible Wolf Pit Hills Historic Archaeological District, which in general has archaeological sensitivity for an earlier time period and different economic activities (Sportman et. al 2017: 62). The Oil Mill Historic District is focused on a small area directly related to the nineteenth through early-twentieth-century community associated with the oil mill. Four historic properties on the north side of the Boston Post Road are included; beyond them, properties postdate the district's period of significance and have no known connection with the mill community.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Marguerite Carnell, Senior Architectural Historian, Mary G. Harper, Director of Archaeological Research, & Sarah P. Sportman, Senior Archaeologist, Public Archaeology Survey Team, Inc.; Robert Nye, Municipal Historian & Vivian A. Brooks, Assistant Municipal Historian, Town of Waterford. Edited by Jenny Fields Scofield, National Register Coordinator.

organization: Public Archaeology Survey Team, Inc.

Oil Mill Historic District  
Name of Property

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street & number: 569 Middle Turnpike  
city or town: Storrs state: CT zip code: 06268  
e-mail: mcarnell@ahs-inc.biz  
telephone: 860-429-2142  
date: April 6, 2021

---

### **Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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### **Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### **Photo Log**

Name of Property: Oil Mill Historic District  
City or Vicinity: Waterford  
County: New London  
State: Connecticut  
Photographers: Marguerite Carnell & Ross Harper  
Date Photographed: July 2018, unless otherwise noted.

Number of Photographs: 27

Location of Original Digital Files: Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photograph 1 of 27.

Corner of Gurley Road and Oil Mill Road, camera facing south.

Photograph 2 of 27.

View of 15, 13, 5, 6, and 2 Oil Mill Road and the Niantic River, camera facing southeast.

Photograph 3 of 27.

Isaac Dart House at 557 Boston Post Road, camera facing northeast.

Photograph 4 of 27.

Lyman Cavarly-Jonathan Comstock-John W. Keeney House at 563 Boston Post Road (now Blue Anchor Motel), camera facing northeast.

Photograph 5 of 27.

Stone wall at 21 Gurley Road, camera facing northeast.

Photograph 6 of 27.

Almshouse remains at 21 Gurley Road, camera facing east (April 2015).

Photograph 7 of 27.

Springhouse at 21 Gurley Road, camera facing south (April 2015).

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Photograph 8 of 27.

Remnant of King's Highway at 21 Gurley Road, camera facing east (April 2015).

Photograph 9 of 27.

Nathan Daniels House at 44 Gurley Road, camera facing southwest.

Photograph 10 of 27.

James & John Manwaring House at 46 Gurley Road, camera facing southeast.

Photograph 11 of 27.

William Moore 4th House at 51 Gurley Road, camera facing northeast.

Photograph 12 of 27.

Philip Cavarly House at 54 Gurley Road, camera facing southeast.

Photograph 13 of 27.

Wheel pit at 59 Gurley Road, camera facing north (April 2015).

Photograph 14 of 27.

Foundation at 59 Gurley Road, camera facing north (April 2015).

Photograph 15 of 27.

Cavarly-Comstock-Chapman Store (now a residence) at 2 Oil Mill Road on the Niantic River, camera facing southwest.

Photograph 16 of 27.

Horace Beckwith-Frank Chapman House at 5 Oil Mill Road, camera facing northeast.

Photograph 17 of 27.

Isaac Comstock House at 9 Oil Mill Road, camera facing southeast.

Photograph 18 of 27.

Winthrop Beebe House at 15 Oil Mill Road and George Brown House at 13 Oil Mill Road, camera facing southeast.

Photograph 19 of 27.

Thomas Ames House at 25 Oil Mill Road, camera facing east.

Photograph 20 of 27.

House and cottage at 27 Oil Mill Road, camera facing northeast.

Photograph 21 of 27.

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Daniel W. Stanton and Ellen Comstock Stanton House at 31 Oil Mill Road, camera facing east.

Photograph 22 of 27.  
Sumac/Oil Mill Site, 34 Oil Mill Road, camera facing south.

Photograph 23 of 27.  
Houses at 37 and 39 Oil Mill Road, camera facing northeast.

Photograph 24 of 27.  
Remnant of dam at 54 Oil Mill Road, camera facing northwest (April 2015).

Photograph 25 of 27.  
Southwest corner of dam at 54 Oil Mill Road, camera facing north (April 2015).

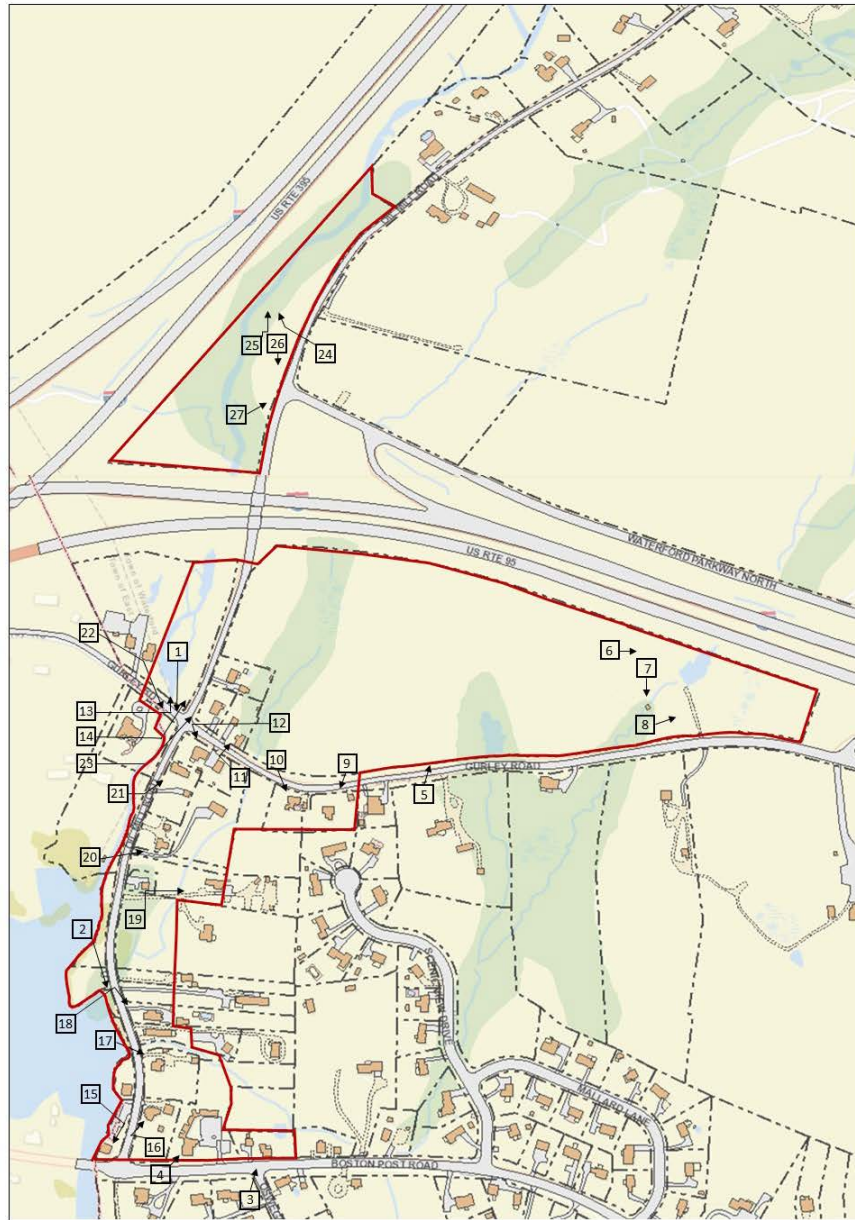
Photograph 26 of 27.  
Mill headrace at 54 Oil Mill Road, camera facing south (April 2015).

Photograph 27 of 27.  
Remnant of raceway retaining wall at 54 Oil Mill Road, camera facing northeast (April 2015).



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<p><b>Oil Mill Historic District Photo Key</b></p>		<p><b>Legend</b></p> <p><span style="border: 1px solid red; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px; vertical-align: middle;"></span> District Boundaries</p> <p><span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; vertical-align: middle;">5</span> ← Photo Number &amp; Location</p>
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**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. 460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



Corner of Gurley Road and Oil Mill Road, camera facing south.  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



Photograph 2 of 27

Houses at 15, 13, 5, 6, and 2 Oil Mill Road and the Niantic River, camera facing southeast.

Oil Mill Historic District

New London County, Connecticut



Isaac Dart House at 557 Boston Post Road, camera facing northeast.  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



Lyman Cavarly-Jonathan Comstock-John W. Keeney House at 563  
Boston Post Road (now Blue Anchor Motel), camera facing northeast.  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



Stone wall at 21 Gurley Road, camera facing northeast.  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



Almshouse remains at 21 Gurley Road, camera facing east (April 2015).  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



Springhouse at 21 Gurley Road, camera facing south (April 2015).  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut





Photograph 8 of 27

Remnant of King's Highway at 21 Gurley Road, camera facing east (April 2015).  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



Nathan Daniels House at 44 Gurley Road, camera facing southwest.  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



James & John Manwaring House at 46 Gurley Road, camera facing southeast.

Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



William Moore 4th House at 51 Gurley Road,  
camera facing northeast.  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



Philip Cavarly House at 54 Gurley Road, camera facing southeast.  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



Wheel pit at 59 Gurley Road, camera facing north (April 2015).  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



Foundation at 59 Gurley Road, camera facing north (April 2015).  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



Cavarly-Comstock-Chapman Store (now a residence)  
at 2 Oil Mill Road on the Niantic River, camera facing southwest.  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut





Horace Beckwith-Frank Chapman House at 5 Oil Mill Road, camera facing northeast. Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



Isaac Comstock House at 9 Oil Mill Road, camera facing southeast.  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



Winthrop Beebe House at 15 Oil Mill Road and George Brown House  
at 13 Oil Mill Road, camera facing southeast.  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



Thomas Ames House at 25 Oil Mill Road, camera facing east.  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



House and cottage at 27 Oil Mill Road, camera facing northeast.  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



Daniel W. Stanton and Ellen Comstock Stanton House  
at 31 Oil Mill Road, camera facing northeast.  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



Sumac/Oil Mill Site at 34 Oil Mill Road, camera facing southeast.  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



Houses at 37 and 39 Oil Mill Road, camera facing northeast.  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut





Remnant of dam at 54 Oil Mill Road, camera facing northwest (April 2015).  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



Southwest corner of dam at 54 Oil Mill Road, camera facing north (April 2015).  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



Mill headrace at 54 Oil Mill Road, camera facing south (April 2015).  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut



Remnant of raceway retaining wall at 54 Oil Mill Road,  
camera facing northeast (April 2015).  
Oil Mill Historic District  
New London County, Connecticut