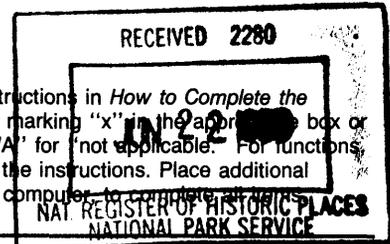


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name \_\_\_\_\_

other names/site number Plymouth Center Historic District

2. Location

street & number See Item #2.  not for publication

city or town Plymouth  vicinity

state Connecticut code CT county Litchfield code 005 zip code 06782

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

John W. Shannahan June 14, 1999  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

John W. Shannahan, Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

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

Edson A. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

7-22-99

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

- Ownership options: private (checked), public-local, public-State, public-Federal

- Category options: building(s), district (checked), site, structure, object

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

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

- Historic Functions: DOMESTIC/single/multiple dwelling/secondary structure, LANDSCAPE/plaza, RELIGION/religious facility and residence, COMMERCE/store, INDUSTRY/manufacturing facility

- Current Functions: DOMESTIC/single/multiple dwelling/secondary structure, LANDSCAPE/plaza, RELIGION/religious facility and residence, COMMERCE/store/manufacturing facility, INDUSTRY/meeting hall/residence

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

- Architectural Classification: COLONIAL/Postmedieval English, EARLY REPUBLIC/Federal, MID-19TH CENTURY/Greek Revival/villa, LATE VICTORIAN/Italianate, 20TH-CENTURY REVIVALS/Colonial Revival

- Materials: foundation stone/brick, walls weatherboard, brick, roof asphalt shingle, other

Narrative Description

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

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**2. Location**

Carter Road: 1 and Map 34/Block 59/Lot 21 (West Cemetery).

Hillside Avenue: 2, 8, 16.

Ives Crossing: 2.

Main Street: 655, 661, 663, 664, 669, 670, 674, 675, 678, 679, 681, 683, 684, 688, 691,  
692, 693, 694, 696, 699, 703, 705, 707, 711, 715, 716, 717, 720, 721, 722,  
724, 725, 726, 728, 731, 732, 733, 738, 739, 740, 742, 743, 747, 750, 751,  
756, 758 (ROW only), 762, 768, 772, 775, 778, 779, Map 34/Block 59/Lot 1,  
782, 785, 787, 788, 792.

Maple Street: 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 12, 18, 19, 25, 27, 31.

North Street: 2, 4, 8, 14, 24, 31, 32, 33, 37, 43, 49, 63.

Park Street: Plymouth Green, Plymouth Burying Ground, 2, 4, 6.

South Street: 2, 4, 5, 8, 10.

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Plymouth Center Historic District, Plymouth, Litchfield County, Connecticut

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The Plymouth Center Historic District, a crossroads village nestled in the rolling hills of the Town of Plymouth, is situated on the western edge of town about a half mile from the Naugatuck River. Extending for about three-quarters of a mile along Main Street (Route 6), the district rises steeply from the Thomaston border on the west, continues more gradually uphill through the major crossroads at North and South streets, and ends with the inclusion of Maple Street on the east. Other roads in the district include part of North and South streets and short sections of Hillside Avenue, Ives Crossing, and Carter Street.

The district contains 163 resources (buildings, sites, and objects), of which 122 (75 percent) contribute to its historical and/or architectural significance. The oldest contributing resource is the Plymouth Green, a historic site reserved for a commons (public land) in 1746. Also known as Plymouth Park, it is located in the center of the village, northwest of the crossroads. Other contributing historic sites in the district are Plymouth's first Burying Ground west of the Green and the West Cemetery on Carter Street. Clustered around the Green are historic institutional buildings, two churches, two parsonages, a former school, and an early town hall, as well as a library and several historic commercial buildings. The majority of the contributing resources are historic houses and their associated barns and outbuildings. Most of the 73 historic houses are generally well preserved and contribute to the historic character of the district; only a few are considered non-contributing because of extensive alterations. The rest of 41 non-contributing resources were built after 1940. They include six residences and outbuildings, such as garages and sheds.

When it was assembled from several parcels about 1746, the area of the Green encompassed about four acres and included the Burying Ground. Although once described as an alder swamp, it was the site of the first and second Congregational meetinghouses and an Episcopal church built in 1798 at the northeast corner, a location now marked by a stone plaque on a boulder. The present configuration and size of the Green were established in the late eighteenth century by a lane along the north and west, now Park Street, which set off less than two acres. By the mid 1800s, this area was landscaped with rows of sycamores and elms and diagonally bisected with pathways. Today the Green is an open grassed area, sparsely planted with mainly deciduous trees of moderate size (Photograph #1; Inventory #144). The Civil War Monument, a simple granite obelisk set on a high granite base and commemorating the "War of 1861," is located off-center and flanked by a flagpole (Inventory #145). A single paved crosswalk runs northwest from the corner of North and Main streets,

The Plymouth Congregational Church and Parish Hall face the Green from the west (Inventory #s 153, 152; Photograph #2). Constructed in 1838, the Greek Revival church was designed in Ionic tetrastyle with a pediment supported by four columns. A two-stage square belltower enhanced by engaged Doric columns is capped by a shaped parapet. The facade clock in the tympanum of the pediment, donated by clockmaker Eli Terry, retains some of its original wooden mechanism. Three identical doorways with four-light transoms, framed with broad surrounds with corner blocks, are located beneath the porch. Side elevations feature two rows of 12-over-12 windows, which have replacement sash with removable muntins and shutters. The c. 1840 Stoughton Building to the north, with its matching Greek Revival-style facade doorways and octagonal belfry, complements the church. Now the Congregational parish hall, it was moved to this location from the east side of North Street. The belltower, gable fanlight, and south wing are later additions.

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To the north is the Reverend Andrew Storrs House, which was built in 1766 by the second Congregational minister (Inventory #148; Photograph #3). One of 11 eighteenth-century residences remaining in the district, this five-bay Colonial with a double overhang once had a center chimney. A later narrow two-story ell is attached to the east end elevation and there is a large late nineteenth-century barn at the rear (Inventory #149). Trees planted by the Reverend Storrs include a sycamore that was still standing in 1998. To the east is a small vernacular residence, the Congregational parsonage since about 1865, which was attached to the Storrs House when it was the Hart Female Seminary in the mid-nineteenth century (Inventory #146).

The original Plymouth Burying Ground is located on a lower terrace west of the Green, which borders the Storrs property and the church buildings (Inventory #150; Photograph #4). Bordered by stone walls and a chain-link fence on the east, the cemetery contains about 300 graves, generally aligned in north-south rows. Plain rectangular stones mark most of the sites and a few of these have concave upper corners. The remainder have the more conventional round or tombstone arch. West Cemetery is located on a hill and overlooks the village center (Inventory #4; Photograph #5). Although it was laid out in 1776, many of the graves there date from the nineteenth century and include family plots for many village residents of that era. A stone wall along Carter Street contains several vaults.

St. Peter's Episcopal Church, a country chapel constructed of fieldstone in 1915 after the earlier church was destroyed by fire, faces the Green from the east side of North Street (Inventory #126; Photograph #6). Gothic Revival in style with a square flanking tower and pointed-arched windows, it presently serves as a Baptist church. Other buildings associated with the religious life of the community include St. Peter's Rectory at the corner of North and Main streets (Inventory #125). This c. 1800 Georgian Colonial house has twin interior chimneys, gable overhangs, and a flat-roofed portico.

Commercial development at the crossroads began in the late eighteenth century. The group at the northeast corner includes a brick building of 1782, presently serving as the Plymouth Post Office, the Grange Hall, and a former carriage shop at the rear (Inventory #s 46, 44, 45; Photograph #7). The latter two buildings date from the late nineteenth century and were moved there from other sites in the district. They are flanked by the Plymouth Library of 1932, a Colonial Revival building, also constructed of brick (Inventory # 46: Photograph #7).

Diagonally across the street is Beach and Blackmer's, a retail establishment since about 1780 (Inventory #48; Photograph #8). It is likely that the facade pediment and gable roof were nineteenth-century alterations to a colonial house form. Also shown in the photograph is a small c. 1850 Greek Revival brick building to the north, erected for a town clerk's office and later used as a firehouse (Inventory #49). The early twentieth-century brick building just beyond was once a store and is now used for light industrial purposes. Further north is the Curtiss Hotel, a late Colonial house remodeled in the Greek Revival style (Inventory #53).

Until recently, the southwest corner was occupied by historic residential properties. It now contains a gas station and convenience store. To the east are several houses, a modern fire station, and a small structure that may have been an early twentieth-century gas station (Inventory #43).

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Plymouth Center Historic District, Plymouth, Litchfield County, Connecticut

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Late eighteenth-century houses are scattered through the district. The most popular form was the the one-story Colonial Cape. One on Main Street which dates from 1793 was associated with Eli Terry. It displays small eave windows in the gables and has a transom over the door (Inventory #67; Photograph #9). The Blakeslee House on North Street is similar but the location of the roof eave right above the facade fenestration is typical of its earlier c. 1780 date (Inventory #142; Photograph #10). Next door is Leach-Stanton Barn, which was moved to this site about 1985 by the Plymouth Land Trust (Inventory #141).

The c. 1775 Joel Blakeslee House on Maple Street has been remodeled. The Georgian quoining on the wide gable-to-street main block and the wing are probably original features, but the door surround, with sidelights and fanlight, are later Federal-style elements, or possibly early twentieth-century enhancements (Inventory #107; Photograph #11). Its full gable pediment, an early manifestation of this feature, is also found on the end elevations of the nearby Byron Tuttle House on Main Street (Inventory #14; Photograph #12). Its colonial five-bay form is embellished with a central Federal doorway. A similar doorway is found on the gable-to-street Dean-Stoughton House at the western edge of the district (Inventory #101; Photograph #13). The facade features a fanlight in the pediment.

Two small workers' houses built on Maple Street in this period have simple unembellished gabled forms and rest on rubblestone foundations (Inventory #s 113, 114; Photograph #14). The dormer and the ell on the Miller House are later additions.

Fully a third of the historic houses in the district exhibit some features of the Greek Revival style. The familiar side-hall gable-to-street farmhouse with a kitchen wing is the plan of the Truman Wedge House on Maple Street and the Riley Ives House on South Street (Inventory #s 110, 158; Photograph #s 15, 16). Both have gabled pediments; the one on the Wedge House displays the multipaned rectangular window often associated with this style, while the Ives example has a flushboarded tympanum defined by broad rake boards. They have similar boldly executed Greek Revival doorways with entablatures, although the one on the Ives House was altered to accommodate a Colonial Revival porch. Other houses of this type include the Elias Barnes House on lower Main Street (Inventory #93).

The typical shallow roof pitch and gable-to-street orientation of the Greek Revival was utilized in many vernacular examples, most notably the Thomas Scott and Maria Johnson houses on Main Street (Inventory #s 68, 75; Photograph #17). The bold Greek Revival doorway of the Scott cottage dominates the facade. A later cottage nearby is embellished with a Victorian porch (Inventory #82; Photograph #18). The east wing has a recessed porch and a rectangular window in the gable. Several two-story vernacular Greek Revivals display some features of the succeeding Italianate style. For example, chamfered Tuscan porch posts are found on the Harriet Hunt and Ann Smith houses in the same neighborhood (Inventory #s 73, 76; Photograph #19). The Hunt House also has a round-arched window in the gable, a bracketed doorhood at the side entrance, and cornice returns to suggest a pediment. A Tuscan porch is the primary style feature of the Henry Beech House to the east (Inventory #96).

By mid-century Greek Revival detailing was used to embellish the villa form, which has a near-flat roof and overhanging eaves. One such example, the Henry Terry House on North Street, has an exceptionally broad entablature under the eaves, punctuated by four-pane attic windows, and a later Colonial Revival porch that shelters the three middle bays of

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the five-bay facade (Inventory #129; Photograph #20). A much more elaborate treatment of the villa form was used for the Augustus Shelton House on Main Street (Inventory #19; Photograph #21). There the main entablature and eave cornice are embellished with metopes and mutules, details also found in reduced scale over the Doric-order entrance, which features columns in antis, flanked by broad pilasters. The door itself has sidelights and a transom. Pilasters also frame the recessed second-floor balcony.

There are several examples of the Carpenter Gothic style, which appeared in the district about 1860. A decorative gable brace or truss, often a key style element, is displayed in the gables of the Horace Fenn House situated well above the east side of North Street (Inventory #134; Photograph #22). The truss design is repeated on the porch that connects the main block to the cross-gable wing. Among the other style features are exposed decorative rafter ends and outriggers, ridge finials, and round-arched gable windows, the latter derived from the Italianate style.

The more complex asymmetrical massing of the George Langdon House on Main Street utilizes a hipped and gabled roof (Inventory #35; Photograph #23). While decorative bargeboards, another Carpenter Gothic style element, were used in its eclectic design, the Italianate style predominates in the elaborate treatment of the fenestration, which includes round- and segmental-arched pediments and molded shouldered surrounds. The round-arched and circular windows in the gable peaks are embellished with tracery. The two-story porch features arched open spandrels and clustered slim columns.

Among the few houses built in the district after the Civil War are simple farmhouses on North and South streets (Inventory # 138, 161; Photograph #s 24, 25). Both of these vernacular Italianates display peaked gable windows rather than the more typical round-arched type, a variation typical of the Naugatuck Valley. The same feature can be found on the c. 1880 house at 788 Main Street (Inventory #100). The Edward Parker House is a more elaborate version of this style (Inventory #55; Photograph #26). Remaining Italianate features include prominent window caps and chamfered Tuscan posts on the side porch. The property, which backs up on the Burying Ground, also has a large barn with a cupola at the rear (Inventory #56).

Several representative styles of the early twentieth century in the district include a Bungalow at the eastern end of Main Street (Inventory #98). Two of the three Colonial Revival-style houses are located on North Street. One is a Cape; the other has a gambrel form (Inventory #s 131, 133). The third, a Colonial Revival Four-Square, built at the entrance to Maple Street in 1906, has a typical Colonial Revival facade porch (Inventory #102; Photograph #27). Decorative tracery is found in the upper sash of first-floor windows and the paired sash in the facade dormer of the hipped roof.

In the following inventory list, all contributing and non-contributing resources in the district are listed alphanumerically by street and address numbers. Each is assigned an inventory number, which is used in the text and on the district map. Excluded from the inventory are modern utility sheds, which are quite small and do not have permanent foundations. Vacant lots are identified but not assigned an inventory number. Historic names may refer to the first known owner or later occupants. Dates of construction were estimated in the field and cross-checked against tax assessor's records.

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## INVENTORY OF CONTRIBUTING AND NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

Inv. #	Address	Historic Name/Style/Type/Date	C/NC	Photo #
<b>CARTER ROAD</b>				
1.	1	HENRY D. ROBBINS HOUSE, 19th-century vernacular, c. 1850	C	
2.	1	garage, c. 1981	NC	
3.	1	shed, c. 1900	C	
4.	--	(34/59/21) WEST CEMETERY, c. 1776 - present	C	5
<b>HILLSIDE AVENUE</b>				
5.	2	19th-century vernacular, c. 1860	C	
6.	2	barn, c. 1900	C	
7.	8	Cape, c. 1985	NC	
8.	16	Federal, c. 1840	C	
9.	16	garage, c. 1930	C	
10.	16	shed, c. 1970	NC	
<b>IVES CROSSING</b>				
11.	2	C. ROBERTS HOUSE, Italianate, c. 1880	C	
12.	2	barn, c. 1930	C	
13.	2	garage, 1974	NC	
<b>MAIN STREET</b>				
14.	655	BYRON TUTTLE HOUSE, Federal, 1793	C	12
15.	655	shed, c. 1930	C	
16.	655	TUTTLE BARN, c. 1870	C	
17.	661	LUCIUS S. BRADLEY HOUSE, Cape, c. 1780	C	
18.	661	shed/garage, c. 1890	C	
19.	663	AUGUSTUS C. SHELTON HOUSE, Greek Revival, 1850	C	21
20.	663	garage, 1978	NC	

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## MAIN STREET

21.	664	WILLIAM F. BISHOP HOUSE, Colonial/Federal, c. 1790	C	
22.	669	EDWIN TALMADGE HOUSE, Italianate, c. 1865	C	
23.	669	garage, c. 1930	C	
24.	670	MRS. A. H. TALMADGE HOUSE, Colonial, c. 1782	C	
25.	670	garage, 1952	NC	
26.	674	TALMADGE HOUSE, 19th-century vernacular, c. 1860	C	
27.	675	TRUMAN D. IVES HOUSE, vernacular, 1782-1820	C	
28.	675	garage, 1937	C	
29.	678	modern commercial, c. 1950	NC	
30.	679	ORVILLE TERRY HOUSE, vernacular (altered), 1832	NC	
31.	681	modern, c. 1920	C	
32.	683	20th-century vernacular, 1904	C	
33.	683	garage/barn, c. 1900	C	
34.	684	MRS. P. E. LANGDON HOUSE, 19th-century vernacular, c. 1880	C	
35.	688	GEORGE LANGDON HOUSE, Carpenter Gothic, c. 1865	C	23
36.	688	barn/garage, c. 1880	C	
37.	688	shed, c. 1997	NC	
38.	691	Plymouth Firehouse, 1963	NC	
39.	691	garage, 1990	NC	
40.	692	PLYMOUTH LIBRARY, Colonial Revival, 1932 (Architect: Edward Erwin)	C	7
41.	693	late 19th-century duplex (altered), c. 1890	NC	
42.	693	garage, c. 1950	NC	
43.	693	vernacular, c. 1900	C	
44.	694	PLYMOUTH GRANGE HALL (former Ives Toy Factory, c. 1870), Federal Revival, c. 1921 (moved)	C	7

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**MAIN STREET**

45.	696	BLAKESLEE CARRIAGE SHOP, c. 1870 (moved)	C	
46.	696	PLYMOUTH POST OFFICE, 1782, renovated 1960	C	7
47.	699	gas station/convenience store, 1965	NC	
48.	703	BEACH & BLACKMERS STORE, Colonial, c. 1780	C	8
49.	705	PLYMOUTH TOWN HALL/FIREHOUSE, c. 1855	C	8
50.	707	Italianate commercial, 1903	C	8
51.	707	barn, c. 1880	C	
52.	707	garage, 1993	NC	
53.	711	CURTISS HOTEL, Greek Revival, c. 1766/c. 1850	C	8
54.	715	Four-Square, c. 1910	C	
55.	716	EDWARD PARKER HOUSE, Italianate cross-gable, c. 1870	C	26
56.	716	barn, c. 1870	C	
57.	717	CAROLINE P. ROOT HOUSE, Greek Revival cottage (former ell #711), c. 1860	C	
58.	720	20th-century vernacular, c. 1910	C	
59.	720	garage, 1918	C	
60.	721	SILAS HOADLEY HOUSE, Cape, c. 1790	C	
61.	722	19th-century vernacular, c. 1860	C	
62.	722	garage/barn, c. 1920	C	
63.	724	Italianate, c. 1880	C	
64.	725	vernacular (altered), c. 1880	NC	
65.	726	HANNAH HALL HOUSE, 19th-century cottage, c. 1870	C	
66.	728	AARON P. FENN HOUSE, Italianate (cube-form), c. 1860	C	
67.	731	ELI TERRY HOUSE, Cape, 1793	C	9
68.	732	THOMAS SCOTT HOUSE, Greek Revival cottage, c. 1840	C	17
69.	732	barn, c. 1850	C	

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**MAIN STREET**

70.	732	shed, 1970	NC	
71.	733	ENOS BLAKESLEE HOUSE, Greek Revival, c. 1870	C	
72.	733	garage, c. 1981	NC	
73.	738	HARRIET HUNT HOUSE, Italianate, c. 1870	C	19
74.	739	19th-century vernacular, c. 1890	C	
75.	740	MARIA JOHNSON HOUSE, Greek Revival cottage, c. 1840	C	
76.	742	ANN SMITH HOUSE, Greek Revival, c. 1850	C	
77.	743	Greek Revival, c. 1875	C	
78.	743	garage, c. 1981	NC	
79.	743	shed, 1975	NC	
80.	747	Italianate, c. 1880	C	
81.	747	barn, c. 1880	C	
82.	750	Greek Revival/Italianate cottage, c. 1850	C	
83.	750	barn/garage, c. 1900	C	18
84.	751	JOHN W. SULLIVAN HOUSE, Federal, c. 1825	C	
85.	756	PLATT S. SMITH HOUSE, 19th-century (altered), c. 1840	NC	
86.	756	garage, c. 1965	NC	
	--	(34/42/5) vacant lot		
87.	762	EBER THOMPSON HOUSE, 19th-century vernacular, c. 1840	C	
88.	762	shed, c. 1960	NC	
89.	762	shed, c. 1960	NC	
90.	768	19th-century vernacular, c. 1890	C	
91.	768	shed, 1979	NC	
92.	772	Ranch, 1949	NC	
93.	775	ELIAS H. BARNES HOUSE, Greek Revival, c. 1840	C	

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**MAIN STREET**

94.	778	H. CHASE, 19th-century vernacular, c. 1880 (altered)	NC	
95.	779	DAVID B. WHITE HOUSE, 19th-century vernacular, c. 1880	C	
	---	(34/59/1) vacant lot		
96.	782	HENRY BEECH HOUSE, 19th-century vernacular, c. 1850	C	
97.	785	H. WELTON HOUSE, Cape, c. 1820	C	
98.	787	Bungalow, c. 1930	C	
99.	787	garage, , c. 1950	NC	
100.	788	19th-century vernacular, c. 1880	C	
101.	792	DEAN-STOUGHTON HOUSE, Federal, c. 1830	C	13

**MAPLE STREET**

102.	1	Four-Square, 1906	C	27
103.	2	G. LANGDON HOUSE, 19th-century vernacular, c. 1800	C	
104.	4	modern split-level, 1973	NC	
105.	4	garage, 1973	NC	
106.	8	BLAKESLEE CARRIAGE SHOP, industrial (brick), c. 1840	C	
107.	9	JOEL BLAKESLEE HOUSE, Colonial/Federal, c. 1775. c. 1790	C	11
108.	12	Ranch, 1965	NC	
109.	12	garage, 1950	NC	
110.	--	garage, c. 1960	NC	
111.	--	shed, 1979	NC	
112.	18	TRUMAN C. WEDGE HOUSE, Greek Revival, c. 1840	C	16
113.	18	carport, 1989	NC	
114.	19	JAMES VILE HOUSE, vernacular cottage, c. 1820	C	14
115.	25	MRS. MILLER HOUSE, vernacular cottage, c. 1820	C	14
116.	25	shed, 1960	NC	

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**MAPLE STREET**

117.	27	SOLOMON PALMER HOUSE, Greek Revival, c. 1840	C	
118.	27	shed, 1979	NC	
119.	31	P. CALDWELL HOUSE, Italianate, c. 1870	C	
120.	31	large barn, c. 1880	C	
121.	31	garage, c. 1950	NC	
122.	31	shed or small barn, c. 1950	NC	
123.	31	shed or small barn, c. 1950	NC	
124.	31	shed or small barn, c. 1870	C	

**NORTH STREET**

125.	2	ST. PETER'S RECTORY, Colonial/Greek Revival, c. 1800	C	
126.	4	ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH (now Baptist Church), 1915	C	6
127.	8	WARREN-PIERPONT HOUSE, Greek Revival, c. 1835	C	
128.	8	barn/garage, c. 1900	C	
129.	14	HENRY K. TERRY HOUSE, Greek Revival, c. 1850	C	20
130.	14	barn/garage, c. 1900	C	
131.	24	Colonial Revival, 1927	C	
132.	24	garage, 1927	C	
133.	31	Cape, 1937	C	
134.	32	HORACE FENN HOUSE, Carpenter Gothic, 1868	C	22
135.	32	garage/barn, c. 1880	C	
136.	32	small barn, c. 1880	C	
	33	(034/42/31A), vacant lot		
137.	37	Ranch, 1954	NC	
138.	43	LANGDON HOUSE, Italianate, c. 1870	C	24
139.	43	barn, c. 1900	C	

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Plymouth Center Historic District, Plymouth, Litchfield County, Connecticut

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**NORTH STREET**

140.	43	shed, c. 1920	C	
141.	49	LEACH-STANTON BARN, 1850 (moved to site c. 1985)	C	
142.	63	BLAKESLEE HOUSE, Cape, c. 1780	C	10
143.	63	small barn, c. 1850	C	

**PARK STREET**

144.	--	PLYMOUTH CENTER GREEN, 1746	C	1
145.	--	CIVIL WAR MONUMENT, n. d.	C	1
146.	2	Congregational Parsonage, 19th-century vernacular, 1853	C	
147.	2	barn/garage, c. 1870	C	
148.	4	REVEREND ANDREW STORRS HOUSE, Colonial, c. 1765	C	3
149.	4	barn, c. 1880	C	
150.	--	OLD BURYING GROUND, c. 1740 - c. 1850	C	4
151.	--	pumphouse, c. 1900	C	
152.	6	STOUGHTON BUILDING (Congregational Parish Hall), Greek Revival, c. 1840 (moved c. 1890)	C	1, 2
153.	6	PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, Greek Revival, 1838	C	1, 2

**SOUTH STREET**

154.	2	WILLIAM A. SMITH HOUSE, Cape, c. 1800	C	
155.	2	garage, c. 1920	C	
156.	4	ADALINE C. WARNER HOUSE, Cape, 1764	C	
157.	4	garage, c. 1930	C	
158.	5	RILEY IVES HOUSE, Greek Revival, c. 1840	C	15
159.	5	barn, c. 1900	C	
160.	5	shed, c. 1900	C	
161.	8	A. MARKHAM HOUSE, Italianate, c. 1870	C	25
162.	8	garage, c. 1930	C	
163.	10	DR. SAMUEL T. SALISBURY HOUSE, Federal, c. 1820	C	25

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

SOCIAL HISTORY

INDUSTRY

**Period of Significance**

1746 - c. 1940

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

unknown

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository:

Plymouth Historical Society

Plymouth Center Historic District  
Name of Property

Litchfield, CT  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 130

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

3	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By** Reviewed by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

name/title Jan Cunningham, National Register Consultant

organization Cunningham Preservation Associates date 3/7/99

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

city or town Middletown state CT zip code 06457

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

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

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

**Photographs**

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

**Additional items**

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

**Property Owner**

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

name

street & number telephone

city or town state zip code

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

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

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Plymouth Center Historic District, Plymouth, Litchfield County, Connecticut

Section number 8 Page 1**Statement of Significance**

Primarily significant as a representative example of community development in Connecticut's Western Uplands, the Plymouth Center Historic District illustrates the complex religious and political dynamics of regional eighteenth-century town formation and fully demonstrates the evolution of a fairly typical industrial village. Like many towns in the Naugatuck Valley, Plymouth grew rapidly in the early industrial period, which is reflected in the architectural, social, and economic development of the district. The cohesive village center that emerged remained the town's institutional center until the late nineteenth century. As a result, the Colonial, Federal, Greek Revival, Carpenter Gothic, and Italianate are well represented in the district, along with numerous vernacular interpretations of these styles and a few examples of early twentieth-century architecture.

**Historical Background and Significance**

Plymouth was one of the many daughter towns that evolved from the original settlement at Mattatuck on the Naugatuck River, now known as Waterbury. Settlement upriver began in the 1730s in the area that encompasses present-day Plymouth, Watertown, and Thomaston. Although Plymouth followed the customary path of eighteenth-century town development, separating from Waterbury in religious and political stages, as was so often the case in western hilltowns, the process was less structured and often fraught with delay and dissension. The establishment of a stable Congregational church society, or parish, was impeded by a number of factors. The river itself, not bridged until 1747, was a barrier to concerted development, and parish consensus by the "Up-River Inhabitants" was difficult to achieve, particularly during the 1740s, a period of colony-wide religious upheaval.

By 1739, even though the area was still sparsely settled and the population by colony standards was too small to support even one church society, petitions to the General Assembly had resulted in the formation of two parishes: Westbury (now Watertown) and Northbury, an area which included Plymouth and Thomaston. It was not an auspicious time to establish a new parish. The Great Awakening, a evangelical religious revival of major proportions, threatened to destabilize the Connecticut colony. It challenged the authority of the state as well as the fundamental theology of old-style Congregationalism. Adherents of this new style religion, known as Separatists or New Lights, broke away to found new Congregational churches or other Protestant sects. Many in the western part of the state turned to the Church of England, the religion rejected by their Puritan forebears. The Reverend Todd, ordained in 1739 as the first minister in Northbury, favored New Light Congregationalism; in the first year of his ministry, Todd's preaching apparently alienated the majority of the members, who left the church to form an Anglican church society in Plymouth Hollow, present-day Thomaston.

The location of a Congregational meetinghouse was always a cause for some dissension but in Northbury it was a major issue for seven years. In fact, the dispute over which side of the river would have the meetinghouse threatened to destroy a parish already weakened by secession. Even though the early meetings of the parish were held on the west side and a "church house" erected there, the eastern contingent finally prevailed. In 1746, apparently because Waterbury agreed to buy the land, plans were made to build the official meetinghouse at the southeast corner of the present Green. The building was probably framed out and at least closed in against the weather the following year.

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Plymouth Center Historic District, Plymouth, Litchfield County, Connecticut

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Finishing the meetinghouse, however, proved to be a financial burden for this small parish; it took another 21 years to complete the building.

With the settlement of the Reverend Andrew Storrs in 1765, the Northbury Parish stabilized and began to flourish. He built his own house on the Green the following year (Inventory #148). During his 20-year pastorate, Northbury and Westbury were incorporated as the Town of Watertown in 1780 and became part of Litchfield County. The meetinghouse was finished and plans were underway to build a new one when Todd died in 1785. Predictably, the location of that meetinghouse was still an issue. Many parishoners opted for a site on Town Hill to the east of the district, but once again it was built on the Green, soon after the next minister was installed. Two years later, in 1795, Plymouth became a separate autonomous town. The bounds of the new community then included Thomaston.

In 1798 St. Peter's Episcopal Church was erected on the opposite corner of the Green, a potent symbol of the renewed status of this former Anglican denomination. During the Revolution, Anglicans throughout the region had been harassed for their presumed support for England; Anglican churches were closed for the duration and their English ministers driven out.<sup>1</sup> After the war, having shed their ties to England and led by an American bishop, Anglicans were members of the newly established Episcopal Church, which became a powerful presence in western Connecticut. In Plymouth, Episcopalians shared the governance of the town with the Congregationalists for at least the next 100 years.

Unlike many Connecticut towns which lost population in the nineteenth century, Plymouth continued to grow, largely due to industrial development. Although there was a slight dip in 1820, the population nearly quadrupled after 1800, reaching a high of 4140 in 1870. Mills, shops, and factories were established all over town, but it was the manufacture of clocks, toys, and carriages by district residents that supported Plymouth's early industrial economy.

Native sons and newcomers pioneered in the clock industry. Chief among them was Eli Terry, who came to town about 1793 and set up a factory on the Niagara Brook, a small stream which ran down to the Naugatuck along the southern border of the district. He may have built his home nearby on Main Street (Inventory #67). Terry's first wood-gearred clocks were mostly hand-crafted and peddled locally. When he began to experiment with mass production methods, Terry set up a new shop on a stream to the south, which had a better waterpower supply. Having accepted a three-year contract to provide Waterbury wholesalers with mechanisms for 4000 "tall clocks" (the type later known as grandfather clocks), Terry hired Silas Hoadley, a local resident (Inventory #60), and Seth Thomas. Both men were joiners, but Thomas also had clockmaking experience in Wolcott. With their help, Terry met the terms of the contract by milling interchangeable wooden parts to facilitate assembly, a process comparable to the methods used by his contemporary, Eli Whitney of Hamden, who attempted the first mass production of guns. Bolstered by their initial success, all three principals of the firm eventually became independent clockmakers, but it was the Terry family that had the greatest influence on the course of Plymouth's industrial development.

After selling out to Hoadley and Thomas, Eli Terry set up shop on the Naugatuck at Terry's Bridge, where he produced clocks of his own patented designs, and took his sons, Eli, Jr., and Henry, into the business when they came of age. Henry, who lived in the district on North Street in a large Greek Revival house (Inventory #129), continued working at Terry's Bridge. In 1824 Eli, Jr., had his own factory on the Pequabuck River

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Plymouth Center Historic District, Plymouth, Litchfield County, Connecticut

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about two miles east of the district, where the Terry family established the industrial village of Terryville. Eli was also an early investor in the developing lock industry there, which in 1854 was consolidated as the Eagle Lock Company under the presidency of his son James Terry and remained in business well into the twentieth century. Two other sons were entrepreneurs in Terryville: Silas B., who had his own clock factory in 1831, and Andrew, who started a malleable iron foundry which later became O. Z. Gedney, manufacturers of fittings for electrical conduit in the twentieth-century.

Seth Thomas, who left Hoadley & Thomas in 1814, built his clock factory across the river in Plymouth Hollow, later named Thomaston in his honor. Thomas, whose company became the mainstay of that community, also had other industrial interests there and was elected to the General Assembly in 1865. Hoadley remained in business in Plymouth, in the village then known as Hoadleyville, and was active in town affairs. A vestryman at St. Peter's, Hoadley served as town clerk in 1830, represented the town in the state legislature in 1832, 1837, and 1853, and, according to one source, was elected as a state senator in 1844.<sup>2</sup>

The internationally famous Ives Toy Company also began in Plymouth. During the Civil War, Riley Ives, who lived on South Street (Inventory #158), and his son Edward Riley made uniform buttons in a small waterpowered shop north of the district. After the war they converted their button stamping machines to the production of parts for mechanical wind-up toys. Since both Riley and his wife Mary had worked in the clock industry (Mary as a decorator of clock cases), producing toys activated by clockwork springs was a logical progression for the Ives family. Toys were assembled and painted in several shops in the village, including one on Riley's property (no longer extant) and another later used as the Grange Hall (Inventory #44). Edward Ives set up his own factory on Maple Street (probably no longer extant).<sup>3</sup> By 1870 his father was still making tin whistles in town, but Edward Ives had moved his company to Bridgeport. Wind-ups remained a staple product of the new business, but more complex cast-iron toys and miniature trains powered by hot air, steam, or even electricity, were produced and exported to Europe and South America.

The carriagemaking industry, which endured the longest, produced some of the more stylish domestic architecture in Plymouth Center. Zalmon Coley is credited with starting the business in 1836, but he soon was superseded by two other more successful manufacturers. Shelton & Tuttle Company, manufacturer of buggies and other horse-drawn vehicles, was located on the north side of Main Street, directly across from Maple Street. Only one building survives from this complex; it now stands behind the post office on Main Street (Inventory #45). The evident success of this business, which was valued at \$20,000 in 1870 and had regional distribution warehouses in Chicago and Louisiana, is demonstrated by the exceptionally elaborate Greek Revival house built by the founder, Augustus C. Shelton, on upper Main Street (Inventory #19). After an apprenticeship as a wheelwright in New Haven, Shelton returned to Plymouth in 1837 to set up his factory, which flourished until his death in 1880. In later years, it was run by Byron Tuttle, who joined the company in 1847 and became a partner in 1855. He lived a few doors to the east of Shelton; his house and barn still stand (Inventory #s 14, 16). A justice of the peace and judge of probate in Plymouth for many years, Tuttle was elected first selectman in 1882 and served in that capacity until 1891.

The Blakeslee Carriage Shop on Maple street was started by blacksmith Ransom Blakeslee, whose family were incorporators of the town. He served as first selectman between 1822 and 1826. The extensive Blakeslee Carriageworks depicted on the 1874 map later was run

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by Ransom's son Joel Blakeslee, who lived in a fine Federal house across the street (Inventory #107). By 1870, when Joel had turned to toy manufacturing, Enos Blakeslee, probably his brother, ran the carriageworks (Inventory #71).

The industrial prosperity of the *ante bellum* period transformed the physical appearance of the district. The crossroads remained the focus of institutional and commercial development. A "modern" Greek Revival church replaced the meetinghouse on the Green in 1838, and across the street the first municipal government building was erected for a town clerk's office about 1855. The demand for goods and services attracted new trades and businesses; the streets of the district were lined with new houses and shops. William Dean had a meat market across the street from his house at the western edge of the district (Inventory #101), but there were at least two stores at the crossroads as early as the 1780s (Inventory #s 46, 48). At the turn of the century, the one on the southwest corner was owned by General David Smith (Inventory #48). In 1812 it housed the first post office in town, and by 1870, a dry goods store and apothecary shop. Apothecary Luther Porter and most of the people who worked there rented quarters upstairs. In the late nineteenth-century the store was purchased by out-of-towners and known as Beach and Blackmer's. Several other district stores or homes have served as post offices, including the current one since about 1950 (Inventory #46). Horace Fenn, a watch repairman by trade, once served as postmaster (Inventory #134), as did Edwin Talmadge, a well-to-do storekeeper. By 1870 his son Edwin S. carried on the family's dry goods business (Inventory #22). Among the other nineteenth-century storekeepers in the district were Orville Terry and Thomas Scott (Inventory #s 30, 68).

Main Street was the major route to Hartford; travellers were accommodated in two houses converted to taverns or hotels. The Episcopal Rectory was once known as the Red Tavern (Inventory #125) and later, A. B. Curtiss converted General Smith's c. 1765 house to a tavern and inn of the Greek Revival style (Inventory #53). After Curtiss died, his widow continued in business with the help of her daughter and an Irish servant. A temperance advocate, Mrs. Curtiss closed the bar and changed the name of the hotel to "Quiet House," which she ran as a boardinghouse for female teachers who taught at the district school on the Green (no longer extant).

Teachers and the principal of the Hart Female Seminary lived at that school, which was located in the Storrs House. It was founded in 1853 by the Reverend Isaac Warren, the Congregational minister, who built his own house across the street (Inventory #127). The seminary only survived a few years, but in 1857, the last year of operation, 71 students were enrolled. After the school closed, the new wing that Warren had added to the Storrs House for the school was detached as a separate residence and has served as the Congregational parsonage since about 1865 (Inventory #146).

All levels of society prospered in this economic boom. From the 40 heads of household who were identified in the federal census of 1870 as residents of Plymouth Center, it is apparent that there was a large, relatively affluent middle-class in the district.<sup>4</sup> Industrialists, professional men, tradesmen, farmers, and even a few skilled workers owned their own homes and several could afford live-in domestics, all young Irish women. Some self-employed tradesmen, such as blacksmith Solomon Palmer, owned his own home, as did machinist Edwin Parker (Inventory #s 117, 55). Harnessmaker William Smith had a home on South Street and also took in boarders, a common nineteenth-century practice (Inventory #154). In fact, there were boarders in almost a third of the households in the district. Next door to Smith, a young tinshop worker boarded at Adaline Warner's, where her aged parents also lived (Inventory #156). Truman Ives, a successful farmer,

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also had a multi-generational household and boarded the family of Henry Mason, an engineer (Inventory #27). A number of district homeowners and their boarders worked in factories across the river in Plymouth Hollow. Such was the case with the household of Henry Robbins, a night watchman, which included the family of William Dell, a brass factory worker, and three young men who worked in various occupations (Inventory #1). Boarding at Ann Smith's house were her son Henry and Porter Beach; both men worked in a clock shop (Inventory #76).

Carriage workers were housed in various ways. English-born James Vile rented 19 Maple Street. It was one of two neighboring cottages there that may have been built to house farm laborers. Edward Root, who lived with his mother who owned the house (Inventory #57), was a carriage painter, as was Eber Thompson, who at age 59, owned his own home on Main Street, as did Enos Blakeslee (Inventory #s 87, 71).

Although in this period most adult women listed their occupation as "keeping house," a few were employed in the needle trades. Among them were two milliners who boarded with Thompson and may have had a shop in the present post office (Inventory #46). Sophia Johnson, at age 14, was apprenticed as a "tailoress" to tailor Strong Kelsey, who lived in the former Storrs House on the edge of the Green (Inventory #148). Dressmaker Maria Johnson ran her business in her Greek Revival cottage on the north side of Main Street below the crossroads, one of several unmarried women who owned small homes in that neighborhood (Inventory #75).

Agriculture, the mainstay of the colonial economy, was still carried on in the district. Truman Ives, Elias Barnes, Elias Stoughton, and Platt Smith all farmed the land behind their Main Street properties (Inventory #s 27, 93, 101, 88). This nineteenth-century agricultural pattern is still represented today by the Leach-Stanton House on North Street and the Caldwell House on Maple Street, farms on the edge of the district that have numerous outbuildings (Inventory #s 142, 119).

George Langdon, the wealthiest man in town, also listed farming as his occupation. However, with a net worth of \$75,000, Langdon undoubtedly left the actual running of his farms to a manager. Having failed as an industrial entrepreneur in Colchester in the Panic of 1857, Langdon, a Yale graduate, returned to Plymouth, where he amassed a fortune and became a leading citizen. His real estate holdings in 1870 included extensive farming acreage and his stylish Carpenter Gothic/Italianate house just up the hill from the crossroads (Inventory #35). For most of his life Langdon was active in the Connecticut Sunday School Association and the Plymouth Congregational Church, where he served as deacon and Sunday School superintendent. Among his elected offices were school visitor (inspector), state representative in 1859, and first selectman from 1859 to 1865.

Augustus Hall Fenn was another native son who returned to Plymouth. Born here in 1844, Fenn had studied for the law with Amni Giddings in Plymouth Center. At age 18 he was commissioned a lieutenant and enlisted a company of 40 men to serve in the Civil War. After distinguished service, during which he lost an arm, Fenn was mustered out as a full colonel. Resuming the study of law, he was admitted to the bar in 1867 and took a law degree from Harvard College in 1868. Returning to Plymouth in 1870, Fenn lived in the former Joel Blakeslee House on Maple Street, and held several elected offices, including judge of probate and town clerk (Inventory #107). After he moved to Winsted, Fenn was appointed a judge of the Connecticut Superior Court in 1887 and later served on the Supreme Court of Errors. Fenn's five years as town clerk were briefly interrupted in 1874 by the one-year term of George Pierpont. Pierpont, who lived in the former Warren

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parsonage on North Street, became a county commissioner in 1877 and also served for a time as a federal tax assessor (Inventory #127).

By the late nineteenth century, with local industry consolidated in Plymouth Hollow and Terryville, Plymouth Center gradually declined in importance. Although town leaders were still drawn from the district, there were few new buildings constructed there. Two key events contributed to the decline, most notably the loss of Plymouth Hollow, which was set off as the Town of Thomaston in 1875. This severe blow to Plymouth's tax base, which reduced the town's population by half, was followed by the ascendancy of Terryville as the town's institutional center. The town hall was established there in the Eagle Lock Company office building, where it remained until the present building was erected in 1972. This bustling industrial community, which already supported its own Congregational and Episcopal churches, continued to grow and soon had a number of ethnic churches founded by a large immigrant labor force.

**Architectural Significance**

The Plymouth Center Historic District is a generally cohesive collection of historic buildings and sites that still reflects patterns of development laid down in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Despite the intrusion of modern commercial buildings, particularly the gas station at the crossroads, village history, expressed mainly in the vernacular architectural language of the nineteenth century, clearly conveys a distinct sense of time and place. Plymouth Green and its associated buildings, the historic focus of institutional and commercial life, remain as the centerpiece of the district. Building on the eighteenth-century armature laid down at settlement, the center radiated out from the crossroads. Contiguous houselots carved out along village streets produced a linear residential growth pattern that has been maintained to the present day. Much of the historic farm acreage at the rear of these properties is still visible as woodland or open fields on modern aerial maps. Among the generally well-preserved historic houses that grace these streets are a number of exceptionally stylish period examples; together they illuminate the progression of nineteenth-century architecture in Plymouth and how it became more elaborate over time. While a limited amount of modern residential development is compatibly scaled and integrated into the historic fabric of the streetscapes, the possibility of more commercial development, especially along Main Street, remains a potential threat to the district's essential architectural integrity.

Architectural style began to evolve in the Federal period when the district's residential buildings exhibited a limited amount of hand-crafted, classically inspired architectural detail. As demonstrated by the Byron Tuttle House, for some, the Federal style consisted of a colonial form and plan enhanced with simple Federal doorway and gable pediments (Inventory #14; Photograph #12). Although colonial construction methods were still employed, the broad street facades and center-chimney plan of the Connecticut "Plain style," however, soon gave way to a side-hall plan with a gable-to-street orientation, an arrangement that prevailed for most of the nineteenth century. These side-hall plan houses were still detailed with similar attenuated Federal door surrounds and fanlights, the features of the Dean-Stoughton House (Inventory #101; Photograph #13). The Joel Blakeslee House, with its elaborate door treatment and quoining, was a major exception to the understated simplicity of this style in the district (Inventory # 107; Photograph #11). In fact, for Plymouth, the pedimented doorway of this house is so atypically enriched that it may have been a Federal Revival addition by an early twentieth-century owner.

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The succeeding Greek Revival style, said to be the first real American architectural style, was based on the form of ancient Greek temples. It was popular for both civic and domestic architecture from the 1830s to the Civil War. The most notable district example is the 1838 Plymouth Congregational Church, the architectural linchpin of the district, a well-preserved regional expression of the ecclesiastical Greek Revival style. Its composite tetra-style plan, probably derived from architectural pattern books of the day such as Asher Benjamin's 1833 *Practice of Architecture or Builder's Guide* of 1837, features a solid square belfry tower instead of a lofty spire. This tower design was characteristic of Greek Revival churches in the area. In fact, the Plymouth church actually served as a model for the Watertown Congregational Church, built the same year, and perhaps the Second Congregational Church in Terryville, which it closely resembles.

Houses of this style often mimic the form of the church. Although similar in plan to the Federal-style house, the Greek Revival is more bold in concept. Doorway surrounds, again often the major architectural feature, have broader pilasters and higher entablatures; wide frieze boards often accentuate pediments and eaves, as they do on the well-preserved Riley Ives House (Inventory #158; Photograph #15). Many of these houses display rectangular multipaned windows in the pediment and have recessed kitchen wings, features of the Truman Wedge House (Inventory #112; Photograph #16).

The boldness of the Greek Revival becomes even more evident when used on the smaller cottages in the district. A case in point is the generous proportions of the doorway of the well-preserved Thomas Scott House (Inventory #68; Photograph #17). Such naive exaggeration of detailing, so often characteristic of the vernacular Greek Revival, adds to the architectural significance of the building. This house and other two-over-three-bay cottages nearby were probably the work of a local carpenter/builder (Inventory #s 75, 83).

The Augustus Shelton House is an exceptionally well-preserved illustration of another type of Greek Revival (Inventory #19; Photograph #21). Exhibiting a full range of architectural detail and a sophisticated *in antis* doorway, this well-proportioned and late expression of the Greek Revival is significant in its own right and makes a major contribution to the district.

With the Industrial Revolution in full swing by the late nineteenth century, some of the impact of machine technology on methods of construction and architectural style became evident in the district. Standardized lumber made for lighter house framing and more complex floorplans; exteriors were individualized by machine-milled and turned architectural elements. Porches, often added to older houses, featured a variety of scroll-sawn decorative bracing and turned posts. New styles in the district were generally limited to the Carpenter Gothic and Italianate, and several combine these styles. Taller house forms with steeper roofs, bay windows, and projecting wings and gables were in vogue, as illustrated by a well-preserved Italianate farmhouse on North Street (Inventory #138; Photograph #24). Its present Colonial Revival veranda, which was added in the 1920s, was probably a replacement for the original Victorian porch.

The Horace Fenn House is an exceptional and well-preserved example of the Carpenter Gothic style. In its integrated design, characteristic decorative gable trusses with drops are repeated in the braces for the porch, and projecting window heads are supported by small scrolled brackets. The more complex massing of the George Langdon House on Main Street also exhibits Carpenter Gothic detailing, most evident in the molded scrolled bargeboards that highlight the various gables (Inventory # 35, Photograph #23). While

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both these houses have round-arched Italianate-style gable windows, the molded and arched surrounds of the windows on the Langdon House are a particularly distinctive architectural feature. Of further significance are the unusual porch supports, which appear to be composed of multiple slim columns. The original porch balusters at the first floor have the same turned pattern; both were produced by machine on a wood lathe.

The district's architectural evolution was completed in the early twentieth century by the Colonial Revival, a style in which the asymmetry and elaboration of the Victorian era was rejected in favor of formal balanced design. As has been demonstrated, the columned porches associated with this style were added to many older houses. Such a porch is featured on the well-preserved Colonial Revival Four-Square built at the intersection of Maple and Main in 1906 (Inventory # 102; Photograph #27). The only example in the district, this imposing style was more common in urban settings. Most Colonial Revivals echoed earlier colonial house forms; in the district the one-story Cape Cod was popular. This residential form was even used for the new library built in 1932 (Inventory # 40; Photograph #7). Elaborated with such detail as keystones and a Palladian window in the gable, this architect-designed building is suitably scaled to the streetscape.

End Notes:

1. Western Connecticut was a hotbed of Tory sympathizers during the war, but only a few, like Moses Dunbar, were actual Tories. This native of Plymouth, an active recruiter for the King's Army, was hanged for treason.
2. Francis Atwater, *History: Town of Plymouth Connecticut*. Hoadley is not one of the three state senators from Plymouth listed in the bicentennial history, *Plymouth, Conn. 1776-1976*.
3. According to *Plymouth, Conn. 1776-1976*, the Edward Ives Toy Shop on Maple Street was moved several times and demolished in the 1930s. Since there is no evidence of a toy business in town prior to 1868, it likely that the brick building there, now identified as the Ives Toy Shop with a date of 1820, was actually part of the later Blakeslee Carriage Shop depicted on the map of 1874.
4. Names recorded in the manuscript census were correlated with the 1874 map of Plymouth Center. Data listed in 1870 included the age and occupation of all members of a household, as well as the place of birth and the value of real and personal estates. Home ownership was confirmed if real estate values were recorded, which in the district generally ranged from \$2000 to \$5000. There were greater differences in personal estate values, which were listed separately.

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**Major Bibliographical References**

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Ransom, David F. "Connecticut's Monumental Epoch: A Survey of War Memorials." *The Connecticut Historical Society Bulletin* 59 (1994), pp. 79-281.

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Town Greens. Statewide Architectural and Historical Survey, 172 properties. Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation and Connecticut Historical Commission, 1996.

**10. Geographical Data**

UTMS:

- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. 18 661450 4615170 | 2. 18 661900 4615030 |
| 3. 18 661900 4615430 | 4. 18 662070 4615430 |
| 5. 18 662480 4614950 | 6. 18 662630 4614640 |
| 7. 18 662510 4614630 | 8. 18 662470 4614680 |
| 9. 18 661410 4614760 |                      |

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundaries of the district are shown on the attached map drawn to scale from Plymouth Tax Assessor's Map #s 34, 35, 43, and 44, which are based on aerial surveys, and computer-generated maps of Plymouth Center supplied by the Town of Plymouth.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundaries of the district were drawn to maintain visual and geographic continuity and encompass the maximum number of contributing historic resources associated with the period of significance of Plymouth Center. The western boundary is the border with the Town of Thomaston. On the east, the district ends where Main Street curves to the northeast after the intersection with Maple Street. After that point resources are generally non-contributing and not visible from the district. The north and south boundaries of the district are drawn to exclude surrounding undeveloped land and/or more recent residential development. They run along the rear residential property lines on both sides of Main Street and also extend to encompass contiguous historic properties along North and South streets and on short sections of Hillside Avenue, Carter Street, and Maple Street in its entirety.

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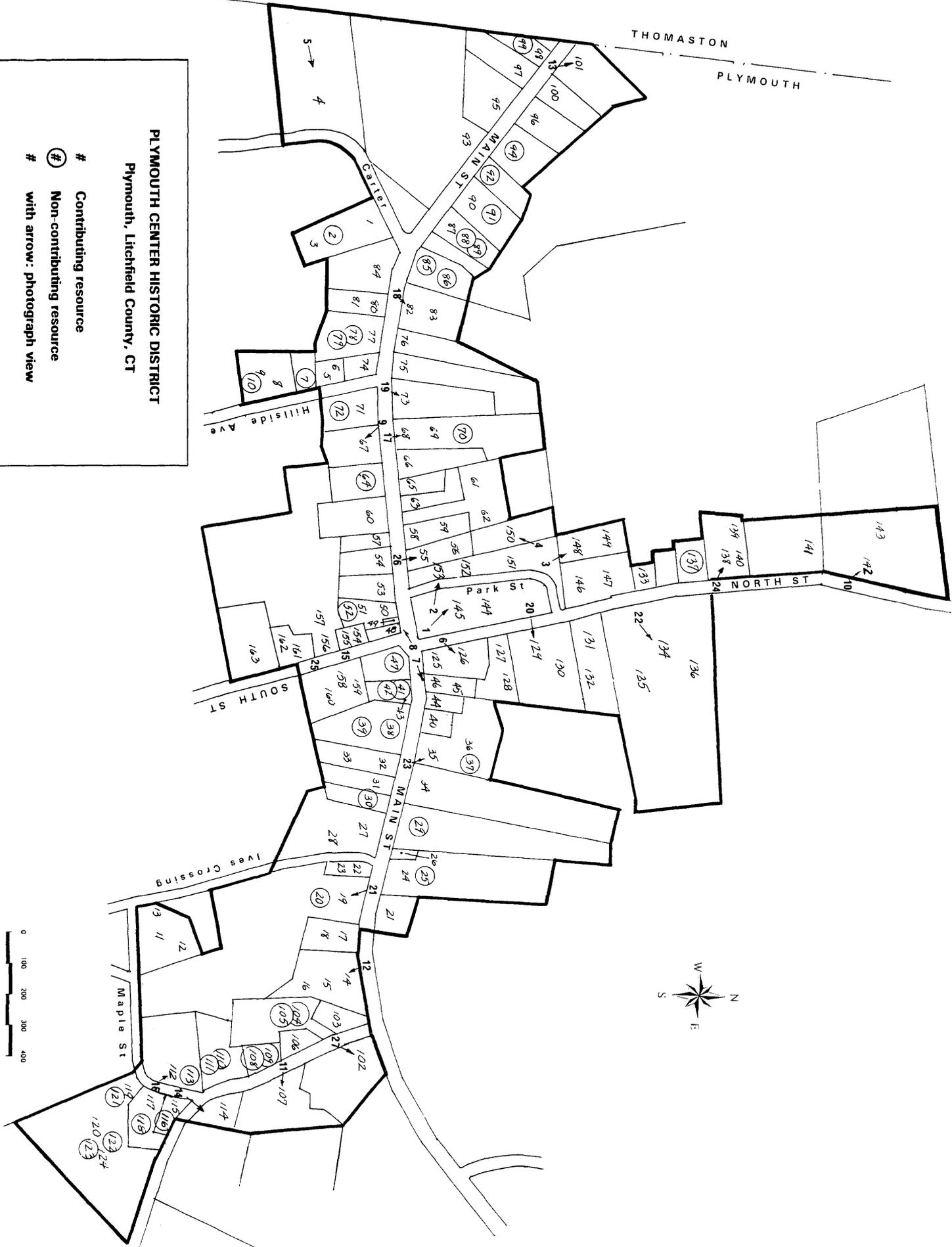
**List of Photographs**

Photographer: Cunningham Preservation Associates, LLC

Date: 12/98 to 2/99 Negatives on file: Connecticut Historical Commission

1. PLYMOUTH CENTER GREEN, facing NW
2. PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH & STOUGHTON BUILDING, facing NW
3. REVEREND ANDREW STORRS HOUSE, facing NW
4. OLD BURYING GROUND, facing SW
5. WEST CEMETERY, facing E
6. ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, facing NE
7. PLYMOUTH POST OFFICE, GRANGE HALL, PLYMOUTH LIBRARY (r-l), facing NE
8. BEECH & BLACKMER'S, TOWN HALL, 707 Main Street, & CURTISS HOTEL (l-r), facing SW
9. ELI TERRY HOUSE, facing SE
10. BLAKESLEE HOUSE, facing NW
11. JOEL BLAKESLEE HOUSE, facing E
12. BYRON TUTTLE HOUSE, facing SE
13. DEAN-STOUGHTON HOUSE, facing NW
14. JAMES VILE HOUSE & MRS. MILLER HOUSE (l-r), facing NE
15. RILEY IVES HOUSE, facing NE
16. TRUMAN WEDGE HOUSE, facing NE
17. THOMAS SCOTT HOUSE, facing N
18. 750 Main Street, facing NE
19. HARRIET HUNT HOUSE, facing NE
20. HENRY K. TERRY HOUSE, facing E
21. AUGUSTUS SHELTON HOUSE, facing SE
22. HORACE FENN HOUSE, facing NE
23. GEORGE LANGDON HOUSE, facing NW
24. LANGDON HOUSE, facing NW
25. DR. SAMUEL SALISBURY HOUSE & A. MARKHAM HOUSE (l-r), facing SW
26. EDWARD PARKER HOUSE, facing N
27. 1 Maple Street, facing NE

THOMASTON  
PLYMOUTH



**PLYMOUTH CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT**  
Plymouth, Litchfield County, CT

- # Contributing resource
- # Non-contributing resource
- # with arrow: photograph view

**Bold Line: National Register District Boundary**  
Cunningham Preservation Associates, LLC 2/99